

Welcome to OLSSI:

The Ohio Library Support Staff Institute is now in session. Join us for some housekeeping tips as we get started ...

- Questions: Please ask your questions through the “Chat” function, or for this session you are free to unmute to ask questions. Please mute when not speaking to not interfere with others who are speaking.
- Can't hear us? Please click on the “Audio” tab or exit and re-enter the WebEx session to restart the audio.
- All sessions will be recorded and shared after the conference.

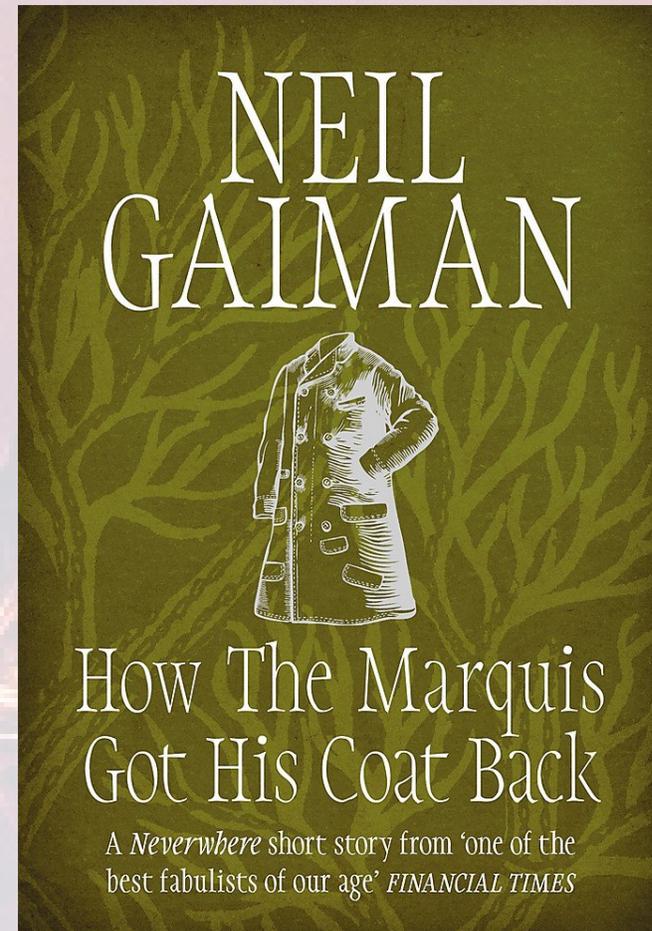
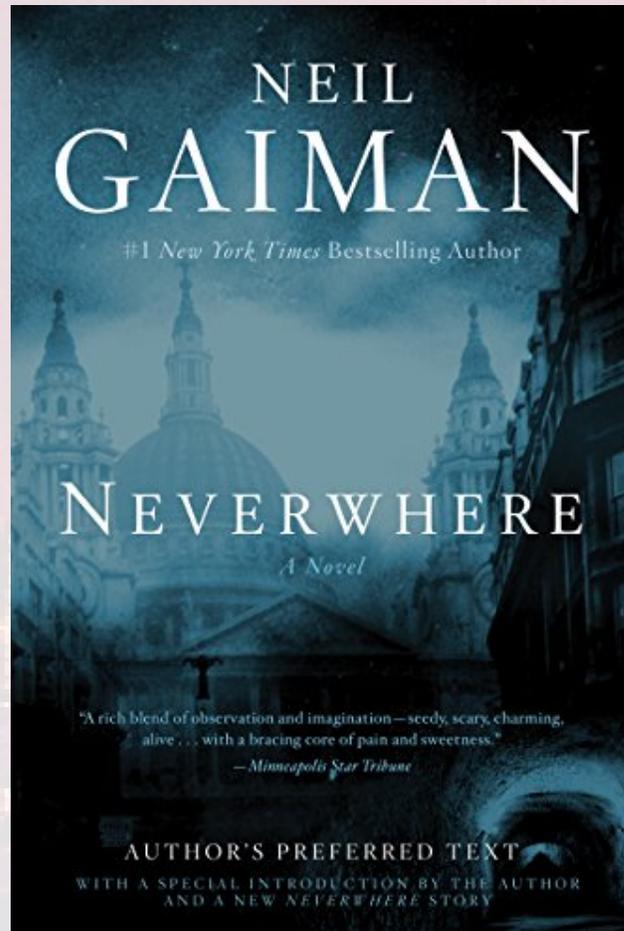
Wednesday, July 28, 2021: 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (?)

