Title: Nineteen eighty-four

Author: George Orwell (pseudonym of Eric Blair) (1903-1950)

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PART ONE

Chapter 1

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.

Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the

vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions,

though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering

along with him.

The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a

coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall.

It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a

man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome

features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even

at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric

current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive

in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston,

who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went

slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the

lift-shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was

one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about

when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.

Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had

something to do with the production of pig-iron. The voice came from an

oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface

of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank

somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument

(the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of

shutting it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail

figure, the meagreness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls

which were the uniform of the party. His hair was very fair, his face

naturally sanguine, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor

blades and the cold of the winter that had just ended.

Outside, even through the shut window-pane, the world looked cold. Down in

the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into

spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there

seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered

everywhere. The black-moustachio'd face gazed down from every commanding

corner. There was one on the house-front immediately opposite. BIG BROTHER

IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said, while the dark eyes looked deep into

Winston's own. Down at street level another poster, torn at one corner,

flapped fitfully in the wind, alternately covering and uncovering the

single word INGSOC. In the far distance a helicopter skimmed down between

the roofs, hovered for an instant like a bluebottle, and darted away again

with a curving flight. It was the police patrol, snooping into people's

windows. The patrols did not matter, however. Only the Thought Police

mattered.

Behind Winston's back the voice from the telescreen was still babbling away

about pig-iron and the overfulfilment of the Ninth Three-Year Plan. The

telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston

made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it,

moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal

plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard. There was of course

no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How

often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual

wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all

the time. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted

to. You had to live--did live, from habit that became instinct--in the

assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in

darkness, every movement scrutinized.

Winston kept his back turned to the telescreen. It was safer; though, as he

well knew, even a back can be revealing. A kilometre away the Ministry of

Truth, his place of work, towered vast and white above the grimy landscape.

This, he thought with a sort of vague distaste--this was London, chief

city of Airstrip One, itself the third most populous of the provinces of

Oceania. He tried to squeeze out some childhood memory that should tell him

whether London had always been quite like this. Were there always these

vistas of rotting nineteenth-century houses, their sides shored up with

baulks of timber, their windows patched with cardboard and their roofs

with corrugated iron, their crazy garden walls sagging in all directions?

And the bombed sites where the plaster dust swirled in the air and the

willow-herb straggled over the heaps of rubble; and the places where the

bombs had cleared a larger patch and there had sprung up sordid colonies

of wooden dwellings like chicken-houses? But it was no use, he could not

remember: nothing remained of his childhood except a series of bright-lit

tableaux occurring against no background and mostly unintelligible.

The Ministry of Truth--Minitrue, in Newspeak [Newspeak was the official

language of Oceania. For an account of its structure and etymology see

Appendix.]--was startlingly different from any other object in sight. It

was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring

up, terrace after terrace, 300 metres into the air. From where Winston

stood it was just possible to read, picked out on its white face in

elegant lettering, the three slogans of the Party:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

The Ministry of Truth contained, it was said, three thousand rooms above

ground level, and corresponding ramifications below. Scattered about London

there were just three other buildings of similar appearance and size. So

completely did they dwarf the surrounding architecture that from the roof

of Victory Mansions you could see all four of them simultaneously. They

were the homes of the four Ministries between which the entire apparatus

of government was divided. The Ministry of Truth, which concerned itself

with news, entertainment, education, and the fine arts. The Ministry of

Peace, which concerned itself with war. The Ministry of Love, which

maintained law and order. And the Ministry of Plenty, which was responsible

for economic affairs. Their names, in Newspeak: Minitrue, Minipax, Miniluv,

and Miniplenty.

The Ministry of Love was the really frightening one. There were no windows

in it at all. Winston had never been inside the Ministry of Love, nor

within half a kilometre of it. It was a place impossible to enter except

on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of

barbed-wire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests. Even

the streets leading up to its outer barriers were roamed by gorilla-faced

guards in black uniforms, armed with jointed truncheons.

Winston turned round abruptly. He had set his features into the

expression of quiet optimism which it was advisable to wear when facing

the telescreen. He crossed the room into the tiny kitchen. By leaving

the Ministry at this time of day he had sacrificed his lunch in the

canteen, and he was aware that there was no food in the kitchen except

a hunk of dark-coloured bread which had got to be saved for tomorrow's

breakfast. He took down from the shelf a bottle of colourless liquid

with a plain white label marked VICTORY GIN. It gave off a sickly, oily

smell, as of Chinese rice-spirit. Winston poured out nearly a teacupful,

nerved himself for a shock, and gulped it down like a dose of medicine.

Instantly his face turned scarlet and the water ran out of his eyes. The

stuff was like nitric acid, and moreover, in swallowing it one had the

sensation of being hit on the back of the head with a rubber club. The

next moment, however, the burning in his belly died down and the world

began to look more cheerful. He took a cigarette from a crumpled packet

marked VICTORY CIGARETTES and incautiously held it upright, whereupon the

tobacco fell out on to the floor. With the next he was more successful.

He went back to the living-room and sat down at a small table that stood

to the left of the telescreen. From the table drawer he took out a

penholder, a bottle of ink, and a thick, quarto-sized blank book with a

red back and a marbled cover.

For some reason the telescreen in the living-room was in an unusual

position. Instead of being placed, as was normal, in the end wall, where

it could command the whole room, it was in the longer wall, opposite the

window. To one side of it there was a shallow alcove in which Winston

was now sitting, and which, when the flats were built, had probably been

intended to hold bookshelves. By sitting in the alcove, and keeping well

back, Winston was able to remain outside the range of the telescreen, so

far as sight went. He could be heard, of course, but so long as he stayed

in his present position he could not be seen. It was partly the unusual

geography of the room that had suggested to him the thing that he was now

about to do.

But it had also been suggested by the book that he had just taken out of

the drawer. It was a peculiarly beautiful book. Its smooth creamy paper,

a little yellowed by age, was of a kind that had not been manufactured for

at least forty years past. He could guess, however, that the book was much

older than that. He had seen it lying in the window of a frowsy little

junk-shop in a slummy quarter of the town (just what quarter he did not

now remember) and had been stricken immediately by an overwhelming desire

to possess it. Party members were supposed not to go into ordinary shops

('dealing on the free market', it was called), but the rule was not

strictly kept, because there were various things, such as shoelaces and

razor blades, which it was impossible to get hold of in any other way. He

had given a quick glance up and down the street and then had slipped inside

and bought the book for two dollars fifty. At the time he was not conscious

of wanting it for any particular purpose. He had carried it guiltily home

in his briefcase. Even with nothing written in it, it was a compromising

possession.

The thing that he was about to do was to open a diary. This was not illegal

(nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws), but if detected

it was reasonably certain that it would be punished by death, or at least

by twenty-five years in a forced-labour camp. Winston fitted a nib into

the penholder and sucked it to get the grease off. The pen was an archaic

instrument, seldom used even for signatures, and he had procured one,

furtively and with some difficulty, simply because of a feeling that the

beautiful creamy paper deserved to be written on with a real nib instead

of being scratched with an ink-pencil. Actually he was not used to writing

by hand. Apart from very short notes, it was usual to dictate everything

into the speak-write which was of course impossible for his present

purpose. He dipped the pen into the ink and then faltered for just a

second. A tremor had gone through his bowels. To mark the paper was the

decisive act. In small clumsy letters he wrote:

April 4th, 1984.

He sat back. A sense of complete helplessness had descended upon him. To

begin with, he did not know with any certainty that this was 1984. It

must be round about that date, since he was fairly sure that his age was

thirty-nine, and he believed that he had been born in 1944 or 1945; but

it was never possible nowadays to pin down any date within a year or two.

For whom, it suddenly occurred to him to wonder, was he writing this diary?

For the future, for the unborn. His mind hovered for a moment round the

doubtful date on the page, and then fetched up with a bump against the

Newspeak word DOUBLETHINK. For the first time the magnitude of what he had

undertaken came home to him. How could you communicate with the future? It

was of its nature impossible. Either the future would resemble the present,

in which case it would not listen to him: or it would be different from it,

and his predicament would be meaningless.

For some time he sat gazing stupidly at the paper. The telescreen had

changed over to strident military music. It was curious that he seemed

not merely to have lost the power of expressing himself, but even to have

forgotten what it was that he had originally intended to say. For weeks

past he had been making ready for this moment, and it had never crossed

his mind that anything would be needed except courage. The actual writing

would be easy. All he had to do was to transfer to paper the interminable

restless monologue that had been running inside his head, literally for

years. At this moment, however, even the monologue had dried up. Moreover

his varicose ulcer had begun itching unbearably. He dared not scratch it,

because if he did so it always became inflamed. The seconds were ticking

by. He was conscious of nothing except the blankness of the page in front

of him, the itching of the skin above his ankle, the blaring of the music,

and a slight booziness caused by the gin.

Suddenly he began writing in sheer panic, only imperfectly aware of what

he was setting down. His small but childish handwriting straggled up and

down the page, shedding first its capital letters and finally even its

full stops:

April 4th, 1984. Last night to the flicks. All war films. One very good

one of a ship full of refugees being bombed somewhere in the Mediterranean.

Audience much amused by shots of a great huge fat man trying to swim away

with a helicopter after him, first you saw him wallowing along in the

water like a porpoise, then you saw him through the helicopters gunsights,

then he was full of holes and the sea round him turned pink and he sank as

suddenly as though the holes had let in the water, audience shouting with

laughter when he sank. then you saw a lifeboat full of children with a

helicopter hovering over it. there was a middle-aged woman might have been

a jewess sitting up in the bow with a little boy about three years old in

her arms. little boy screaming with fright and hiding his head between her

breasts as if he was trying to burrow right into her and the woman putting

her arms round him and comforting him although she was blue with fright

herself, all the time covering him up as much as possible as if she thought

her arms could keep the bullets off him. then the helicopter planted a 20

kilo bomb in among them terrific flash and the boat went all to matchwood.

then there was a wonderful shot of a child's arm going up up up right up

into the air a helicopter with a camera in its nose must have followed it

up and there was a lot of applause from the party seats but a woman down in

the prole part of the house suddenly started kicking up a fuss and shouting

they didnt oughter of showed it not in front of kids they didnt it aint

right not in front of kids it aint until the police turned her turned her

out i dont suppose anything happened to her nobody cares what the proles

say typical prole reaction they never----

Winston stopped writing, partly because he was suffering from cramp. He did

not know what had made him pour out this stream of rubbish. But the curious

thing was that while he was doing so a totally different memory had

clarified itself in his mind, to the point where he almost felt equal to

writing it down. It was, he now realized, because of this other incident

that he had suddenly decided to come home and begin the diary today.

