Final Questions for *Between Shades of Gray*

1. Discuss the character traits that allow Lina, Jonas, and Andrius to ultimately persevere. How are these characters similar to each other? In what ways are they different? Which character are you most like?
2. Throughout the novel, Lina uses her passion for her art to remain con­nected to her family and the outside world. What are some of the specific ways she does this?
3. What role does Andrius play in the story? In what ways is he a catalyst for the choices made by Lina and Jonas?
4. Consider the consequences of not signing the documents which charge the prisoners of counterrevolutionary activities against the Soviet Union. Does Lina’s family make the right decision by refusing to “confess” these transgressions? Why or why not?
5. Though Lina believes that Andrius and his mother are supplying information to the NKVD officers in exchange for food and shelter, she eventually learns that the arrangement comes at a great cost to his family. How does this knowledge of the lengths his mother goes to in order to keep him safe ultimately affect him? How does Lina’s understanding of these sacrifices reshape her perception of him? His mother?
6. Throughout the novel, the bald man is cast as an unsympathetic character. How do his random acts of kindness help portray him as more than one dimensional? Cite specific instances from the story where you find evidence of this. Why might the author choose to include these examples?