

SECTION A: 40 marks

Read carefully the passage below. Then answer **all** the questions which follow it.

The Waste Land

The moment that the bus moved on Mike knew he was in danger. In the dim light he saw the figures of the young men waiting under the tree. It was too late to run after the bus; it went down the dark street like an island of safety in a sea of perils. His mouth was already dry, his heart was pounding in his chest, and something within him was crying out in protest against the coming event.

His wages were in his purse; he could feel them weighing heavily against his thigh. That was what they wanted from him. Nothing else mattered to them. His wife could be made a widow, his children made fatherless. Nothing counted against that. Mercy was an unknown word to them.

While he stood there uncertainly Mike heard the young men walking towards him, not only from the side where he had seen them, but from the other also. They did not speak, their intention was unspeakable. The sound of their feet came on the wind to him. They had chosen the place well, for behind him was the high wall of the convent, and the barred door that would not open before a man was dead. On the other side of the road was the waste land, full of wire and iron and the bodies of old cars. It was his only hope, and he moved towards it; as he did so he knew from the whistle that the young men were there too.

His fear was great and instant, and the smell of it went from his body to his nostrils. At that moment one of them spoke, giving directions. He felt so trapped that he was filled suddenly with strength and anger, and he ran towards the waste land swinging his heavy stick. In the darkness the figure of a man loomed up at him, and he swung the stick at him, and heard him give a cry of pain. Then he plunged blindly into the wilderness of wire and iron and the bodies of old cars.

Something caught him by the leg, and he brought his stick crashing down on it, but it was not a man, only some knife-edged piece of iron. He was sobbing and out of breath, but he pushed on into the waste, while behind him they pushed on also, knocking against the old iron bodies and kicking against tins and buckets. He fell into a tangle of wire; it was barbed, and tore at his clothes and flesh. Then it held him, so that it seemed to him that death must be near, and having no other hope, he cried out, "Help me, help me!" in what should have been a great voice but was voiceless and gasping. He tore at the wire, and it tore at him too, ripping his face and his hands.

Then suddenly Mike was free. He saw the bus returning, and in its headlights he could see the shape of a man close to him. He was facing death and for a moment he was filled with the injustice of life: why should he have to die like this when he had always been hardworking and honest? He lifted the heavy stick and brought it down on the head of his pursuer, so that the man crumpled to the ground, moaning and groaning as the life drained out of him.

Mike turned and began to run wildly again, but in the darkness ran into the side of an old lorry which sent him reeling. He lay there for a moment expecting the blow that would kill him, but even then his wits came back to him, and he turned over twice and rolled under the lorry. His stomach seemed to be coming into his mouth, and his lips could taste sweat and blood. His heart thumped wildly in his chest, and seemed to lift his whole body each time that it beat. He tried to calm it down, thinking it might be heard, and tried to control the noise of his gasping breath, but he could not do either of these things.

Suddenly against the dark sky he saw two of the young men. He thought they must hear him, but they themselves were gasping like drowned men, and their speech came in fits and starts.

Then one of them said, "Can you hear him?"

They were silent except for their gasping, listening. And he listened also, but could hear nothing but his own exhausted heart.

"I heard a man ... running ... on the road," said one. "He's got away ... let's go."

Then some more of the young men came up, gasping and cursing.

"Freddy," said one, "your father's got away."

But there was no reply.

"Where's Freddy?" one asked.

Another man said, "Quiet!" Then he called in a loud voice, "Freddy."

But still there was no reply.

"Let's go," he said.

They moved off slowly and carefully. Then one of them spotted the body and stopped.

"Look, he's here," he said. "It's Freddy's father."

He knelt down on the ground, and then started cursing.

"There's no money here," he said.

One of the young men lit a match and, in the small light of it, Mike saw him fall back in horror.

"It's not his father. It's Freddy!" one said. "He's dead!"

Then the one who had said "Quiet" spoke again.

"Lift him up," he said. "Put him under the lorry."

Under the lorry, Mike heard them struggling with the body of the dead young man, and he turned once, twice, deeper into his hiding-place. The young men lifted the body and swung it under the lorry so that it touched him. Then he heard them moving away, not speaking, slowly and quietly, making an occasional sound.

He turned on his side, so that he would not need to touch the body of his son. He buried his face in his arms and sobbed. Then he lifted himself from under the lorry, and went heavily out of the waste land.

(from 'Tales of a Troubled Land' by Alan Paton)

Look again at lines 1-15.

A1. List **five** things that show Mike's fear.

(5)

Look again at lines 1-15

A2. *What impression do we get of the men in this section?*

(5)

Look again at lines 16-28.

A3. How does the writer make this part of the story tense and exciting?

(10)

You should write about:

- what happens to build tension and excitement
- the writer's use of language to create tension and excitement
- the effect on the reader.

Look again at lines 29-40

A3. How does the writer show Mike's feelings in these lines?

(10)

You should write about:

- what Mike does
- the writer's use of language to show Mike's feelings
- the effects on the reader.

Look again at lines 41-69

A4. Evaluate what happens in these lines.

(10)

You should write about:

- what happens in these lines
- the writer's use of language in these lines
- the effects on the reader.

You must refer to the text to support your answer.