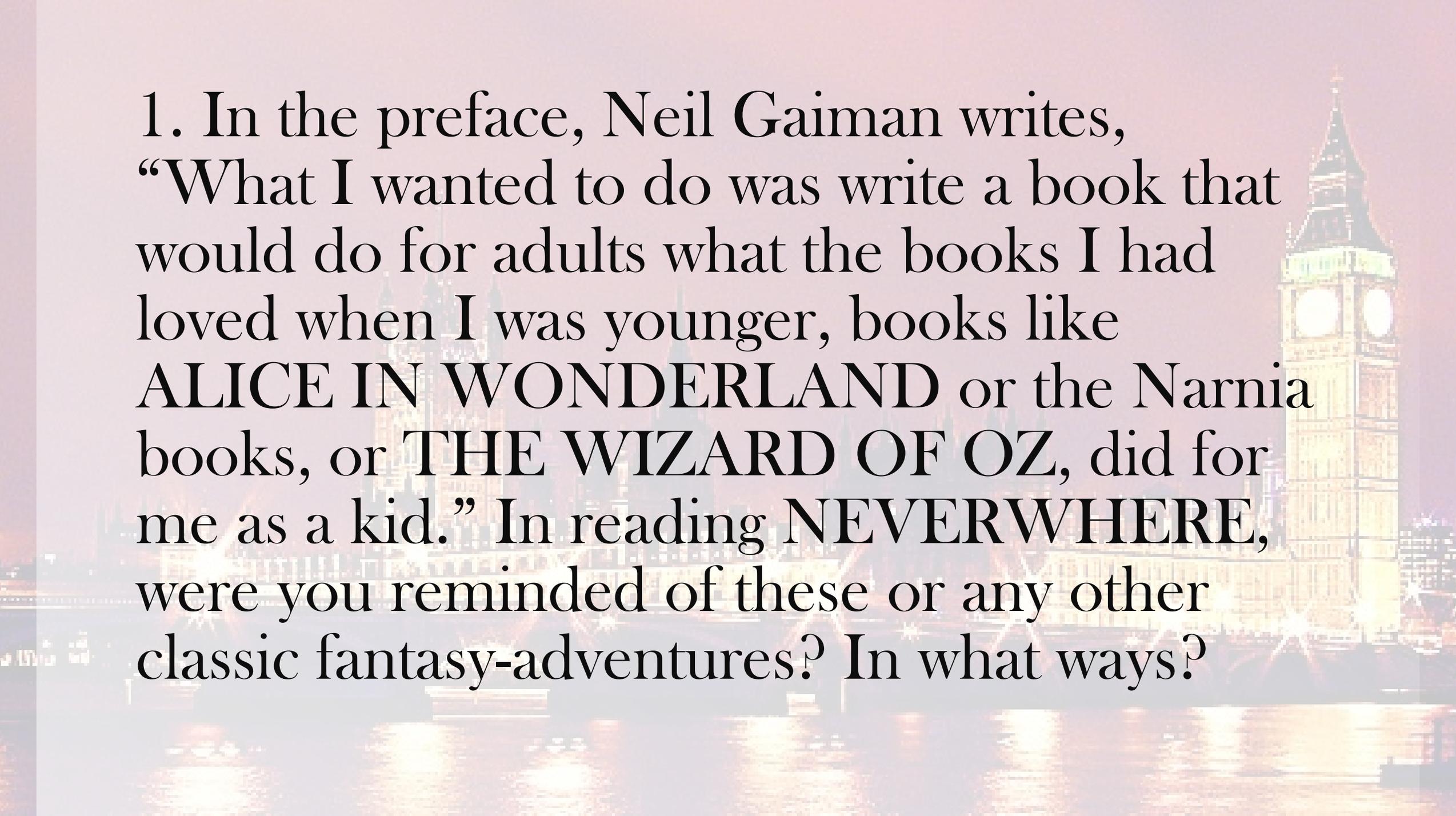
Neverwhere by Neil Gaiman

Discussion led by Tanya Ellenburg-Kimmet

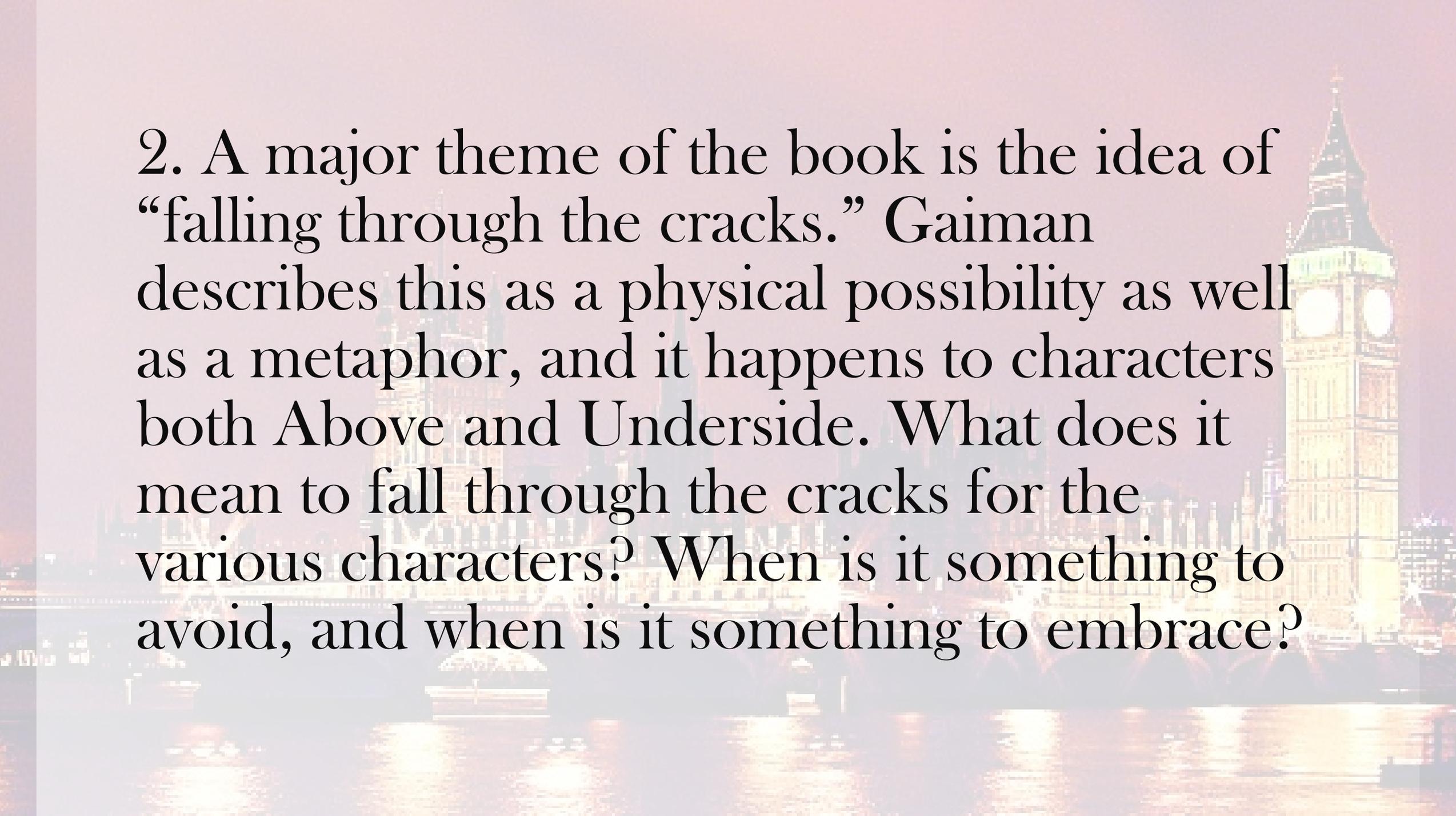