It had happened that morning at the Ministry, if anything so nebulous could

be said to happen.

It was nearly eleven hundred, and in the Records Department, where Winston

worked, they were dragging the chairs out of the cubicles and grouping them

in the centre of the hall opposite the big telescreen, in preparation for

the Two Minutes Hate. Winston was just taking his place in one of the

middle rows when two people whom he knew by sight, but had never spoken

to, came unexpectedly into the room. One of them was a girl whom he often

passed in the corridors. He did not know her name, but he knew that she

worked in the Fiction Department. Presumably--since he had sometimes seen

her with oily hands and carrying a spanner--she had some mechanical job

on one of the novel-writing machines. She was a bold-looking girl, of

about twenty-seven, with thick hair, a freckled face, and swift, athletic

movements. A narrow scarlet sash, emblem of the Junior Anti-Sex League, was

wound several times round the waist of her overalls, just tightly enough to

bring out the shapeliness of her hips. Winston had disliked her from the

very first moment of seeing her. He knew the reason. It was because of the

atmosphere of hockey-fields and cold baths and community hikes and general

clean-mindedness which she managed to carry about with her. He disliked

nearly all women, and especially the young and pretty ones. It was always

the women, and above all the young ones, who were the most bigoted

adherents of the Party, the swallowers of slogans, the amateur spies and

nosers-out of unorthodoxy. But this particular girl gave him the impression

of being more dangerous than most. Once when they passed in the corridor

she gave him a quick sidelong glance which seemed to pierce right into

him and for a moment had filled him with black terror. The idea had even

crossed his mind that she might be an agent of the Thought Police. That,

it was true, was very unlikely. Still, he continued to feel a peculiar

uneasiness, which had fear mixed up in it as well as hostility, whenever

she was anywhere near him.

The other person was a man named O'Brien, a member of the Inner Party and

holder of some post so important and remote that Winston had only a dim

idea of its nature. A momentary hush passed over the group of people

round the chairs as they saw the black overalls of an Inner Party member

approaching. O'Brien was a large, burly man with a thick neck and a coarse,

humorous, brutal face. In spite of his formidable appearance he had a

certain charm of manner. He had a trick of resettling his spectacles on

his nose which was curiously disarming--in some indefinable way, curiously

civilized. It was a gesture which, if anyone had still thought in such

terms, might have recalled an eighteenth-century nobleman offering his

snuffbox. Winston had seen O'Brien perhaps a dozen times in almost as many

years. He felt deeply drawn to him, and not solely because he was intrigued

by the contrast between O'Brien's urbane manner and his prize-fighter's

physique. Much more it was because of a secretly held belief--or perhaps

not even a belief, merely a hope--that O'Brien's political orthodoxy was

not perfect. Something in his face suggested it irresistibly. And again,

perhaps it was not even unorthodoxy that was written in his face, but

simply intelligence. But at any rate he had the appearance of being a

person that you could talk to if somehow you could cheat the telescreen and

get him alone. Winston had never made the smallest effort to verify this

guess: indeed, there was no way of doing so. At this moment O'Brien glanced

at his wrist-watch, saw that it was nearly eleven hundred, and evidently

decided to stay in the Records Department until the Two Minutes Hate was

over. He took a chair in the same row as Winston, a couple of places away.

A small, sandy-haired woman who worked in the next cubicle to Winston was

between them. The girl with dark hair was sitting immediately behind.

The next moment a hideous, grinding screech, as of some monstrous machine

running without oil, burst from the big telescreen at the end of the room.

It was a noise that set one's teeth on edge and bristled the hair at the

back of one's neck. The Hate had started.

As usual, the face of Emmanuel Goldstein, the Enemy of the People, had

flashed on to the screen. There were hisses here and there among the

audience. The little sandy-haired woman gave a squeak of mingled fear and

disgust. Goldstein was the renegade and backslider who once, long ago

(how long ago, nobody quite remembered), had been one of the leading

figures of the Party, almost on a level with Big Brother himself, and

then had engaged in counter-revolutionary activities, had been condemned

to death, and had mysteriously escaped and disappeared. The programmes

of the Two Minutes Hate varied from day to day, but there was none in

which Goldstein was not the principal figure. He was the primal traitor,

the earliest defiler of the Party's purity. All subsequent crimes against

the Party, all treacheries, acts of sabotage, heresies, deviations,

sprang directly out of his teaching. Somewhere or other he was still

alive and hatching his conspiracies: perhaps somewhere beyond the sea,

under the protection of his foreign paymasters, perhaps even--so it was

occasionally rumoured--in some hiding-place in Oceania itself.

Winston's diaphragm was constricted. He could never see the face of

Goldstein without a painful mixture of emotions. It was a lean Jewish face,

with a great fuzzy aureole of white hair and a small goatee beard--a

clever face, and yet somehow inherently despicable, with a kind of senile

silliness in the long thin nose, near the end of which a pair of spectacles

was perched. It resembled the face of a sheep, and the voice, too, had a

sheep-like quality. Goldstein was delivering his usual venomous attack

upon the doctrines of the Party--an attack so exaggerated and perverse that

a child should have been able to see through it, and yet just plausible

enough to fill one with an alarmed feeling that other people, less

level-headed than oneself, might be taken in by it. He was abusing Big

Brother, he was denouncing the dictatorship of the Party, he was demanding

the immediate conclusion of peace with Eurasia, he was advocating freedom

of speech, freedom of the Press, freedom of assembly, freedom of thought,

he was crying hysterically that the revolution had been betrayed--and all

this in rapid polysyllabic speech which was a sort of parody of the

habitual style of the orators of the Party, and even contained Newspeak

words: more Newspeak words, indeed, than any Party member would normally

use in real life. And all the while, lest one should be in any doubt as to

the reality which Goldstein's specious claptrap covered, behind his head on

the telescreen there marched the endless columns of the Eurasian army--row

after row of solid-looking men with expressionless Asiatic faces, who swam

up to the surface of the screen and vanished, to be replaced by others

exactly similar. The dull rhythmic tramp of the soldiers' boots formed the

background to Goldstein's bleating voice.

Before the Hate had proceeded for thirty seconds, uncontrollable

exclamations of rage were breaking out from half the people in the room.

The self-satisfied sheep-like face on the screen, and the terrifying power

of the Eurasian army behind it, were too much to be borne: besides,

the sight or even the thought of Goldstein produced fear and anger

automatically. He was an object of hatred more constant than either Eurasia

or Eastasia, since when Oceania was at war with one of these Powers it was

generally at peace with the other. But what was strange was that although

Goldstein was hated and despised by everybody, although every day and a

thousand times a day, on platforms, on the telescreen, in newspapers,

in books, his theories were refuted, smashed, ridiculed, held up to the

general gaze for the pitiful rubbish that they were--in spite of all this,

his influence never seemed to grow less. Always there were fresh dupes

waiting to be seduced by him. A day never passed when spies and saboteurs

acting under his directions were not unmasked by the Thought Police.

He was the commander of a vast shadowy army, an underground network of

conspirators dedicated to the overthrow of the State. The Brotherhood, its

name was supposed to be. There were also whispered stories of a terrible

book, a compendium of all the heresies, of which Goldstein was the author

and which circulated clandestinely here and there. It was a book without a

title. People referred to it, if at all, simply as THE BOOK. But one knew

of such things only through vague rumours. Neither the Brotherhood nor

THE BOOK was a subject that any ordinary Party member would mention if

there was a way of avoiding it.

In its second minute the Hate rose to a frenzy. People were leaping up and

down in their places and shouting at the tops of their voices in an effort

to drown the maddening bleating voice that came from the screen. The little

sandy-haired woman had turned bright pink, and her mouth was opening and

shutting like that of a landed fish. Even O'Brien's heavy face was flushed.

He was sitting very straight in his chair, his powerful chest swelling and

quivering as though he were standing up to the assault of a wave. The

dark-haired girl behind Winston had begun crying out 'Swine! Swine! Swine!'

and suddenly she picked up a heavy Newspeak dictionary and flung it at the

screen. It struck Goldstein's nose and bounced off; the voice continued

inexorably. In a lucid moment Winston found that he was shouting with the

others and kicking his heel violently against the rung of his chair. The

horrible thing about the Two Minutes Hate was not that one was obliged to

act a part, but, on the contrary, that it was impossible to avoid joining

in. Within thirty seconds any pretence was always unnecessary. A hideous

ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness, a desire to kill, to torture, to smash

faces in with a sledge-hammer, seemed to flow through the whole group of

people like an electric current, turning one even against one's will into

a grimacing, screaming lunatic. And yet the rage that one felt was an

abstract, undirected emotion which could be switched from one object to

another like the flame of a blowlamp. Thus, at one moment Winston's hatred

was not turned against Goldstein at all, but, on the contrary, against

Big Brother, the Party, and the Thought Police; and at such moments his

heart went out to the lonely, derided heretic on the screen, sole guardian

of truth and sanity in a world of lies. And yet the very next instant he

was at one with the people about him, and all that was said of Goldstein

seemed to him to be true. At those moments his secret loathing of Big

Brother changed into adoration, and Big Brother seemed to tower up, an

invincible, fearless protector, standing like a rock against the hordes

of Asia, and Goldstein, in spite of his isolation, his helplessness, and

the doubt that hung about his very existence, seemed like some sinister

enchanter, capable by the mere power of his voice of wrecking the structure

of civilization.

It was even possible, at moments, to switch one's hatred this way or that

by a voluntary act. Suddenly, by the sort of violent effort with which one

wrenches one's head away from the pillow in a nightmare, Winston succeeded

in transferring his hatred from the face on the screen to the dark-haired

girl behind him. Vivid, beautiful hallucinations flashed through his mind.

He would flog her to death with a rubber truncheon. He would tie her naked

to a stake and shoot her full of arrows like Saint Sebastian. He would

ravish her and cut her throat at the moment of climax. Better than before,

moreover, he realized WHY it was that he hated her. He hated her because

she was young and pretty and sexless, because he wanted to go to bed with

her and would never do so, because round her sweet supple waist, which

seemed to ask you to encircle it with your arm, there was only the odious

scarlet sash, aggressive symbol of chastity.

