Carol Shields, “Fragility” Response Questions

Please answer in full sentences and use direct evidence from the story to support your answer.

1. What is the significance of the narrator’s observance of the young man on the plane to Vancouver (p. 237)? How does that contrast that to the narrator and his wife at that moment? (2)

2. How does the physical relocation reflect their current emotional state?

3. Think about each of the different houses and owners, what do they say about the idea of human relationships and fragility?

a. Divorce House

b. Elderly mother of the movie star

c. Young mother with twins transferring to Toronto

4. Ivy feels a “vibe” in each house they look and the narrator ponders whether others will feel Christopher’s vibe in his room when they return to sell it. Initially, Ivy was put off by the ‘divorce house’ vibe of their new home, what does their acceptance and choice of the house say?