Neverwhere by Neil Gaiman

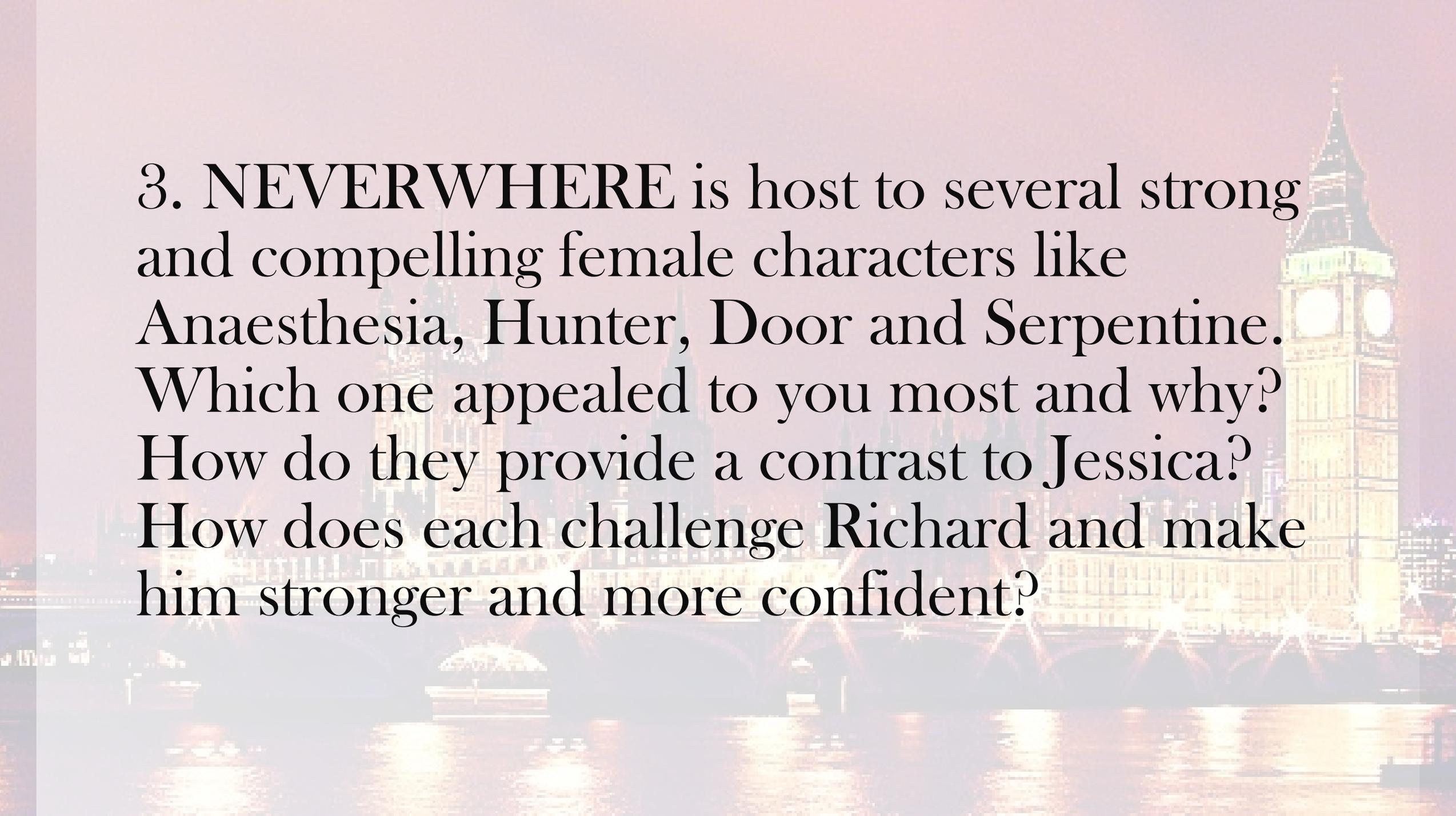




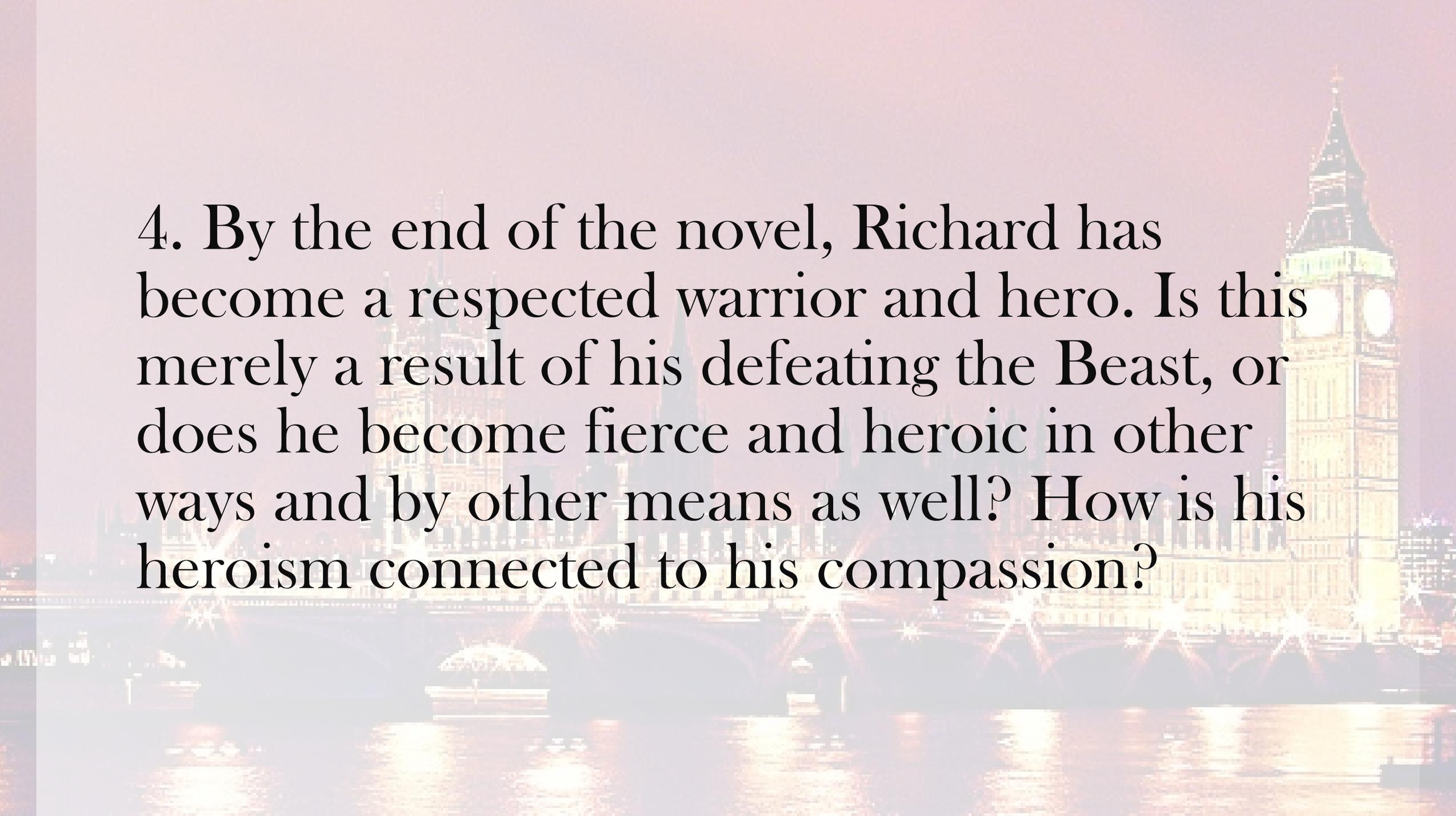
1. In the preface, Neil Gaiman writes, “What I wanted to do was write a book that would do for adults what the books I had loved when I was younger, books like *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* or the Narnia books, or *THE WIZARD OF OZ*, did for me as a kid.” In reading *NEVERWHERE*, were you reminded of these or any other classic fantasy-adventures? In what ways?