The Hate rose to its climax. The voice of Goldstein had become an actual

sheep's bleat, and for an instant the face changed into that of a sheep.

Then the sheep-face melted into the figure of a Eurasian soldier who seemed

to be advancing, huge and terrible, his sub-machine gun roaring, and

seeming to spring out of the surface of the screen, so that some of the

people in the front row actually flinched backwards in their seats. But

in the same moment, drawing a deep sigh of relief from everybody, the

hostile figure melted into the face of Big Brother, black-haired,

black-moustachio'd, full of power and mysterious calm, and so vast that

it almost filled up the screen. Nobody heard what Big Brother was saying.

It was merely a few words of encouragement, the sort of words that are

uttered in the din of battle, not distinguishable individually but

restoring confidence by the fact of being spoken. Then the face of Big

Brother faded away again, and instead the three slogans of the Party stood

out in bold capitals:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

But the face of Big Brother seemed to persist for several seconds on the

screen, as though the impact that it had made on everyone's eyeballs was

too vivid to wear off immediately. The little sandy-haired woman had flung

herself forward over the back of the chair in front of her. With a

tremulous murmur that sounded like 'My Saviour!' she extended her arms

towards the screen. Then she buried her face in her hands. It was apparent

that she was uttering a prayer.

At this moment the entire group of people broke into a deep, slow,

rhythmical chant of 'B-B!...B-B!'--over and over again, very slowly, with a

long pause between the first 'B' and the second--a heavy, murmurous sound,

somehow curiously savage, in the background of which one seemed to hear the

stamp of naked feet and the throbbing of tom-toms. For perhaps as much as

thirty seconds they kept it up. It was a refrain that was often heard in

moments of overwhelming emotion. Partly it was a sort of hymn to the wisdom

and majesty of Big Brother, but still more it was an act of self-hypnosis,

a deliberate drowning of consciousness by means of rhythmic noise.

Winston's entrails seemed to grow cold. In the Two Minutes Hate he could

not help sharing in the general delirium, but this sub-human chanting of

'B-B!...B-B!' always filled him with horror. Of course he chanted with the

rest: it was impossible to do otherwise. To dissemble your feelings, to

control your face, to do what everyone else was doing, was an instinctive

reaction. But there was a space of a couple of seconds during which the

expression of his eyes might conceivably have betrayed him. And it was

exactly at this moment that the significant thing happened--if, indeed,

it did happen.

Momentarily he caught O'Brien's eye. O'Brien had stood up. He had taken

off his spectacles and was in the act of resettling them on his nose with

his characteristic gesture. But there was a fraction of a second when

their eyes met, and for as long as it took to happen Winston knew--yes, he

KNEW!--that O'Brien was thinking the same thing as himself. An unmistakable

message had passed. It was as though their two minds had opened and the

thoughts were flowing from one into the other through their eyes. 'I am

with you,' O'Brien seemed to be saying to him. 'I know precisely what you

are feeling. I know all about your contempt, your hatred, your disgust.

But don't worry, I am on your side!' And then the flash of intelligence

was gone, and O'Brien's face was as inscrutable as everybody else's.

That was all, and he was already uncertain whether it had happened. Such

incidents never had any sequel. All that they did was to keep alive in him

the belief, or hope, that others besides himself were the enemies of the

Party. Perhaps the rumours of vast underground conspiracies were true after

all--perhaps the Brotherhood really existed! It was impossible, in spite

of the endless arrests and confessions and executions, to be sure that the

Brotherhood was not simply a myth. Some days he believed in it, some days

not. There was no evidence, only fleeting glimpses that might mean anything

or nothing: snatches of overheard conversation, faint scribbles on lavatory

walls--once, even, when two strangers met, a small movement of the hand

which had looked as though it might be a signal of recognition. It was all

guesswork: very likely he had imagined everything. He had gone back to his

cubicle without looking at O'Brien again. The idea of following up their

momentary contact hardly crossed his mind. It would have been inconceivably

dangerous even if he had known how to set about doing it. For a second, two

seconds, they had exchanged an equivocal glance, and that was the end of

the story. But even that was a memorable event, in the locked loneliness in

which one had to live.

Winston roused himself and sat up straighter. He let out a belch. The gin

was rising from his stomach.

His eyes re-focused on the page. He discovered that while he sat helplessly

musing he had also been writing, as though by automatic action. And it was

no longer the same cramped, awkward handwriting as before. His pen had slid

voluptuously over the smooth paper, printing in large neat capitals--

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

over and over again, filling half a page.

He could not help feeling a twinge of panic. It was absurd, since the

writing of those particular words was not more dangerous than the initial

act of opening the diary, but for a moment he was tempted to tear out the

spoiled pages and abandon the enterprise altogether.

He did not do so, however, because he knew that it was useless. Whether he

wrote DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER, or whether he refrained from writing it, made

no difference. Whether he went on with the diary, or whether he did not go

on with it, made no difference. The Thought Police would get him just the

same. He had committed--would still have committed, even if he had never

set pen to paper--the essential crime that contained all others in itself.

Thoughtcrime, they called it. Thoughtcrime was not a thing that could be

concealed for ever. You might dodge successfully for a while, even for

years, but sooner or later they were bound to get you.

It was always at night--the arrests invariably happened at night. The

sudden jerk out of sleep, the rough hand shaking your shoulder, the lights

glaring in your eyes, the ring of hard faces round the bed. In the vast

majority of cases there was no trial, no report of the arrest. People

simply disappeared, always during the night. Your name was removed from the

registers, every record of everything you had ever done was wiped out, your

one-time existence was denied and then forgotten. You were abolished,

annihilated: VAPORIZED was the usual word.

For a moment he was seized by a kind of hysteria. He began writing in a

hurried untidy scrawl:

theyll shoot me i don't care theyll shoot me in the back of the neck i

dont care down with big brother they always shoot you in the back of the

neck i dont care down with big brother----

He sat back in his chair, slightly ashamed of himself, and laid down

the pen. The next moment he started violently. There was a knocking at

the door.

Already! He sat as still as a mouse, in the futile hope that whoever it was

might go away after a single attempt. But no, the knocking was repeated.

The worst thing of all would be to delay. His heart was thumping like a

drum, but his face, from long habit, was probably expressionless. He got

up and moved heavily towards the door.

Chapter 2

As he put his hand to the door-knob Winston saw that he had left the

diary open on the table. DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER was written all over it,

in letters almost big enough to be legible across the room. It was an

inconceivably stupid thing to have done. But, he realized, even in his

panic he had not wanted to smudge the creamy paper by shutting the book

while the ink was wet.

He drew in his breath and opened the door. Instantly a warm wave of relief

flowed through him. A colourless, crushed-looking woman, with wispy hair

and a lined face, was standing outside.

'Oh, comrade,' she began in a dreary, whining sort of voice, 'I thought I

heard you come in. Do you think you could come across and have a look at

our kitchen sink? It's got blocked up and----'

It was Mrs Parsons, the wife of a neighbour on the same floor. ('Mrs' was

a word somewhat discountenanced by the Party--you were supposed to call

everyone 'comrade'--but with some women one used it instinctively.) She was

a woman of about thirty, but looking much older. One had the impression

that there was dust in the creases of her face. Winston followed her down

the passage. These amateur repair jobs were an almost daily irritation.

Victory Mansions were old flats, built in 1930 or thereabouts, and were

falling to pieces. The plaster flaked constantly from ceilings and walls,

the pipes burst in every hard frost, the roof leaked whenever there was

snow, the heating system was usually running at half steam when it was not

closed down altogether from motives of economy. Repairs, except what you

could do for yourself, had to be sanctioned by remote committees which

were liable to hold up even the mending of a window-pane for two years.

'Of course it's only because Tom isn't home,' said Mrs Parsons vaguely.

The Parsons' flat was bigger than Winston's, and dingy in a different

way. Everything had a battered, trampled-on look, as though the

place had just been visited by some large violent animal. Games

impedimenta--hockey-sticks, boxing-gloves, a burst football, a pair of

sweaty shorts turned inside out--lay all over the floor, and on the

table there was a litter of dirty dishes and dog-eared exercise-books.

On the walls were scarlet banners of the Youth League and the Spies, and

a full-sized poster of Big Brother. There was the usual boiled-cabbage

smell, common to the whole building, but it was shot through by a sharper

reek of sweat, which--one knew this at the first sniff, though it was

hard to say how--was the sweat of some person not present at the moment.

In another room someone with a comb and a piece of toilet paper was

trying to keep tune with the military music which was still issuing

from the telescreen.

'It's the children,' said Mrs Parsons, casting a half-apprehensive glance

at the door. 'They haven't been out today. And of course----'

She had a habit of breaking off her sentences in the middle. The kitchen

sink was full nearly to the brim with filthy greenish water which smelt

worse than ever of cabbage. Winston knelt down and examined the angle-joint

of the pipe. He hated using his hands, and he hated bending down, which was

always liable to start him coughing. Mrs Parsons looked on helplessly.

'Of course if Tom was home he'd put it right in a moment,' she said.

'He loves anything like that. He's ever so good with his hands, Tom is.'

Parsons was Winston's fellow-employee at the Ministry of Truth. He was

a fattish but active man of paralysing stupidity, a mass of imbecile

enthusiasms--one of those completely unquestioning, devoted drudges on

whom, more even than on the Thought Police, the stability of the Party

depended. At thirty-five he had just been unwillingly evicted from the

Youth League, and before graduating into the Youth League he had managed to

stay on in the Spies for a year beyond the statutory age. At the Ministry

he was employed in some subordinate post for which intelligence was not

required, but on the other hand he was a leading figure on the Sports

Committee and all the other committees engaged in organizing community

hikes, spontaneous demonstrations, savings campaigns, and voluntary

activities generally. He would inform you with quiet pride, between whiffs

of his pipe, that he had put in an appearance at the Community Centre every

evening for the past four years. An overpowering smell of sweat, a sort of

unconscious testimony to the strenuousness of his life, followed him about

wherever he went, and even remained behind him after he had gone.

'Have you got a spanner?' said Winston, fiddling with the nut on the

angle-joint.

'A spanner,' said Mrs Parsons, immediately becoming invertebrate. 'I don't

know, I'm sure. Perhaps the children----'

There was a trampling of boots and another blast on the comb as the

children charged into the living-room. Mrs Parsons brought the spanner.

