Apocalypse Now Study Questions Part I

1. Describe Captain Willard at the beginning of the movie.
2. In what Vietnamese city is he located?
3. For whom is Willard going to be the “caretaker of …memory”?
4. What is Willard’s job in the military?
5. How does General Corman describe Walter E. Kurtz?
6. How does General Corman describe Kurtz’s ideas and methods after joining the Special Forces?
7. Why was Col. Kurtz about to be arrested? Be specific about the crime(s).
8. What does the general suggest is a great temptation being left out in the jungle alone?
9. General Corman notes that what is the conflict in every human heart?
10. What is Captain Willard’s mission? Again be specific.
11. Why is Captain Willard shocked that the American army wants Kurtz dead?
12. What does Willard mean when he says, “Charging a man with murder in this place was like handing out speeding tickets at the Indy 500?”
13. What kind of boat is taking Willard down the coast?
14. Why is he specifically being ferried by this kind of boat?
15. Name and describe the rest of the crew that is travelling with Willard. There are 4 others.
16. What river is Willard headed toward?
17. Give some pertinent information that Willard reads about Kurtz.
18. What is the significance of the playing cards that Lieutenant Colonel Kilgore is placing on the dead?
19. What is ironic about the scene with the wounded Vietnamese villager?
20. What is Bill Kilgore’s favorite hobby?
21. How does Willard describe Kilgore’s leadership and personality?
22. What is Kilgore’s plan for transporting Willard’s ship to the mouth of the river?
23. Why does one of Kilgore’s men seem reluctant about this plan?
24. What composer’s music does Kilgore use to scare the enemy?
25. Why do all of Kilgore’s troops sit on their helmets?
26. What does Kilgore say the smell of napalm reminds him of?
27. What do Chef and Willard go looking for in the jungle?
28. What attacks and nearly kills Chef and Willard in the jungle?
29. What is the name of the operation that Kurtz stages without army approval?
30. What is the name of the supply station in the middle of the Nung River?
31. Why had Kurtz executed the Vietnamese intelligence agents in his area?
32. How did the Viet Cong feel about Kurtz?
33. Into what country is the boat taking Willard?
34. Summarize Kurtz’s letter to his son.
35. Why does Chief stop to search the Vietnamese boat; what does he think it is carrying?
36. What is it actually carrying?
37. What does Willard mean when he says, “It was a way we had over here of living with ourselves; cut them in half with a machine gun then give them a band-aid.”
38. What is Willard beginning to “hate”?
39. Why won’t the crew look at Willard the same way again?
40. What is the name of the bridge that the boat passes?
41. What is Willard given at this bridge?
42. Describe the scene at the bridge.
43. What is wrong with Lance?
44. Who is in command at the bridge?
45. What happens to the bridge each night? Each day?
46. What new information is Willard given about Kurtz and Kurtz’s camp?
47. What does the letter from the man previously sent to retrieve Kurtz have written on it?
48. Who has recorded a message for “Clean” to listen to?
49. What happens to the boat as they reading their mail?
50. Who is killed?
51. What do the natives attack the boat with after the boat travels through the fog?
52. Who is killed during this attack and how?