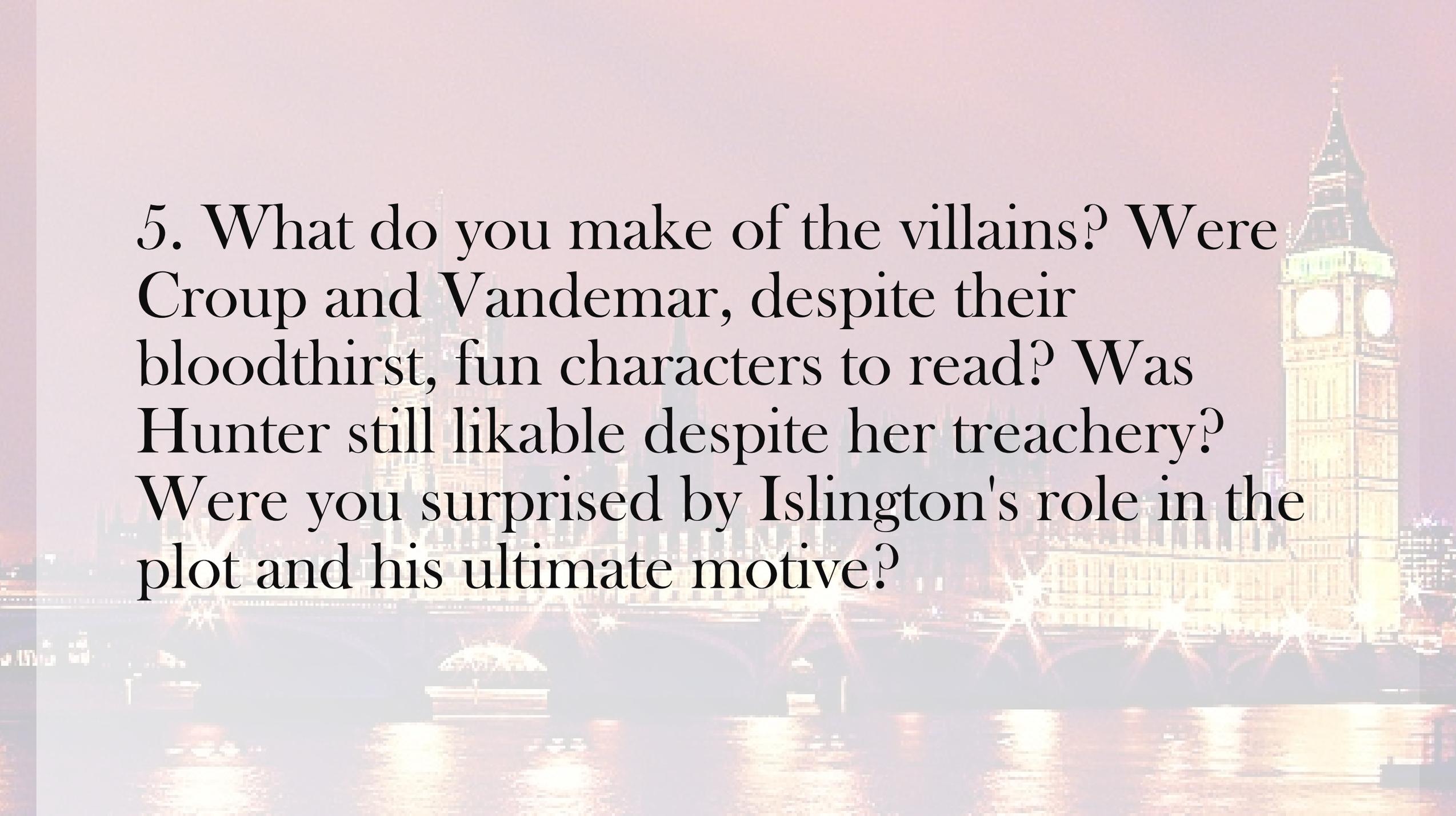
2. A major theme of the book is the idea of “falling through the cracks.” Gaiman describes this as a physical possibility as well as a metaphor, and it happens to characters both Above and Underside. What does it mean to fall through the cracks for the various characters? When is it something to avoid, and when is it something to embrace?