Winston let out the water and disgustedly removed the clot of human hair

that had blocked up the pipe. He cleaned his fingers as best he could in

the cold water from the tap and went back into the other room.

'Up with your hands!' yelled a savage voice.

A handsome, tough-looking boy of nine had popped up from behind the table

and was menacing him with a toy automatic pistol, while his small sister,

about two years younger, made the same gesture with a fragment of wood.

Both of them were dressed in the blue shorts, grey shirts, and red

neckerchiefs which were the uniform of the Spies. Winston raised his hands

above his head, but with an uneasy feeling, so vicious was the boy's

demeanour, that it was not altogether a game.

'You're a traitor!' yelled the boy. 'You're a thought-criminal! You're a

Eurasian spy! I'll shoot you, I'll vaporize you, I'll send you to the salt

mines!'

Suddenly they were both leaping round him, shouting 'Traitor!' and

'Thought-criminal!' the little girl imitating her brother in every

movement. It was somehow slightly frightening, like the gambolling of

tiger cubs which will soon grow up into man-eaters. There was a sort of

calculating ferocity in the boy's eye, a quite evident desire to hit or

kick Winston and a consciousness of being very nearly big enough to do so.

It was a good job it was not a real pistol he was holding, Winston thought.

Mrs Parsons' eyes flitted nervously from Winston to the children, and back

again. In the better light of the living-room he noticed with interest

that there actually was dust in the creases of her face.

'They do get so noisy,' she said. 'They're disappointed because they

couldn't go to see the hanging, that's what it is. I'm too busy to take

them. and Tom won't be back from work in time.'

'Why can't we go and see the hanging?' roared the boy in his huge voice.

'Want to see the hanging! Want to see the hanging!' chanted the little

girl, still capering round.

Some Eurasian prisoners, guilty of war crimes, were to be hanged in the

Park that evening, Winston remembered. This happened about once a month,

and was a popular spectacle. Children always clamoured to be taken to see

it. He took his leave of Mrs Parsons and made for the door. But he had not

gone six steps down the passage when something hit the back of his neck an

agonizingly painful blow. It was as though a red-hot wire had been jabbed

into him. He spun round just in time to see Mrs Parsons dragging her son

back into the doorway while the boy pocketed a catapult.

'Goldstein!' bellowed the boy as the door closed on him. But what most

struck Winston was the look of helpless fright on the woman's greyish face.

Back in the flat he stepped quickly past the telescreen and sat down at the

table again, still rubbing his neck. The music from the telescreen had

stopped. Instead, a clipped military voice was reading out, with a sort of

brutal relish, a description of the armaments of the new Floating Fortress

which had just been anchored between Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

With those children, he thought, that wretched woman must lead a life of

terror. Another year, two years, and they would be watching her night

and day for symptoms of unorthodoxy. Nearly all children nowadays were

horrible. What was worst of all was that by means of such organizations as

the Spies they were systematically turned into ungovernable little savages,

and yet this produced in them no tendency whatever to rebel against the

discipline of the Party. On the contrary, they adored the Party and

everything connected with it. The songs, the processions, the banners, the

hiking, the drilling with dummy rifles, the yelling of slogans, the worship

of Big Brother--it was all a sort of glorious game to them. All their

ferocity was turned outwards, against the enemies of the State, against

foreigners, traitors, saboteurs, thought-criminals. It was almost normal

for people over thirty to be frightened of their own children. And with

good reason, for hardly a week passed in which 'The Times' did not carry

a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak--'child hero'

was the phrase generally used--had overheard some compromising remark

and denounced its parents to the Thought Police.

The sting of the catapult bullet had worn off. He picked up his pen

half-heartedly, wondering whether he could find something more to write

in the diary. Suddenly he began thinking of O'Brien again.

Years ago--how long was it? Seven years it must be--he had dreamed that he

was walking through a pitch-dark room. And someone sitting to one side of

him had said as he passed: 'We shall meet in the place where there is no

darkness.' It was said very quietly, almost casually--a statement, not a

command. He had walked on without pausing. What was curious was that at the

time, in the dream, the words had not made much impression on him. It was

only later and by degrees that they had seemed to take on significance. He

could not now remember whether it was before or after having the dream that

he had seen O'Brien for the first time, nor could he remember when he had

first identified the voice as O'Brien's. But at any rate the identification

existed. It was O'Brien who had spoken to him out of the dark.

Winston had never been able to feel sure--even after this morning's flash

of the eyes it was still impossible to be sure whether O'Brien was a friend

or an enemy. Nor did it even seem to matter greatly. There was a link of

understanding between them, more important than affection or partisanship.

'We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness,' he had said.

Winston did not know what it meant, only that in some way or another it

would come true.

The voice from the telescreen paused. A trumpet call, clear and beautiful,

floated into the stagnant air. The voice continued raspingly:

'Attention! Your attention, please! A newsflash has this moment arrived

from the Malabar front. Our forces in South India have won a glorious

victory. I am authorized to say that the action we are now reporting may

well bring the war within measurable distance of its end. Here is the

newsflash----'

Bad news coming, thought Winston. And sure enough, following on a gory

description of the annihilation of a Eurasian army, with stupendous figures

of killed and prisoners, came the announcement that, as from next week,

the chocolate ration would be reduced from thirty grammes to twenty.

Winston belched again. The gin was wearing off, leaving a deflated feeling.

The telescreen--perhaps to celebrate the victory, perhaps to drown the

memory of the lost chocolate--crashed into 'Oceania, 'tis for thee'. You

were supposed to stand to attention. However, in his present position he

was invisible.

'Oceania, 'tis for thee' gave way to lighter music. Winston walked over to

the window, keeping his back to the telescreen. The day was still cold and

clear. Somewhere far away a rocket bomb exploded with a dull, reverberating

roar. About twenty or thirty of them a week were falling on London at

present.

Down in the street the wind flapped the torn poster to and fro, and the

word INGSOC fitfully appeared and vanished. Ingsoc. The sacred principles

of Ingsoc. Newspeak, doublethink, the mutability of the past. He felt as

though he were wandering in the forests of the sea bottom, lost in a

monstrous world where he himself was the monster. He was alone. The past

was dead, the future was unimaginable. What certainty had he that a single

human creature now living was on his side? And what way of knowing that the

dominion of the Party would not endure FOR EVER? Like an answer, the three

slogans on the white face of the Ministry of Truth came back to him:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

He took a twenty-five cent piece out of his pocket. There, too, in tiny

clear lettering, the same slogans were inscribed, and on the other face of

the coin the head of Big Brother. Even from the coin the eyes pursued you.

On coins, on stamps, on the covers of books, on banners, on posters, and on

the wrappings of a cigarette packet--everywhere. Always the eyes watching

you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating,

indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed--no escape. Nothing was your

own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull.

The sun had shifted round, and the myriad windows of the Ministry of Truth,

with the light no longer shining on them, looked grim as the loopholes of a

fortress. His heart quailed before the enormous pyramidal shape. It was too

strong, it could not be stormed. A thousand rocket bombs would not batter

it down. He wondered again for whom he was writing the diary. For the

future, for the past--for an age that might be imaginary. And in front of

him there lay not death but annihilation. The diary would be reduced to

ashes and himself to vapour. Only the Thought Police would read what he had

written, before they wiped it out of existence and out of memory. How could

you make appeal to the future when not a trace of you, not even an

anonymous word scribbled on a piece of paper, could physically survive?

The telescreen struck fourteen. He must leave in ten minutes. He had to be

back at work by fourteen-thirty.

Curiously, the chiming of the hour seemed to have put new heart into him.

He was a lonely ghost uttering a truth that nobody would ever hear. But so

long as he uttered it, in some obscure way the continuity was not broken.

It was not by making yourself heard but by staying sane that you carried on

the human heritage. He went back to the table, dipped his pen, and wrote:

To the future or to the past, to a time when thought is free, when men

are different from one another and do not live alone--to a time when truth

exists and what is done cannot be undone:

From the age of uniformity, from the age of solitude, from the age of

Big Brother, from the age of doublethink--greetings!

He was already dead, he reflected. It seemed to him that it was only now,

when he had begun to be able to formulate his thoughts, that he had taken

the decisive step. The consequences of every act are included in the act

itself. He wrote:

Thoughtcrime does not entail death: thoughtcrime IS death.

Now he had recognized himself as a dead man it became important to stay

alive as long as possible. Two fingers of his right hand were inkstained.

It was exactly the kind of detail that might betray you. Some nosing zealot

in the Ministry (a woman, probably: someone like the little sandy-haired

woman or the dark-haired girl from the Fiction Department) might start

wondering why he had been writing during the lunch interval, why he had

used an old-fashioned pen, WHAT he had been writing--and then drop a hint

in the appropriate quarter. He went to the bathroom and carefully scrubbed

the ink away with the gritty dark-brown soap which rasped your skin like

sandpaper and was therefore well adapted for this purpose.

He put the diary away in the drawer. It was quite useless to think of

hiding it, but he could at least make sure whether or not its existence had

been discovered. A hair laid across the page-ends was too obvious. With the

tip of his finger he picked up an identifiable grain of whitish dust and

deposited it on the corner of the cover, where it was bound to be shaken

off if the book was moved.

Chapter 3

Winston was dreaming of his mother.

He must, he thought, have been ten or eleven years old when his mother had

disappeared. She was a tall, statuesque, rather silent woman with slow

movements and magnificent fair hair. His father he remembered more vaguely

as dark and thin, dressed always in neat dark clothes (Winston remembered

especially the very thin soles of his father's shoes) and wearing

spectacles. The two of them must evidently have been swallowed up in one

of the first great purges of the fifties.

At this moment his mother was sitting in some place deep down beneath him,

with his young sister in her arms. He did not remember his sister at all,

except as a tiny, feeble baby, always silent, with large, watchful eyes.

Both of them were looking up at him. They were down in some subterranean

place--the bottom of a well, for instance, or a very deep grave--but it

was a place which, already far below him, was itself moving downwards.

They were in the saloon of a sinking ship, looking up at him through the

darkening water. There was still air in the saloon, they could still see

him and he them, but all the while they were sinking down, down into the

green waters which in another moment must hide them from sight for ever.

He was out in the light and air while they were being sucked down to death,

and they were down there because he was up here. He knew it and they knew

it, and he could see the knowledge in their faces. There was no reproach

either in their faces or in their hearts, only the knowledge that they

must die in order that he might remain alive, and that this was part of

the unavoidable order of things.

