Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #4

*Read and annotate the text thoroughly:*

THE ALARM WENT OFF at five-thirty and Robert Neville reached out a numbed arm in the

morning gloom and pushed in the stop.

He reached for his cigarettes and lit one, then sat up. After a few moments he got up and

walked into the dark living room and opened the peephole door.

Outside, on the lawn, the dark figures stood like silent soldiers on duty. As he watched, some

of them started moving away, and he heard them muttering discontentedly among themselves.

Another night was ended.

He went back to the bedroom, switched on the light, and dressed. As he was pulling on his

shirt, he heard Ben Cortman cry out, “Come out, Neville!”

And that was all. After that, they all went away weaker, he knew, than when they had come.

Unless they had attacked one of their own. They did that often. There was no union among

them. Their need was their only motivation.

After dressing, Neville sat down on his bed with a grunt and penciled his list for the day:

Lathe at Sears

Water

Check generator

Doweling (?)

Usual

Breakfast was hasty: a glass of orange juice, a slice of toast, and two cups of coffee. He

finished it quickly, wishing he had the patience to eat slowly.

After breakfast he threw the paper plate and cup into the trash box and brushed his teeth. At

least I have one good habit, he consoled himself.

The first thing he did when he went outside was look at the sky. It was clear, virtually

cloudless. He could go, out today. Good.

As he crossed the porch, his shoe kicked some pieces of the mirror. Well, the damn thing

broke just as I thought it would, he thought. He’d clean it up later.

One of the bodies was sprawled on the sidewalk; the other one was half concealed in the

shrubbery. They were both women. They were almost always women.

He unlocked the garage door and backed his Willys station wagon into the early-morning

crispness. Then he got out and pulled down the back gate. He put on heavy gloves and walked

over to the woman on the sidewalk.

There was certainly nothing attractive about them in the daylight, he thought, as he dragged

them across the lawn and threw them up on the canvas tarpaulin. There wasn’t a drop left in

them; both women were the color of fish out of water. He raised the gate and fastened it.

He went around the lawn then, picking up stones and bricks and putting them into a cloth

sack. He put the sack in the station wagon and then took off his gloves. He went inside the

house, washed his hands, and made lunch: two sandwiches, a few cookies, and a thermos of hot coffee.

When that was done, he went into the bedroom and got his bag of stakes. He slung this across

his back and buckled on the holster that held his mallet. Then he went out of the house, locking

the front door behind him.

He wouldn’t bother searching for Ben Cortman that morning; there were too many other

things to do. For a second, he thought about the soundproofing job he’d resolved to do on the

house. Well, the hell with it, he thought. I’ll do it tomorrow or some cloudy day.

He got into the station wagon and checked his list. “Lathe at Sears”; that was first. After he

dumped the bodies, of course.

He started the car and backed quickly into the street and headed for Compton Boulevard.

There he turned right and headed east. On both sides of him the houses stood silent, and against

the curbs cars were parked, empty and dead.

Robert Neville’s eyes shifted down for a moment to the fuel gauge. There was still a half

tank, but he might as well stop on Western Avenue and fill it. There was no point in using any

of the gasoline stored in the garage until be had to.

He pulled into the silent station and braked. He got a barrel of gasoline and siphoned it into

his tank until the pale amber fluid came gushing out of the tank opening and ran down onto the

cement.

He checked the oil, water, battery water, and tires. Everything was in good condition. It

usually was, because he took special care of the car. If it ever broke down so that he couldn’t get

back to the house by sunset…

Well, there was no point in even worrying about that. If it ever happened, that was the end.

Now he continued up Compton Boulevard past the tall oil derricks, through Compton,

through all the silent streets. There was no one to be seen anywhere.

But Robert Neville knew where they were.

The fire was always burning. As the car drew closer, he pulled on his gloves and gas mask

and watched through the eyepieces the sooty pall of smoke hovering above the earth. The entire

field had been excavated into one gigantic pit, that was in June 1975.

Neville parked the car and jumped out, anxious to get the job over with quickly. Throwing

the catch and jerking. down the rear gate, he pulled out one of the bodies and dragged it to the

edge of the pit. There he stood it on its feet and shoved.

The body bumped and rolled down the steep incline until it settled on the great pile of

smoldering ashes at the bottom.

Robert Neville drew in harsh breaths as he hurried back to the station wagon. He always felt

as though he were strangling when he was here, even though he had the gas mask on.

Now he dragged the second body to the brink of the pit and pushed it over. Then, after

tossing the sack, of rocks down, he hurried back to the car and sped away.

After he’d driven a half mile, he skinned off the mask and gloves and tossed them into the

back. His mouth opened and he drew in deep lungfuls of fresh air. He took the flask from the

glove compartment and took a long drink of burning whisky. Then he lit a cigarette and inhaled

deeply. Sometimes he had to go to the burning pit every day for weeks at a time, and it always

made him sick.

Somewhere down there was Kathy.

On the way to Inglewood he stopped at a market to get some bottled water. As he entered the

silent store, the smell of rotted food filled his nostrils. Quickly he pushed a metal wagon up and

down the silent, dust-thick aisles, the heavy smell of decay setting his teeth on edge, making him

breathe through his mouth.

He found the water bottles in back, and also found a door opening on a flight of stairs. After

putting all the bottles into the wagon, he went up the stairs. The owner of the market might be

up there; he might as well get started.

There were two of them. In the living room, lying on a couch, was a woman about thirty

years old, wearing a red housecoat. Her chest rose and fell slowly as she lay there, eyes closed,

her hands clasped over her stomach.

Robert Neville’s hands fumbled on the stake and mallet. It was always hard, when they were

alive; especially with women. He could feel that senseless demand returning again, tightening

his muscles. He forced it down. It was insane, there was no rational argument for it.

She made no sound except for a sudden, hoarse intake of breath. As he walked into the

bedroom, he could hear a sound like the sound of water running. Well, what else can I do? he

asked himself, for he still had to convince himself he was doing the right thing.

He stood in the bedroom doorway, staring at the small bed by the window, his throat moving,

breath shuddering in his chest. Then, driven on, he walked to the side of the bed and looked

down at her.

Why do they all look like Kathy to me? he thought, drawing out the second stake with

shaking hands.

1. Based on what we have read so far, who do you think Kathy is and what happened to her? Mark specific lines/passages to support your answer.

2. Why do you think there is such explicit detail to Robert Neville’s meals? Back up your answer with lines/passages from the text.

3. What is the burning pit? What is its purpose?

4. Who/What does Robert Neville kill with the stakes in the market? Be specific. What effect does it have on him? Mark specific lines/passages.