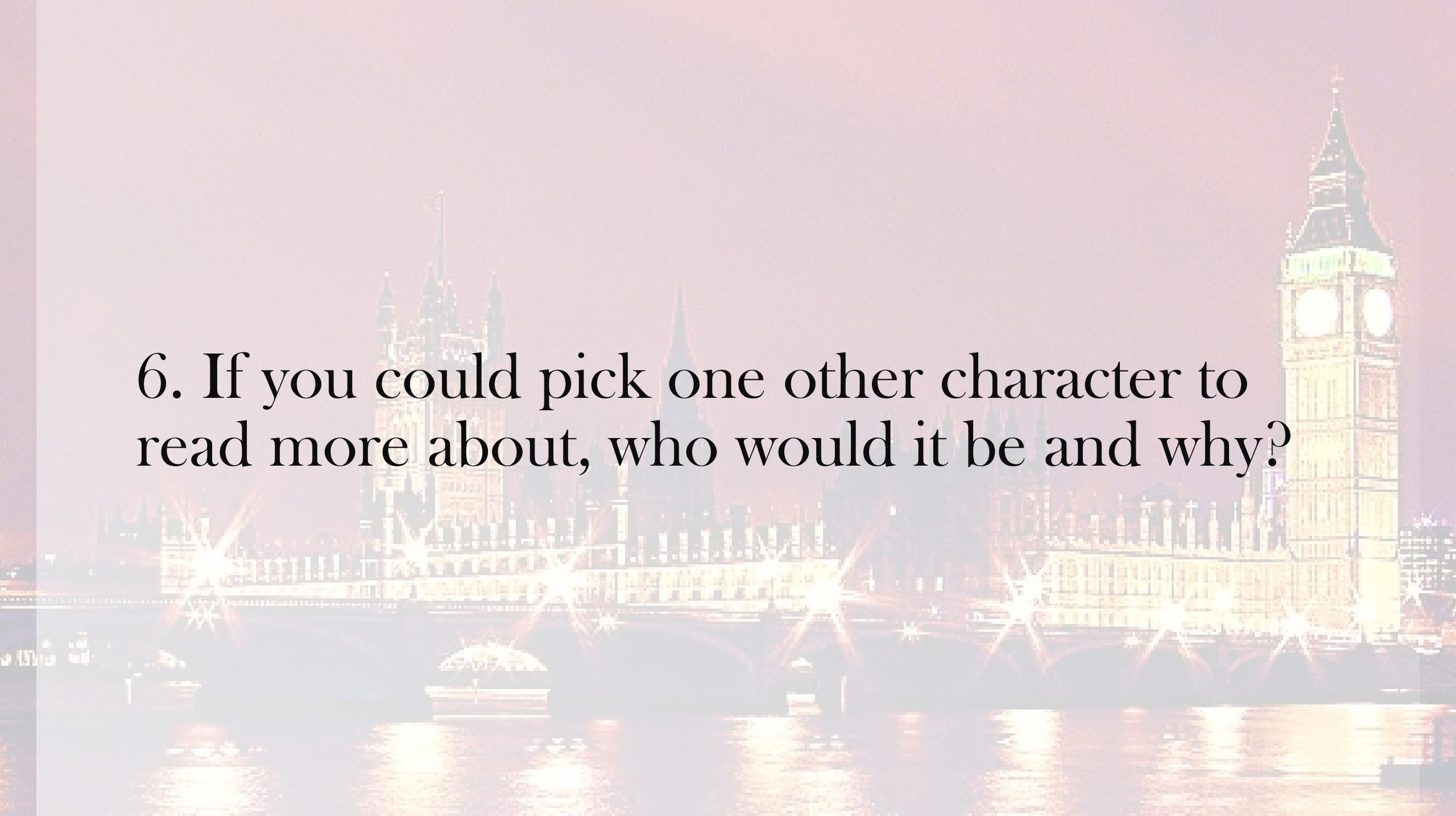
3. **NEVERWHERE** is host to several strong and compelling female characters like Anaesthesia, Hunter, Door and Serpentine. Which one appealed to you most and why? How do they provide a contrast to Jessica? How does each challenge Richard and make him stronger and more confident?

A nighttime photograph of the London skyline, featuring the illuminated Big Ben clock tower and the River Thames. The scene is reflected in the water, and the overall atmosphere is warm and glowing.

4. By the end of the novel, Richard has become a respected warrior and hero. Is this merely a result of his defeating the Beast, or does he become fierce and heroic in other ways and by other means as well? How is his heroism connected to his compassion?



5. What do you make of the villains? Were Croup and Vandemar, despite their bloodthirst, fun characters to read? Was Hunter still likable despite her treachery? Were you surprised by Islington's role in the plot and his ultimate motive?



6. If you could pick one other character to read more about, who would it be and why?

Thank you ...

for joining us for this edition of OLSSI book club.

Follow OLSSI on Facebook for future possible book club events as well as other activities related to Ohio libraries, libraries in general, and OLSSI specific activities. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OLSSI>

Other works by Neil Gaiman include: the comic book series The Sandman and novels Stardust, American Gods, Good Omens, Coraline, and The Graveyard Book.

Neverwhere is on audible, read by the author himself. There is also a BBC Radio full cast dramatization on audible (narrated by [Christopher Lee](#), [James McAvoy](#), [Natalie Dormer](#), [David Harewood](#), [Sophie Okonedo](#), [Benedict Cumberbatch](#), [Anthony Head](#))

And a TV Miniseries: <https://www.amazon.com/Neverwhere-Season-1/dp/B00418RF50> back in 1996.