He could not remember what had happened, but he knew in his dream that in

some way the lives of his mother and his sister had been sacrificed to his

own. It was one of those dreams which, while retaining the characteristic

dream scenery, are a continuation of one's intellectual life, and in which

one becomes aware of facts and ideas which still seem new and valuable

after one is awake. The thing that now suddenly struck Winston was that his

mother's death, nearly thirty years ago, had been tragic and sorrowful in

a way that was no longer possible. Tragedy, he perceived, belonged to the

ancient time, to a time when there was still privacy, love, and friendship,

and when the members of a family stood by one another without needing to

know the reason. His mother's memory tore at his heart because she had died

loving him, when he was too young and selfish to love her in return, and

because somehow, he did not remember how, she had sacrificed herself to a

conception of loyalty that was private and unalterable. Such things, he

saw, could not happen today. Today there were fear, hatred, and pain, but

no dignity of emotion, no deep or complex sorrows. All this he seemed to

see in the large eyes of his mother and his sister, looking up at him

through the green water, hundreds of fathoms down and still sinking.

Suddenly he was standing on short springy turf, on a summer evening when

the slanting rays of the sun gilded the ground. The landscape that he was

looking at recurred so often in his dreams that he was never fully certain

whether or not he had seen it in the real world. In his waking thoughts he

called it the Golden Country. It was an old, rabbit-bitten pasture, with a

foot-track wandering across it and a molehill here and there. In the ragged

hedge on the opposite side of the field the boughs of the elm trees were

swaying very faintly in the breeze, their leaves just stirring in dense

masses like women's hair. Somewhere near at hand, though out of sight,

there was a clear, slow-moving stream where dace were swimming in the

pools under the willow trees.

The girl with dark hair was coming towards them across the field. With

what seemed a single movement she tore off her clothes and flung them

disdainfully aside. Her body was white and smooth, but it aroused no desire

in him, indeed he barely looked at it. What overwhelmed him in that instant

was admiration for the gesture with which she had thrown her clothes aside.

With its grace and carelessness it seemed to annihilate a whole culture,

a whole system of thought, as though Big Brother and the Party and the

Thought Police could all be swept into nothingness by a single splendid

movement of the arm. That too was a gesture belonging to the ancient time.

Winston woke up with the word 'Shakespeare' on his lips.

The telescreen was giving forth an ear-splitting whistle which continued on

the same note for thirty seconds. It was nought seven fifteen, getting-up

time for office workers. Winston wrenched his body out of bed--naked, for

a member of the Outer Party received only 3,000 clothing coupons annually,

and a suit of pyjamas was 600--and seized a dingy singlet and a pair of

shorts that were lying across a chair. The Physical Jerks would begin in

three minutes. The next moment he was doubled up by a violent coughing fit

which nearly always attacked him soon after waking up. It emptied his lungs

so completely that he could only begin breathing again by lying on his back

and taking a series of deep gasps. His veins had swelled with the effort of

the cough, and the varicose ulcer had started itching.

'Thirty to forty group!' yapped a piercing female voice. 'Thirty to forty

group! Take your places, please. Thirties to forties!'

Winston sprang to attention in front of the telescreen, upon which the

image of a youngish woman, scrawny but muscular, dressed in tunic and

gym-shoes, had already appeared.

'Arms bending and stretching!' she rapped out. 'Take your time by me. ONE,

two, three, four! ONE, two, three, four! Come on, comrades, put a bit of

life into it! ONE, two, three four! ONE two, three, four!...'

The pain of the coughing fit had not quite driven out of Winston's mind the

impression made by his dream, and the rhythmic movements of the exercise

restored it somewhat. As he mechanically shot his arms back and forth,

wearing on his face the look of grim enjoyment which was considered proper

during the Physical Jerks, he was struggling to think his way backward into

the dim period of his early childhood. It was extraordinarily difficult.

Beyond the late fifties everything faded. When there were no external

records that you could refer to, even the outline of your own life lost

its sharpness. You remembered huge events which had quite probably not

happened, you remembered the detail of incidents without being able to

recapture their atmosphere, and there were long blank periods to which you

could assign nothing. Everything had been different then. Even the names of

countries, and their shapes on the map, had been different. Airstrip One,

for instance, had not been so called in those days: it had been called

England or Britain, though London, he felt fairly certain, had always been

called London.

Winston could not definitely remember a time when his country had not been

at war, but it was evident that there had been a fairly long interval of

peace during his childhood, because one of his early memories was of an air

raid which appeared to take everyone by surprise. Perhaps it was the time

when the atomic bomb had fallen on Colchester. He did not remember the raid

itself, but he did remember his father's hand clutching his own as they

hurried down, down, down into some place deep in the earth, round and round

a spiral staircase which rang under his feet and which finally so wearied

his legs that he began whimpering and they had to stop and rest. His

mother, in her slow, dreamy way, was following a long way behind them. She

was carrying his baby sister--or perhaps it was only a bundle of blankets

that she was carrying: he was not certain whether his sister had been born

then. Finally they had emerged into a noisy, crowded place which he had

realized to be a Tube station.

There were people sitting all over the stone-flagged floor, and other

people, packed tightly together, were sitting on metal bunks, one above

the other. Winston and his mother and father found themselves a place on

the floor, and near them an old man and an old woman were sitting side by

side on a bunk. The old man had on a decent dark suit and a black cloth cap

pushed back from very white hair: his face was scarlet and his eyes were

blue and full of tears. He reeked of gin. It seemed to breathe out of his

skin in place of sweat, and one could have fancied that the tears welling

from his eyes were pure gin. But though slightly drunk he was also

suffering under some grief that was genuine and unbearable. In his childish

way Winston grasped that some terrible thing, something that was beyond

forgiveness and could never be remedied, had just happened. It also seemed

to him that he knew what it was. Someone whom the old man loved--a little

granddaughter, perhaps--had been killed. Every few minutes the old man kept

repeating:

'We didn't ought to 'ave trusted 'em. I said so, Ma, didn't I? That's what

comes of trusting 'em. I said so all along. We didn't ought to 'ave trusted

the buggers.'

But which buggers they didn't ought to have trusted Winston could not now

remember.

Since about that time, war had been literally continuous, though strictly

speaking it had not always been the same war. For several months during his

childhood there had been confused street fighting in London itself, some

of which he remembered vividly. But to trace out the history of the whole

period, to say who was fighting whom at any given moment, would have been

utterly impossible, since no written record, and no spoken word, ever made

mention of any other alignment than the existing one. At this moment, for

example, in 1984 (if it was 1984), Oceania was at war with Eurasia and

in alliance with Eastasia. In no public or private utterance was it ever

admitted that the three powers had at any time been grouped along different

lines. Actually, as Winston well knew, it was only four years since Oceania

had been at war with Eastasia and in alliance with Eurasia. But that was

merely a piece of furtive knowledge which he happened to possess because

his memory was not satisfactorily under control. Officially the change of

partners had never happened. Oceania was at war with Eurasia: therefore

Oceania had always been at war with Eurasia. The enemy of the moment always

represented absolute evil, and it followed that any past or future

agreement with him was impossible.

The frightening thing, he reflected for the ten thousandth time as he

forced his shoulders painfully backward (with hands on hips, they were

gyrating their bodies from the waist, an exercise that was supposed to be

good for the back muscles)--the frightening thing was that it might all be

true. If the Party could thrust its hand into the past and say of this or

that event, IT NEVER HAPPENED--that, surely, was more terrifying than mere

torture and death?

The Party said that Oceania had never been in alliance with Eurasia. He,

Winston Smith, knew that Oceania had been in alliance with Eurasia as short

a time as four years ago. But where did that knowledge exist? Only in his

own consciousness, which in any case must soon be annihilated. And if all

others accepted the lie which the Party imposed--if all records told the

same tale--then the lie passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls

the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the

present controls the past.' And yet the past, though of its nature

alterable, never had been altered. Whatever was true now was true from

everlasting to everlasting. It was quite simple. All that was needed was

an unending series of victories over your own memory. 'Reality control',

they called it: in Newspeak, 'doublethink'.

'Stand easy!' barked the instructress, a little more genially.

Winston sank his arms to his sides and slowly refilled his lungs with air.

His mind slid away into the labyrinthine world of doublethink. To know

and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling

carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which

cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of

them, to use logic against logic, to repudiate morality while laying claim

to it, to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the

guardian of democracy, to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then

to draw it back into memory again at the moment when it was needed, and

then promptly to forget it again: and above all, to apply the same process

to the process itself. That was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to

induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of

the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word

'doublethink' involved the use of doublethink.

The instructress had called them to attention again. 'And now let's see

which of us can touch our toes!' she said enthusiastically. 'Right over

from the hips, please, comrades. ONE-two! ONE-two!...'

Winston loathed this exercise, which sent shooting pains all the way from

his heels to his buttocks and often ended by bringing on another coughing

fit. The half-pleasant quality went out of his meditations. The past, he

reflected, had not merely been altered, it had been actually destroyed. For

how could you establish even the most obvious fact when there existed no

record outside your own memory? He tried to remember in what year he had

first heard mention of Big Brother. He thought it must have been at some

time in the sixties, but it was impossible to be certain. In the Party

histories, of course, Big Brother figured as the leader and guardian of the

Revolution since its very earliest days. His exploits had been gradually

pushed backwards in time until already they extended into the fabulous

world of the forties and the thirties, when the capitalists in their

strange cylindrical hats still rode through the streets of London in great

gleaming motor-cars or horse carriages with glass sides. There was no

knowing how much of this legend was true and how much invented. Winston

could not even remember at what date the Party itself had come into

existence. He did not believe he had ever heard the word Ingsoc before

1960, but it was possible that in its Oldspeak form--'English Socialism',

that is to say--it had been current earlier. Everything melted into mist.

Sometimes, indeed, you could put your finger on a definite lie. It was not

true, for example, as was claimed in the Party history books, that the

Party had invented aeroplanes. He remembered aeroplanes since his earliest

childhood. But you could prove nothing. There was never any evidence. Just

once in his whole life he had held in his hands unmistakable documentary

proof of the falsification of an historical fact. And on that occasion----

'Smith!' screamed the shrewish voice from the telescreen. '6079 Smith W.!

Yes, YOU! Bend lower, please! You can do better than that. You're not

trying. Lower, please! THAT'S better, comrade. Now stand at ease, the

whole squad, and watch me.'

