

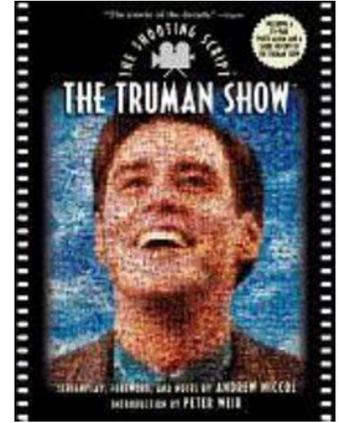
THE TRUMAN SHOW

Synopsis

The movie 'The Truman Show' is about a character called Truman Burbank who has lived his whole life in Seahaven, a fake island town where the other people are all actors.

He alone has no idea that his world is a giant studio, where everything is a high-tech illusion controlled by the director Christo. Truman has no idea that he is filmed day and night and is the star of a television reality show.

He thinks he is happy but cannot forget a girl called Sylvia who disappeared from his life when he was seventeen. The following extract from the script is a flashback.



FLUSHING MEADOW PARK. EVENING.

Truman and Sylvia sit next to the fountain. They kiss. Truman starts to say something, but she covers his lips with her finger.

Sylvia: In a minute someone's going to come and stop me talking to you.

Truman: *(looking around the empty park)* Who? There's no one here.

Sylvia: *(looking over her shoulder nervously)* There isn't much time. Just listen. Everybody's pretending. Everybody but you. *(pointing to the buildings on the horizon)* Look. You think anybody lives there? It's all for you, Truman. A show. The eyes are everywhere.

Truman: *(protesting)* Eyes? Where?

Sylvia: Everywhere, disguised ... Truman, they're going to fill your head with lies. You've got to make yourself deaf.

Suddenly a car roars towards the fountain.

Sylvia: *(scared)* I told you, Truman!

The car stops and a man jumps out.

He pulls the frightened Sylvia to her feet.

Truman: *(shocked)* Hey!

Man: *(to Sylvia)* Get in the car!

Truman: *(to the man)* Who are you?

Man: I'm her father!

Sylvia: No he's not! He's just saying that!

The man throws Sylvia into his car. Truman tries to fight the man.

Truman: Leave her alone!

The man pushes Truman away and Truman falls to the ground. The man slams shut the passenger door of the car.

Man: *(to Sylvia)* I told you not to come here anymore!

Sylvia: *(calling out from the car)* Don't listen, Truman. Make yourself deaf. Come find me.

Man: *(to Truman, getting into the car)* Don't bother! We're moving to Australia.

The car roars away. Truman stares after it.

Stop and think!

1. What are Truman's feelings during the scene?
2. What words or actions show these feelings?
3. Why do you think he feels like this?
4. Why does Sylvia want to warn Truman?
5. Guess: What happens to her!



This second extract comes later in the movie. The adult Truman now knows his world is fake, he does not know why. He has just tried to escape from Seahaven, but has been stopped.

**A LIVING ROOM
SOMEWHERE. NIGHT.**
Two old women sit on their sofa. On the television in front of them, a live picture of Truman drinking a cup of coffee at his kitchen table. A message appears on

screen: 'FOLGERS Coffee - Good To The Last Drop.'

Then a title, "Truman - Total Record y A Human Life" appears. This is replaced by an interviewer sitting opposite Christof.

STUDIO. NIGHT.

Interviewer: *(to camera)* Welcome to week seventeen hundred and sixty-eight of "Truman". This is "Tru Talk", the forum where we discuss events with the show's award-winning director, Christof.
(to Christof) Before we start taking calls, what keeps us watching one man twenty-four hours a day?

Christof: The reality. We've become frustrated watching actors give us false emotions. While the world he lives in is fake, there's nothing fake about Truman himself. No scripts. No cue cards. He tells us about ourselves. - How about some viewers' calls now?

The Interviewer presses a button on his desk.

Interviewer: Charlotte, North Carolina, for Christof.. You're on, caller. Go ahead.

Male Caller: Truman has never been closer. The way he looked directly at us, spoke to us for the first time - do you think he'll ever work it out?

Christof: Not now. He tested his world, as we all do at times, and it passed the test.

Interviewer: *(pressing another button)* Long Island, you're on "Tru Talk".

Female: How can you say Truman lives a life like any other?

Christof: The only difference between Truman's life and our own is that his is recorded. We all play our roles ...

Female: He's not a performer. He's a prisoner.

Christof: He can leave at any time. If he wanted to discover the truth, there's no way we could stop him. I think he feels comfortable in his "cell" ...

Female: No, you're wrong! He'll prove you wrong! He can still do it!

Christof: *(directly to camera)* Do I know you, caller? You sound familiar.

Talk about the two extracts!

1. Explain the contrast in the way we see Truman in the two extracts.
2. How is Truman's life like our own? What is the movie's message about the media?
3. Comment on why Christof looks into the camera. Who might the female caller be and why is her role important?