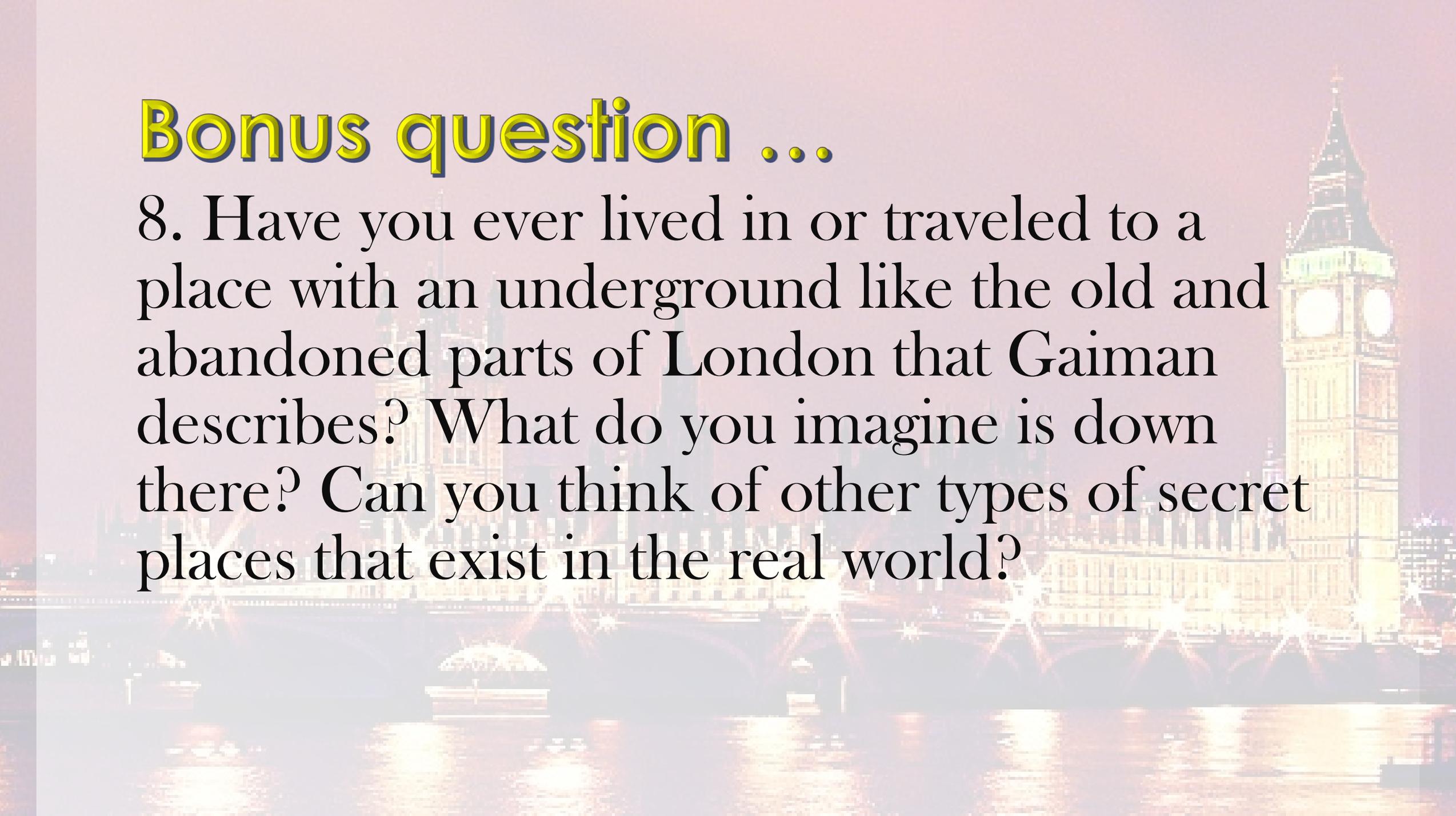
Book club questions were borrowed from:
<https://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/neverwhere/guide>

Bonus question ...

7. Discuss the references to mythology in **NEVERWHERE**. How do the descent into the underworld, the series of trials, the labyrinth and beast and the return home connect Richard Mayhew to Odysseus and other mythological heroes?

Bonus question ...

8. Have you ever lived in or traveled to a place with an underground like the old and abandoned parts of London that Gaiman describes? What do you imagine is down there? Can you think of other types of secret places that exist in the real world?



Bonus question ...

9. The home of the Portico family is described as an “associative house” and is made up of parts of other buildings and distant spaces. If you were to construct such a house, what buildings and spaces would you use?

Bonus question ...

10. In this edition of the book, a new story about the Marquis de Carabas, “How the Marquis Got His Coat Back,” is included. Does this glimpse at the Marquis satisfy your curiosity about the character or make him all the more mysterious? How does his desire to get his coat back mirror Richard's desire to get his normal life back?

Bonus question ...

11. What do you imagine Richard's life in the Underside will be like? What does he give up, and what does he gain in his choice to return?

Bonus question ...

12. How do you define “fantasy” in literature? What about “horror” or “adventure”? Does this book fit neatly into any of your definitions? How so?