A sudden hot sweat had broken out all over Winston's body. His face

remained completely inscrutable. Never show dismay! Never show resentment!

A single flicker of the eyes could give you away. He stood watching while

the instructress raised her arms above her head and--one could not say

gracefully, but with remarkable neatness and efficiency--bent over and

tucked the first joint of her fingers under her toes.

'THERE, comrades! THAT'S how I want to see you doing it. Watch me again.

I'm thirty-nine and I've had four children. Now look.' She bent over again.

'You see MY knees aren't bent. You can all do it if you want to,' she added

as she straightened herself up. 'Anyone under forty-five is perfectly

capable of touching his toes. We don't all have the privilege of fighting

in the front line, but at least we can all keep fit. Remember our boys on

the Malabar front! And the sailors in the Floating Fortresses! Just think

what THEY have to put up with. Now try again. That's better, comrade,

that's MUCH better,' she added encouragingly as Winston, with a violent

lunge, succeeded in touching his toes with knees unbent, for the first

time in several years.

Chapter 4

With the deep, unconscious sigh which not even the nearness of the

telescreen could prevent him from uttering when his day's work started,

Winston pulled the speakwrite towards him, blew the dust from its

mouthpiece, and put on his spectacles. Then he unrolled and clipped

together four small cylinders of paper which had already flopped out of

the pneumatic tube on the right-hand side of his desk.

In the walls of the cubicle there were three orifices. To the right of the

speakwrite, a small pneumatic tube for written messages, to the left, a

larger one for newspapers; and in the side wall, within easy reach of

Winston's arm, a large oblong slit protected by a wire grating. This last

was for the disposal of waste paper. Similar slits existed in thousands or

tens of thousands throughout the building, not only in every room but at

short intervals in every corridor. For some reason they were nicknamed

memory holes. When one knew that any document was due for destruction, or

even when one saw a scrap of waste paper lying about, it was an automatic

action to lift the flap of the nearest memory hole and drop it in,

whereupon it would be whirled away on a current of warm air to the enormous

furnaces which were hidden somewhere in the recesses of the building.

Winston examined the four slips of paper which he had unrolled. Each

contained a message of only one or two lines, in the abbreviated

jargon--not actually Newspeak, but consisting

largely of Newspeak words--which was used in the Ministry for internal

purposes. They ran:

times 17.3.84 bb speech malreported africa rectify

times 19.12.83 forecasts 3 yp 4th quarter 83 misprints verify current issue

times 14.2.84 miniplenty malquoted chocolate rectify

times 3.12.83 reporting bb dayorder doubleplusungood refs unpersons rewrite

fullwise upsub antefiling

With a faint feeling of satisfaction Winston laid the fourth message aside.

It was an intricate and responsible job and had better be dealt with last.

The other three were routine matters, though the second one would probably

mean some tedious wading through lists of figures.

Winston dialled 'back numbers' on the telescreen and called for the

appropriate issues of 'The Times', which slid out of the pneumatic tube

after only a few minutes' delay. The messages he had received referred to

articles or news items which for one reason or another it was thought

necessary to alter, or, as the official phrase had it, to rectify. For

example, it appeared from 'The Times' of the seventeenth of March that Big

Brother, in his speech of the previous day, had predicted that the South

Indian front would remain quiet but that a Eurasian offensive would shortly

be launched in North Africa. As it happened, the Eurasian Higher Command

had launched its offensive in South India and left North Africa alone. It

was therefore necessary to rewrite a paragraph of Big Brother's speech, in

such a way as to make him predict the thing that had actually happened. Or

again, 'The Times' of the nineteenth of December had published the official

forecasts of the output of various classes of consumption goods in the

fourth quarter of 1983, which was also the sixth quarter of the Ninth

Three-Year Plan. Today's issue contained a statement of the actual output,

from which it appeared that the forecasts were in every instance grossly

wrong. Winston's job was to rectify the original figures by making them

agree with the later ones. As for the third message, it referred to a very

simple error which could be set right in a couple of minutes. As short

a time ago as February, the Ministry of Plenty had issued a promise

(a 'categorical pledge' were the official words) that there would be

no reduction of the chocolate ration during 1984. Actually, as Winston

was aware, the chocolate ration was to be reduced from thirty grammes

to twenty at the end of the present week. All that was needed was to

substitute for the original promise a warning that it would probably be

necessary to reduce the ration at some time in April.

As soon as Winston had dealt with each of the messages, he clipped his

speakwritten corrections to the appropriate copy of 'The Times' and pushed

them into the pneumatic tube. Then, with a movement which was as nearly as

possible unconscious, he crumpled up the original message and any notes

that he himself had made, and dropped them into the memory hole to be

devoured by the flames.

What happened in the unseen labyrinth to which the pneumatic tubes led, he

did not know in detail, but he did know in general terms. As soon as all

the corrections which happened to be necessary in any particular number

of 'The Times' had been assembled and collated, that number would be

reprinted, the original copy destroyed, and the corrected copy placed on

the files in its stead. This process of continuous alteration was applied

not only to newspapers, but to books, periodicals, pamphlets, posters,

leaflets, films, sound-tracks, cartoons, photographs--to every kind of

literature or documentation which might conceivably hold any political or

ideological significance. Day by day and almost minute by minute the past

was brought up to date. In this way every prediction made by the Party

could be shown by documentary evidence to have been correct, nor was any

item of news, or any expression of opinion, which conflicted with the

needs of the moment, ever allowed to remain on record. All history was

a palimpsest, scraped clean and reinscribed exactly as often as was

necessary. In no case would it have been possible, once the deed was done,

to prove that any falsification had taken place. The largest section of

the Records Department, far larger than the one on which Winston worked,

consisted simply of persons whose duty it was to track down and collect all

copies of books, newspapers, and other documents which had been superseded

and were due for destruction. A number of 'The Times' which might, because

of changes in political alignment, or mistaken prophecies uttered by Big

Brother, have been rewritten a dozen times still stood on the files bearing

its original date, and no other copy existed to contradict it. Books, also,

were recalled and rewritten again and again, and were invariably reissued

without any admission that any alteration had been made. Even the written

instructions which Winston received, and which he invariably got rid of

as soon as he had dealt with them, never stated or implied that an act of

forgery was to be committed: always the reference was to slips, errors,

misprints, or misquotations which it was necessary to put right in the

interests of accuracy.

But actually, he thought as he re-adjusted the Ministry of Plenty's

figures, it was not even forgery. It was merely the substitution of one

piece of nonsense for another. Most of the material that you were dealing

with had no connexion with anything in the real world, not even the kind of

connexion that is contained in a direct lie. Statistics were just as much

a fantasy in their original version as in their rectified version. A great

deal of the time you were expected to make them up out of your head. For

example, the Ministry of Plenty's forecast had estimated the output of

boots for the quarter at 145 million pairs. The actual output was given as

sixty-two millions. Winston, however, in rewriting the forecast, marked

the figure down to fifty-seven millions, so as to allow for the usual claim

that the quota had been overfulfilled. In any case, sixty-two millions was

no nearer the truth than fifty-seven millions, or than 145 millions. Very

likely no boots had been produced at all. Likelier still, nobody knew

how many had been produced, much less cared. All one knew was that every

quarter astronomical numbers of boots were produced on paper, while perhaps

half the population of Oceania went barefoot. And so it was with every

class of recorded fact, great or small. Everything faded away into a

shadow-world in which, finally, even the date of the year had become

uncertain.

Winston glanced across the hall. In the corresponding cubicle on the other

side a small, precise-looking, dark-chinned man named Tillotson was working

steadily away, with a folded newspaper on his knee and his mouth very close

to the mouthpiece of the speakwrite. He had the air of trying to keep what

he was saying a secret between himself and the telescreen. He looked up,

and his spectacles darted a hostile flash in Winston's direction.

Winston hardly knew Tillotson, and had no idea what work he was employed

on. People in the Records Department did not readily talk about their jobs.

In the long, windowless hall, with its double row of cubicles and its

endless rustle of papers and hum of voices murmuring into speakwrites,

there were quite a dozen people whom Winston did not even know by name,

though he daily saw them hurrying to and fro in the corridors or

gesticulating in the Two Minutes Hate. He knew that in the cubicle next

to him the little woman with sandy hair toiled day in day out, simply at

tracking down and deleting from the Press the names of people who had been

vaporized and were therefore considered never to have existed. There was a

certain fitness in this, since her own husband had been vaporized a couple

of years earlier. And a few cubicles away a mild, ineffectual, dreamy

creature named Ampleforth, with very hairy ears and a surprising talent

for juggling with rhymes and metres, was engaged in producing garbled

versions--definitive texts, they were called--of poems which had become

ideologically offensive, but which for one reason or another were to be

retained in the anthologies. And this hall, with its fifty workers or

thereabouts, was only one sub-section, a single cell, as it were, in the

huge complexity of the Records Department. Beyond, above, below, were other

swarms of workers engaged in an unimaginable multitude of jobs. There were

the huge printing-shops with their sub-editors, their typography experts,

and their elaborately equipped studios for the faking of photographs. There

was the tele-programmes section with its engineers, its producers, and its

teams of actors specially chosen for their skill in imitating voices. There

were the armies of reference clerks whose job was simply to draw up lists

of books and periodicals which were due for recall. There were the vast

repositories where the corrected documents were stored, and the hidden

furnaces where the original copies were destroyed. And somewhere or other,

quite anonymous, there were the directing brains who co-ordinated the whole

effort and laid down the lines of policy which made it necessary that this

fragment of the past should be preserved, that one falsified, and the other

rubbed out of existence.

And the Records Department, after all, was itself only a single branch of

the Ministry of Truth, whose primary job was not to reconstruct the past

but to supply the citizens of Oceania with newspapers, films, textbooks,

telescreen programmes, plays, novels--with every conceivable kind of

information, instruction, or entertainment, from a statue to a slogan,

from a lyric poem to a biological treatise, and from a child's

spelling-book to a Newspeak dictionary. And the Ministry had not only to

supply the multifarious needs of the party, but also to repeat the whole

operation at a lower level for the benefit of the proletariat. There

was a whole chain of separate departments dealing with proletarian

literature, music, drama, and entertainment generally. Here were produced

rubbishy newspapers containing almost nothing except sport, crime and

astrology, sensational five-cent novelettes, films oozing with sex, and

sentimental songs which were composed entirely by mechanical means on a

special kind of kaleidoscope known as a versificator. There was even

a whole sub-section--Pornosec, it was called in Newspeak--engaged in

producing the lowest kind of pornography, which was sent out in sealed

packets and which no Party member, other than those who worked on it,

was permitted to look at.

