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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR *THE UNSEEN*

1. Compare your feelings about Lucas at the beginning of the book with your feelings about him at the end of the book. Did your opinion of him change? Did you identify with him? Why or why not?
2. If you asked Lucas what he most wants at the beginning of the book, what would he say? Would he be truthful with you? Would he be truthful with himself?
3. The members of Creep Club live vicariously through the people they monitor and record. In light of recent trends such as YouTube and “reality” television, do you think our society mirrors this odd fascination? What are the implications—bad and good—of our more transparent world?
4. Lucas feels a connection to his co-worker Sarea, and even though he’s entertained thoughts of spying on her life, he never has. Why do you think this is?
5. At the end of the book, Sarea willingly goes with Lucas—first to escape her apartment, then to travel with him across the country. What does this willingness say about her as a character? About her relationship with Lucas?
6. Lucas has an odd habit of collecting photos and other souvenirs from the people he observes, calling them “totems.” Why do you think he does this? What do the totems represent for him?
7. Throughout the book, Lucas tells us: “People look, but they don’t see.” Mad Billy Weevil, the blues musician, says: “People hear, but they don’t feel.” What do you think they mean by this? Do you agree most people go through life looking but not seeing, and hearing but not feeling?
8. At the end of the book, the character Swarm says he sees himself in Lucas. How is he like Lucas? How is he different?

9. Lucas repeats the mantra “Humpty Dumpty had some great falls” throughout the book, which leads to some obvious connections with his past. But do you think there’s also some symbolic significance in this phrase? Can Lucas himself be seen as a “Humpty Dumpty” kind of character? For that matter, can we all be seen as “Humpty Dumpty” characters in our own lives?

10. At a key point in the story, we find out the person Lucas is most afraid of is...himself. Why would he be afraid of himself? Do you think other people may be afraid of themselves? Do you think Lucas is still afraid at the end of the story?

11. Toward the end of the book, Sarea recounts the famous tale of the crossroads and the musician Robert Johnson, then suggests Lucas is in the same position. What’s the main “crossroads” moment Lucas faces? What is his decision? Do the effects of his choice begin to show by the time the story has ended?