

A Room with a SAW

A Film by

Rather disinterested in the original text you were tasked to adapt, you transported the crassness, vulgarity and pornographic violence of the SAW and Final Destination series into Forster's narrative (not necessarily a 'bad' choice artistically). However, one might be upset about the poor choice of Mr. Emerson and the clear disconnect between 'everyone going to crash in a carriage' and Cecil's murderous rampage. There is *good* silliness and there is just pointless silliness, so be forewarned that a lack of reasoning / clarity of thought is **not** acceptable.

To your credit, there seems to be some awareness of textual concerns and even Forster's chosen style; you invert the 'happy ending', the romance and obviously the overall tone of Forster's social comedy. To your credit, you have tried your best to produce something 'tragic' (to the point of being a little comic) and in so doing, suggested that there is 'tragedy' that Forster has perhaps glossed over in his ending. I am thinking of Cecil and Charlotte's fate; while both are arguably redeemed at the end, a more sensitive reader cannot escape the fact that both will not have their lives 'improved' the way Lucy and George will. The latter is to be a spinster and the former left isolated, unable to truly 'feel' as he hopes he might.

So here's your chance to redeem yourself! Your 'custom' question, should you choose to accept it, is:

'Beneath the comedy lie tragic moments left unseen.' Comment on the ways in which this view bears out in *A Room with a View*.

The pair is asked to write an essay or outline of at least 800 words. The deadline for your 1st draft is the **Friday of Week 5**. If it proves to be of excellent quality (I hope it does), it will be considered as your CA for Term 1. The writing process is detailed as follows:

1. Creative adaptation of the text / *Feedback and question from Mr. Lim*
2. Selection of 5 pieces of relevant evidence / *Literary analysis with Mr. Lim's help*
3. Outline of literary style, methods, features / *Ask for help if needed*
4. Thesis and argumentation / *Ask for help if needed*
5. Write your first draft or outline / *Feedback from me*

If you can, use Google Docs and detail every thought on your document. Share it with marckenjilim@gmail.com and I will provide constructive and hopefully timely comments. The goal of this exercise is really to get you thinking about Forster's literary methods, as you should already tell. Once we get this done, we would have 9-10 excellent essays that will prove useful for your revision later in the year! Take the task on as an opportunity to *really really* get better at Lit ;) **Mr Lim**

Freedom.. From Life

Maybe not the most coherent piece I will ever read, there is some sense of what you want to achieve. Depending on your grasp of Forster's original, your pitch is either downright disastrous or shrewdly subversive.

Being absolutely positive, I would suppose that your inversion of Mr Emerson and George as radical Christian (from being anti-religion) and diary-keeping (more in line with Cecil) maniac respectively are clever ways of critiquing Edwardian society and its over-intellectual, conforming ways. If this interpretation is not 'it', then either reader or writer must be seriously confused.

I do get the impression that there must have been some joy in incorporating Hannibal Lecter-style sickness and that strangely enough is pertinent. There is a certain darkness, 'violence' against religion and society that doesn't fully come to the surface in Forster's text.

“A story of romance with dark undertones.”

Comment on the ways in which this view bears out in the novel.

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George the Stalker

Elza and Jen Kiat

A quite conservative adaptation (at least relatively conservative), you have made your protagonist a 'stalker', which on revisiting, is actually an apt modern-day take on Forster's social recluse / outsider! For some reason, I'm picturing Justin Timberlake or maybe even a Seth Rogen / Michael Cera type but I don't see how 'passion and freedom' go with 'stalker', nerd or recluse.

That said, your George is certainly more active in his pursuit than Forster's George or indeed Forster's Lucy (who arguably remains passive throughout and must be 'taught' and 'led' by both Emersons). Likewise, intentionally or otherwise, your Lucy has now been reduced to Forster's George - nothing more than an object of desire with no real qualities other than the fact that... she is the crown to be 'captured'! To be wholly positive, you were right to say that it is better to *suggest (by leaving things unsaid)* than to say out loud; my interpretation here comes from your rather evocative piece. Accuracy however is a different issue, so I must take that leap of judgement in assigning you the following question:

'A *Room with a View* is nothing more than a story of boy meets girl, boy falls in love, boy gets girl.' How far and in what ways do you agree with this assessment of the novel?