Three messages had slid out of the pneumatic tube while Winston was

working, but they were simple matters, and he had disposed of them before

the Two Minutes Hate interrupted him. When the Hate was over he returned

to his cubicle, took the Newspeak dictionary from the shelf, pushed the

speakwrite to one side, cleaned his spectacles, and settled down to his

main job of the morning.

Winston's greatest pleasure in life was in his work. Most of it was a

tedious routine, but included in it there were also jobs so difficult and

intricate that you could lose yourself in them as in the depths of a

mathematical problem--delicate pieces of forgery in which you had nothing

to guide you except your knowledge of the principles of Ingsoc and your

estimate of what the Party wanted you to say. Winston was good at this kind

of thing. On occasion he had even been entrusted with the rectification of

'The Times' leading articles, which were written entirely in Newspeak.

He unrolled the message that he had set aside earlier. It ran:

times 3.12.83 reporting bb dayorder doubleplusungood refs unpersons

rewrite fullwise upsub antefiling

In Oldspeak (or standard English) this might be rendered:

The reporting of Big Brother's Order for the Day in 'The Times' of December

3rd 1983 is extremely unsatisfactory and makes references to non-existent

persons. Rewrite it in full and submit your draft to higher authority

before filing.

Winston read through the offending article. Big Brother's Order for the

Day, it seemed, had been chiefly devoted to praising the work of an

organization known as FFCC, which supplied cigarettes and other comforts

to the sailors in the Floating Fortresses. A certain Comrade Withers, a

prominent member of the Inner Party, had been singled out for special

mention and awarded a decoration, the Order of Conspicuous Merit, Second

Class.

Three months later FFCC had suddenly been dissolved with no reasons given.

One could assume that Withers and his associates were now in disgrace, but

there had been no report of the matter in the Press or on the telescreen.

That was to be expected, since it was unusual for political offenders to

be put on trial or even publicly denounced. The great purges involving

thousands of people, with public trials of traitors and thought-criminals

who made abject confession of their crimes and were afterwards executed,

were special show-pieces not occurring oftener than once in a couple of

years. More commonly, people who had incurred the displeasure of the

Party simply disappeared and were never heard of again. One never had the

smallest clue as to what had happened to them. In some cases they might

not even be dead. Perhaps thirty people personally known to Winston, not

counting his parents, had disappeared at one time or another.

Winston stroked his nose gently with a paper-clip. In the cubicle

across the way Comrade Tillotson was still crouching secretively over

his speakwrite. He raised his head for a moment: again the hostile

spectacle-flash. Winston wondered whether Comrade Tillotson was engaged

on the same job as himself. It was perfectly possible. So tricky a piece

of work would never be entrusted to a single person: on the other hand,

to turn it over to a committee would be to admit openly that an act of

fabrication was taking place. Very likely as many as a dozen people were

now working away on rival versions of what Big Brother had actually said.

And presently some master brain in the Inner Party would select this

version or that, would re-edit it and set in motion the complex processes

of cross-referencing that would be required, and then the chosen lie

would pass into the permanent records and become truth.

Winston did not know why Withers had been disgraced. Perhaps it was for

corruption or incompetence. Perhaps Big Brother was merely getting rid of

a too-popular subordinate. Perhaps Withers or someone close to him had

been suspected of heretical tendencies. Or perhaps--what was likeliest of

all--the thing had simply happened because purges and vaporizations were a

necessary part of the mechanics of government. The only real clue lay in

the words 'refs unpersons', which indicated that Withers was already dead.

You could not invariably assume this to be the case when people were

arrested. Sometimes they were released and allowed to remain at liberty

for as much as a year or two years before being executed. Very occasionally

some person whom you had believed dead long since would make a ghostly

reappearance at some public trial where he would implicate hundreds of

others by his testimony before vanishing, this time for ever. Withers,

however, was already an UNPERSON. He did not exist: he had never existed.

Winston decided that it would not be enough simply to reverse the tendency

of Big Brother's speech. It was better to make it deal with something

totally unconnected with its original subject.

He might turn the speech into the usual denunciation of traitors and

thought-criminals, but that was a little too obvious, while to invent a

victory at the front, or some triumph of over-production in the Ninth

Three-Year Plan, might complicate the records too much. What was needed

was a piece of pure fantasy. Suddenly there sprang into his mind, ready

made as it were, the image of a certain Comrade Ogilvy, who had recently

died in battle, in heroic circumstances. There were occasions when Big

Brother devoted his Order for the Day to commemorating some humble,

rank-and-file Party member whose life and death he held up as an example

worthy to be followed. Today he should commemorate Comrade Ogilvy. It was

true that there was no such person as Comrade Ogilvy, but a few lines of

print and a couple of faked photographs would soon bring him into

existence.

Winston thought for a moment, then pulled the speakwrite towards him and

began dictating in Big Brother's familiar style: a style at once military

and pedantic, and, because of a trick of asking questions and then

promptly answering them ('What lessons do we learn from this fact,

comrades? The lesson--which is also one of the fundamental principles

of Ingsoc--that,' etc., etc.), easy to imitate.

At the age of three Comrade Ogilvy had refused all toys except a drum, a

sub-machine gun, and a model helicopter. At six--a year early, by a special

relaxation of the rules--he had joined the Spies, at nine he had been a

troop leader. At eleven he had denounced his uncle to the Thought Police

after overhearing a conversation which appeared to him to have criminal

tendencies. At seventeen he had been a district organizer of the Junior

Anti-Sex League. At nineteen he had designed a hand-grenade which had

been adopted by the Ministry of Peace and which, at its first trial, had

killed thirty-one Eurasian prisoners in one burst. At twenty-three he had

perished in action. Pursued by enemy jet planes while flying over the

Indian Ocean with important despatches, he had weighted his body with his

machine gun and leapt out of the helicopter into deep water, despatches

and all--an end, said Big Brother, which it was impossible to contemplate

without feelings of envy. Big Brother added a few remarks on the purity

and single-mindedness of Comrade Ogilvy's life. He was a total abstainer

and a nonsmoker, had no recreations except a daily hour in the gymnasium,

and had taken a vow of celibacy, believing marriage and the care of a

family to be incompatible with a twenty-four-hour-a-day devotion to duty.

He had no subjects of conversation except the principles of Ingsoc, and

no aim in life except the defeat of the Eurasian enemy and the hunting-down

of spies, saboteurs, thought-criminals, and traitors generally.

Winston debated with himself whether to award Comrade Ogilvy the Order of

Conspicuous Merit: in the end he decided against it because of the

unnecessary cross-referencing that it would entail.

Once again he glanced at his rival in the opposite cubicle. Something

seemed to tell him with certainty that Tillotson was busy on the same job

as himself. There was no way of knowing whose job would finally be adopted,

but he felt a profound conviction that it would be his own. Comrade Ogilvy,

unimagined an hour ago, was now a fact. It struck him as curious that you

could create dead men but not living ones. Comrade Ogilvy, who had never

existed in the present, now existed in the past, and when once the act of

forgery was forgotten, he would exist just as authentically, and upon the

same evidence, as Charlemagne or Julius Caesar.

Chapter 5

In the low-ceilinged canteen, deep underground, the lunch queue jerked

slowly forward. The room was already very full and deafeningly noisy. From

the grille at the counter the steam of stew came pouring forth, with a sour

metallic smell which did not quite overcome the fumes of Victory Gin. On

the far side of the room there was a small bar, a mere hole in the wall,

where gin could be bought at ten cents the large nip.

'Just the man I was looking for,' said a voice at Winston's back.

He turned round. It was his friend Syme, who worked in the Research

Department. Perhaps 'friend' was not exactly the right word. You did not

have friends nowadays, you had comrades: but there were some comrades whose

society was pleasanter than that of others. Syme was a philologist, a

specialist in Newspeak. Indeed, he was one of the enormous team of experts

now engaged in compiling the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak Dictionary.

He was a tiny creature, smaller than Winston, with dark hair and large,

protuberant eyes, at once mournful and derisive, which seemed to search

your face closely while he was speaking to you.

'I wanted to ask you whether you'd got any razor blades,' he said.

'Not one!' said Winston with a sort of guilty haste. 'I've tried all over

the place. They don't exist any longer.'

Everyone kept asking you for razor blades. Actually he had two unused ones

which he was hoarding up. There had been a famine of them for months past.

At any given moment there was some necessary article which the Party shops

were unable to supply. Sometimes it was buttons, sometimes it was darning

wool, sometimes it was shoelaces; at present it was razor blades. You could

only get hold of them, if at all, by scrounging more or less furtively on

the 'free' market.

'I've been using the same blade for six weeks,' he added untruthfully.

The queue gave another jerk forward. As they halted he turned and faced

Syme again. Each of them took a greasy metal tray from a pile at the end

of the counter.

'Did you go and see the prisoners hanged yesterday?' said Syme.

'I was working,' said Winston indifferently. 'I shall see it on the

flicks, I suppose.'

'A very inadequate substitute,' said Syme.

His mocking eyes roved over Winston's face. 'I know you,' the eyes seemed

to say, 'I see through you. I know very well why you didn't go to see

those prisoners hanged.' In an intellectual way, Syme was venomously

orthodox. He would talk with a disagreeable gloating satisfaction of

helicopter raids on enemy villages, and trials and confessions of

thought-criminals, the executions in the cellars of the Ministry of Love.

Talking to him was largely a matter of getting him away from such subjects

and entangling him, if possible, in the technicalities of Newspeak, on

which he was authoritative and interesting. Winston turned his head a

little aside to avoid the scrutiny of the large dark eyes.

'It was a good hanging,' said Syme reminiscently. 'I think it spoils it

when they tie their feet together. I like to see them kicking. And above

all, at the end, the tongue sticking right out, and blue--a quite bright

blue. That's the detail that appeals to me.'

'Nex', please!' yelled the white-aproned prole with the ladle.

Winston and Syme pushed their trays beneath the grille. On to each was

dumped swiftly the regulation lunch--a metal pannikin of pinkish-grey stew,

a hunk of bread, a cube of cheese, a mug of milkless Victory Coffee, and

one saccharine tablet.

