**The Light at the End of the Tunnel**

1 Watching people stand in an endless queue for the train station brought back unhappy memories for me. Five years ago I too was one of those mindless robots travelling back and forward, back and forward to an office where I would spend 5 days repeatedly doing something I hated. We would all be dressed in the same uniform: sombre grey suit, tired rain jacket, battered briefcase and shoes covered in dirt. We would all swarm on to the train, cram ourselves in together and stand motionless in agony waiting as our train staggers through tunnel after tunnel.

7 Offices in Glasgow were not cool or stylish. They are generally small, dark, claustrophobic places where too many people are packed in. The ceilings were high and gorgeous but everything at eye level and below was a disaster. Mountains of paper stood on each desk, coffee cups were littered around the room creating mould civilisations and disgruntled workers stared at clocks waiting until they could sneak out.

11 However, this suffering was not something that a rational person could continue and after years of misery working in an office, I broke myself free and bravely took the job of my dreams.

13 At the end of my garden is a marvellous, spacious, specially built shed where I spend 6 hours a day. I am now a fully employed writer and, while I don’t make a fortune, I love what I do. Words gently spill from my brain and fill my page. Ideas dance through my mind and make their way into my stories. I make my own hours and I am my own boss. I am entirely independent and complete what I want when I want.

17 I still write first drafts on to paper. I feel this is more authentic and natural. When young we are taught to write with a pencil and paper and that training has always stuck with me. I also enjoy scoring out mistakes and fixing them. There is a lovely feeling that comes with seeing your attempts on the page and your subsequent improvement. A computer can’t offer that. When you hit that delete button it is as if you never even tried – it is gone and lost forever.

21 That is why today, as I wait on the train to take me to the countryside, away from the hustle and bustle of the city, I feel sadness for those heading to work with darkness drawn on their faces. I also think about how lucky I am to have followed my heart and followed my dreams by leaving that life behind. I would urge you to do the same. If you are stuck in a rut, doing the same thing repeatedly and you want to break out, there is often a light at the end of the tunnel.

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| 1 | **Read lines 1 – 6.** How does the writer’s language (word choice, sentence structure and imagery) highlight his dislike for his old commute to work? | 4 |
| 2 | **Read lines 7 – 10.** In your own words describe offices in Glasgow | 4 |
| 3 | What is the function of lines 11 -12? | 2 |
| 4 | **Read lines 13 – 16.** How does the writer’s language (word choice, sentence structure and imagery) highlight his love of writing? | 3 |
| 5 | **Read lines 17 – 20.** In your own words explain why the writer does not use a computer to write. | 3 |
| 6 | **Read lines 21 – 25**. How effective do you find the final paragraph as a conclusion to the article? | 2 |

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