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The Time Traveller's Vyse

Ruth and Qingke

Completely in line with Forster's 'light style', your adaptation is probably the most entertaining so far *because* it ditches the mawkish sentimentality of your source material (I hope I'm correct!) and makes it more Back to the Future-silly.

In terms of ideas, you have perhaps unintentionally made me *think* about the circularity of Forster's social order. While I certainly have my doubts about Cecil's ability to have a 'reckless fling' (considering how he is so self-conscious of *what to do and how to do it* that a simple kiss is beyond him), the parallels you draw between Lucy and Mrs Honeychurch is definitely interesting. Just as Mrs Vyse is a precursor to the 'mechanical' Cecil (see Chapter XI), Mrs Honeychurch's quite progressive and free outlook does act as a 'beacon' for Lucy. Mrs Honeychurch, I would agree, is perfectly capable of a fling! Your Lucy on the other hand is however one about to choose Cecil for life, who is 'businesslike' (like Cecil) rather than spontaneous and unrestrained (like George). To be honest, I'm not sure where your various time portals and warps will take you but I do know that you have taken a comic (but not satirical) approach to Cecil. Your question, therefore is:

'Repressed but redeemable, Cecil is not completely dispassionate.'

In the light of this statement, comment on the role and presentation of Cecil.

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Why So Cecilous?

Jocelyn and Nicholas

A confused rendering of *Saw*, *Twilight* and *The Dark Knight* (probably Nicholas's fault) aside, you have turned Cecil into a manipulative monster (quite literally, given your source material) intent on capturing the damsel. I am struggling somewhat to fashion something immediately relevant to the original text, so I am leaving your question as open as possible:

How far and in what ways would you agree that Cecil is the villain of the novel?

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A Right to a View

Sean and Desmond

Good effort that has been meticulously conceived with a central motif (slavery). The search for oneself through romance has been altered to become a search for freedom, which reflects your understanding of Forster's concerns!

I am offering you two custom questions. Choose one:

'Forster's England is presented as a prison, cold and austere.' How far and in what ways do you agree with this assessment?

'Above all, *A Room with a View* is concerned about breaking free from societal constraints.' How far and in what ways do you agree?

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The C-C Affair

Vivienne and James

I have very little to work with (very little meaning nothing) but the key idea of Charlotte and Cecil being romantically engaged is both clever and appropriate. Both characters, as comic foils to Lucy, are 'redeemed' in Forster's quite humanistic world view. Where a cruel cynic might deem their union appropriate ('they deserve each other'), Forster's novel is set up for the reader to sympathise with the two, for it is made clear that they too recognise desire, love, passion and truth - Eros and Pallas Athene - at the end of the novel.

Your question, designed to provoke a critical response, is:

'Cecil and Charlotte are nothing more than comic devices subject to the reader's ridicule.' How far and in what ways do you agree with this assessment?

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Waiting for a View

Dave and Gill

Cleverly preserving the play's central motifs of light, music and an empty 'room', your pitch poses more questions than answers, which is high praise in itself. The Beckettian thread of choice (human agency) and necessity (theistic fate or social determinism) actually adds a dimension to the quite generic *bildungsroman* idea the novel adopts. Lucy is presented as the sum of her choices; Lucy is reduced to *being like* Cecil or George and if we were harsh, never fully 'finds herself' as much as she 'finds herself in George, via (rejecting) Cecil'. I think I will leave you two to keep me in suspense with your next (more academic *and* direct) piece. Feel free to take the prompt quotation as far as you can.

'Forster's ending hints that Lucy's development is incomplete, if not far from complete.' How far and in what ways do you agree with this assessment?

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I Love You Mr Beebe / Breakback River

Nicole and Eugenia

A tale of repressed homosexuality (that is evidenced in Forster's original) and tragic consequences, your pitch is certainly interesting by your focus on passion of a different orientation. I don't think I will elaborate any further, lest I repeat what I said in class (I know that I'm not *that* interesting either). Revisiting it, it is probably much better than I originally thought!

Your question, which I am trying my best to tie to your narrative, is:

'A story of repressed desires and untold tragedy.' Comment on the ways in which this view bears out in the novel.

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