Film questions: Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rear Window*

Answer the following questions in detail.

*Day 1: 00:00 – 36:44*

**Question 1:** The film begins with a shot of Jeff’s window as the blinds slowly rise in a theatrical manner. What do you think is the significance of this shot?

**Question 2:** *Rear Window* is famous for using only diegetic sounds (excepting the credits and first musical piece). Why might Hitchcock have avoided non-diegetic sounds?

**Question 3:** Our first introduction to Jeff focuses on his broken leg. What is the significance of the writing on his cast?

**Question 4:** Throughout the film, there are recurring references to the heat. As the film progresses, the temperature drops. How might this be symbolic?

**Question 5:** Following the first shot of Jeff, the camera pans across Jeff’s apartment. What do you notice about his apartment? What impression does this give you of Jeff?

**Question 6:** What are your first impressions of Jeff, following his conversation with Gunnison? List five words to describe him.

**Question 7:** Stella acts as a ‘voice of reason’ in these early scenes of the film. List some of her most important quotes. What is her view on Jeff’s behaviour at this point?

**Question 8:** How does Hitchcock use foreshadowing in the opening scenes of the film?

**Question 9:** Throughout the film, POV shots are used. What is the impact of this?

**Question 10:** Jeff discusses marriage with both Stella and Gunnison, his boss. What are his views on marriage? What opposing views are raised by Stella and Gunnison?

**Question 11:** Interestingly, Jeff’s neighbours offer many different portrayals and incarnations of marriage/relationships. What portrayals are presented?

**Question 12:** What is your first impression of Lisa? List five words to describe her.
Question 13: Lisa and Jeff’s relationship is one of the key focuses of this film. Discuss how it is presented during their first interactions.

Question 14: To chart the progress of Lisa and Jeff’s relationship, Hitchcock uses music. Specifically, in each of their meetings, Jeff’s neighbour – the composer – works on a piece of music that we eventually (final scenes) discover is called “Lisa.” During their first interaction, the piece is incomplete and a ‘work-in-progress.’ How is this symbolic? How do their opposing reactions to the music demonstrate the tension in their relationship?

| Lisa | I think it’s enchanting... Almost as if it were being written for us. |
| Jeff | No wonder he’s having so much trouble with it. |

Question 15: Briefly summarise the nocturnal activities of the salesman that intrigue Jeff.

Question 16: How is lighting used by Hitchcock to build suspense?

* Day 2: 36:44 – 50:29

Question 1: Although Stella recriminates Jeff for his voyeuristic behaviours, she too becomes enthralled in his neighbour’s lives. This is significant for two reasons: 1) how is her interest different to Jeff’s? 2) what does this allow Hitchcock to suggest about voyeurism?

Question 2: Jeff gives many of his neighbours nicknames: Miss Torso, Miss Lonelyhearts. What does this suggest about both society at the time and Jeff as a character?

Question 3: As Stella leaves, Jeff asks for his binoculars before moving to spy on his neighbours with a camera. Why is this significant? How does Hitchcock use cinematic devices to show this is a progression in Jeff’s voyeuristic behaviours?

Question 4: When Lisa visits Jeff again that evening, he is distracted by his neighbours. What does this suggest about Jeff? What does this suggest about Jeff and Lisa’s relationship?

Question 5: Lisa, like Stella, disapproves of Jeff’s behaviour at this point. What concerns does she raise? What changes her mind?

Question 6: Lisa begins to help Jeff investigate Mrs Thorwald’s disappearance. How is this a turning point?

Question 7: How does Lisa and Jeff’s changing relationship intertwine with the unfolding murder mystery?

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Day 3: 50:29 – 1:25:10

**Question 1:** What doubts does Doyle raise about Jeff’s suspicions during his interactions with Jeff?

**Question 2:** Jeff’s reaction to the newlyweds’ apartment – shades down, wife calling her husband back to bed – provides a good example of the Kuleshov Effect. What is Jeff’s reaction to the newlyweds?

**Question 3:** Why do you think Jeff is so concerned about his neighbours?

**Question 4:** Why does Lisa now believe Mrs Thorwald was murdered? What is Jeff’s reaction to Lisa’s interest in the case?

**Question 5:** How does Lisa attempt to prove to Jeff that she is adaptable?

**Question 6:** When Doyle returns to Jeff’s apartment to provide further evidence the murder did not occur, he embodies the sexist attitudes of the time in his interactions with Lisa. How so?

**Question 7:** At one point, Doyle suggests that Jeff is being hypocritical as he also doesn’t “tell [his] landlord everything.” Is Jeff a hypocrite? How so?

**Question 8:** What event prompts Lisa and Jeff to examine the ethics of their behaviour? What do they realise about themselves?

**Question 9:** One of Jeff’s neighbours rants about the state of their small community after her dog is killed. What does she say? Is she correct?

**Question 10:** What reaffirms Jeff’s belief that Thorwald killed his wife?

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Day 4: 1:25:10 – End

**Question 1:** Lisa and Stella act as Jeff’s ‘legs’ in their investigations of Thorwald. How has Lisa changed? What is Jeff’s reaction to these changes?

**Question 2:** How does Hitchcock use cinematic devices to reveal Jeff’s vulnerability and immobility during Lisa’s confrontation with Thorwald?

**Question 3:** As Lisa sneaks into Thorwald’s apartment, Miss Lonelyhearts appears to be readying herself to commit suicide. How do Stella and Jeff react to this? What does this reveal about them as individuals?

**Question 4:** What comment does Hitchcock make about movie-watching itself?
Question 5: Briefly outline what occurs in the final scenes of the film.

Question 6: In the final scenes of the film, how does Hitchcock build suspense?

Question 7: What do you think is the most significant moment? Why?

Question 8: How has Jeff changed? How does Hitchcock use symmetry to demonstrate this?

Question 9: How has Lisa changed? What props/clothing does Hitchcock use to demonstrate this?

Question 10: Recount the resolutions of each of the neighbours – Miss Lonelyhearts, Miss Torso, the dog owners, the Newlyweds, the Thorwalds and the composer.

Question 11: What do you think is the ultimate message of the director?