'There's a table over there, under that telescreen,' said Syme. 'Let's pick

up a gin on the way.'

The gin was served out to them in handleless china mugs. They threaded

their way across the crowded room and unpacked their trays on to the

metal-topped table, on one corner of which someone had left a pool of stew,

a filthy liquid mess that had the appearance of vomit. Winston took up his

mug of gin, paused for an instant to collect his nerve, and gulped the

oily-tasting stuff down. When he had winked the tears out of his eyes he

suddenly discovered that he was hungry. He began swallowing spoonfuls of

the stew, which, in among its general sloppiness, had cubes of spongy

pinkish stuff which was probably a preparation of meat. Neither of them

spoke again till they had emptied their pannikins. From the table at

Winston's left, a little behind his back, someone was talking rapidly and

continuously, a harsh gabble almost like the quacking of a duck, which

pierced the general uproar of the room.

'How is the Dictionary getting on?' said Winston, raising his voice to

overcome the noise.

'Slowly,' said Syme. 'I'm on the adjectives. It's fascinating.'

He had brightened up immediately at the mention of Newspeak. He pushed his

pannikin aside, took up his hunk of bread in one delicate hand and his

cheese in the other, and leaned across the table so as to be able to speak

without shouting.

'The Eleventh Edition is the definitive edition,' he said. 'We're getting

the language into its final shape--the shape it's going to have when nobody

speaks anything else. When we've finished with it, people like you will

have to learn it all over again. You think, I dare say, that our chief job

is inventing new words. But not a bit of it! We're destroying words--scores

of them, hundreds of them, every day. We're cutting the language down to

the bone. The Eleventh Edition won't contain a single word that will become

obsolete before the year 2050.'

He bit hungrily into his bread and swallowed a couple of mouthfuls, then

continued speaking, with a sort of pedant's passion. His thin dark face

had become animated, his eyes had lost their mocking expression and grown

almost dreamy.

'It's a beautiful thing, the destruction of words. Of course the great

wastage is in the verbs and adjectives, but there are hundreds of nouns

that can be got rid of as well. It isn't only the synonyms; there are also

the antonyms. After all, what justification is there for a word which is

simply the opposite of some other word? A word contains its opposite in

itself. Take "good", for instance. If you have a word like "good", what

need is there for a word like "bad"? "Ungood" will do just as well--better,

because it's an exact opposite, which the other is not. Or again, if you

want a stronger version of "good", what sense is there in having a whole

string of vague useless words like "excellent" and "splendid" and all the

rest of them? "Plusgood" covers the meaning, or "doubleplusgood" if you

want something stronger still. Of course we use those forms already. but

in the final version of Newspeak there'll be nothing else. In the end the

whole notion of goodness and badness will be covered by only six words--in

reality, only one word. Don't you see the beauty of that, Winston? It was

B.B.'s idea originally, of course,' he added as an afterthought.

A sort of vapid eagerness flitted across Winston's face at the mention of

Big Brother. Nevertheless Syme immediately detected a certain lack of

enthusiasm.

'You haven't a real appreciation of Newspeak, Winston,' he said almost

sadly. 'Even when you write it you're still thinking in Oldspeak. I've read

some of those pieces that you write in "The Times" occasionally. They're

good enough, but they're translations. In your heart you'd prefer to stick

to Oldspeak, with all its vagueness and its useless shades of meaning.

You don't grasp the beauty of the destruction of words. Do you know that

Newspeak is the only language in the world whose vocabulary gets smaller

every year?'

Winston did know that, of course. He smiled, sympathetically he hoped, not

trusting himself to speak. Syme bit off another fragment of the

dark-coloured bread, chewed it briefly, and went on:

'Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of

thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible,

because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that

can ever be needed, will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning

rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten.

Already, in the Eleventh Edition, we're not far from that point. But the

process will still be continuing long after you and I are dead. Every year

fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little

smaller. Even now, of course, there's no reason or excuse for committing

thoughtcrime. It's merely a question of self-discipline, reality-control.

But in the end there won't be any need even for that. The Revolution will

be complete when the language is perfect. Newspeak is Ingsoc and Ingsoc

is Newspeak,' he added with a sort of mystical satisfaction. 'Has it ever

occurred to you, Winston, that by the year 2050, at the very latest, not a

single human being will be alive who could understand such a conversation

as we are having now?'

'Except----' began Winston doubtfully, and he stopped.

It had been on the tip of his tongue to say 'Except the proles,' but he

checked himself, not feeling fully certain that this remark was not in

some way unorthodox. Syme, however, had divined what he was about to say.

'The proles are not human beings,' he said carelessly. 'By 2050--earlier,

probably--all real knowledge of Oldspeak will have disappeared. The whole

literature of the past will have been destroyed. Chaucer, Shakespeare,

Milton, Byron--they'll exist only in Newspeak versions, not merely changed

into something different, but actually changed into something contradictory

of what they used to be. Even the literature of the Party will change.

Even the slogans will change. How could you have a slogan like "freedom is

slavery" when the concept of freedom has been abolished? The whole climate

of thought will be different. In fact there will be no thought, as we

understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking--not needing to think.

Orthodoxy is unconsciousness.'

One of these days, thought Winston with sudden deep conviction, Syme will

be vaporized. He is too intelligent. He sees too clearly and speaks too

plainly. The Party does not like such people. One day he will disappear.

It is written in his face.

Winston had finished his bread and cheese. He turned a little sideways

in his chair to drink his mug of coffee. At the table on his left the man

with the strident voice was still talking remorselessly away. A young

woman who was perhaps his secretary, and who was sitting with her back

to Winston, was listening to him and seemed to be eagerly agreeing with

everything that he said. From time to time Winston caught some such remark

as 'I think you're so right, I do so agree with you', uttered in a youthful

and rather silly feminine voice. But the other voice never stopped for an

instant, even when the girl was speaking. Winston knew the man by sight,

though he knew no more about him than that he held some important post

in the Fiction Department. He was a man of about thirty, with a muscular

throat and a large, mobile mouth. His head was thrown back a little, and

because of the angle at which he was sitting, his spectacles caught the

light and presented to Winston two blank discs instead of eyes. What was

slightly horrible, was that from the stream of sound that poured out of

his mouth it was almost impossible to distinguish a single word. Just

once Winston caught a phrase--'complete and final elimination of

Goldsteinism'--jerked out very rapidly and, as it seemed, all in one piece,

like a line of type cast solid. For the rest it was just a noise, a

quack-quack-quacking. And yet, though you could not actually hear what the

man was saying, you could not be in any doubt about its general nature.

He might be denouncing Goldstein and demanding sterner measures against

thought-criminals and saboteurs, he might be fulminating against the

atrocities of the Eurasian army, he might be praising Big Brother or the

heroes on the Malabar front--it made no difference. Whatever it was, you

could be certain that every word of it was pure orthodoxy, pure Ingsoc.

As he watched the eyeless face with the jaw moving rapidly up and down,

Winston had a curious feeling that this was not a real human being but

some kind of dummy. It was not the man's brain that was speaking, it was

his larynx. The stuff that was coming out of him consisted of words, but

it was not speech in the true sense: it was a noise uttered in

unconsciousness, like the quacking of a duck.

Syme had fallen silent for a moment, and with the handle of his spoon was

tracing patterns in the puddle of stew. The voice from the other table

quacked rapidly on, easily audible in spite of the surrounding din.

'There is a word in Newspeak,' said Syme, 'I don't know whether you know

it: DUCKSPEAK, to quack like a duck. It is one of those interesting words

that have two contradictory meanings. Applied to an opponent, it is abuse,

applied to someone you agree with, it is praise.'

Unquestionably Syme will be vaporized, Winston thought again. He thought

it with a kind of sadness, although well knowing that Syme despised him

and slightly disliked him, and was fully capable of denouncing him as a

thought-criminal if he saw any reason for doing so. There was something

subtly wrong with Syme. There was something that he lacked: discretion,

aloofness, a sort of saving stupidity. You could not say that he was

unorthodox. He believed in the principles of Ingsoc, he venerated Big

Brother, he rejoiced over victories, he hated heretics, not merely with

sincerity but with a sort of restless zeal, an up-to-dateness of

information, which the ordinary Party member did not approach. Yet a faint

air of disreputability always clung to him. He said things that would have

been better unsaid, he had read too many books, he frequented the Chestnut

Tree Cafe, haunt of painters and musicians. There was no law, not even an

unwritten law, against frequenting the Chestnut Tree Cafe, yet the place

was somehow ill-omened. The old, discredited leaders of the Party had been

used to gather there before they were finally purged. Goldstein himself,

it was said, had sometimes been seen there, years and decades ago. Syme's

fate was not difficult to foresee. And yet it was a fact that if Syme

grasped, even for three seconds, the nature of his, Winston's, secret

opinions, he would betray him instantly to the Thought Police. So would

anybody else, for that matter: but Syme more than most. Zeal was not

enough. Orthodoxy was unconsciousness.

Syme looked up. 'Here comes Parsons,' he said.

Something in the tone of his voice seemed to add, 'that bloody fool'.

Parsons, Winston's fellow-tenant at Victory Mansions, was in fact threading

his way across the room--a tubby, middle-sized man with fair hair and a

froglike face. At thirty-five he was already putting on rolls of fat at

neck and waistline, but his movements were brisk and boyish. His whole

appearance was that of a little boy grown large, so much so that although

he was wearing the regulation overalls, it was almost impossible not to

think of him as being dressed in the blue shorts, grey shirt, and red

neckerchief of the Spies. In visualizing him one saw always a picture of

dimpled knees and sleeves rolled back from pudgy forearms. Parsons did,

indeed, invariably revert to shorts when a community hike or any other

physical activity gave him an excuse for doing so. He greeted them both

with a cheery 'Hullo, hullo!' and sat down at the table, giving off an

intense smell of sweat. Beads of moisture stood out all over his pink face.

His powers of sweating were extraordinary. At the Community Centre you

could always tell when he had been playing table-tennis by the dampness of

the bat handle. Syme had produced a strip of paper on which there was a

long column of words, and was studying it with an ink-pencil between his

fingers.

'Look at him working away in the lunch hour,' said Parsons, nudging

Winston. 'Keenness, eh? What's that you've got there, old boy? Something

a bit too brainy for me, I expect. Smith, old boy, I'll tell you why I'm

chasing you. It's that sub you forgot to give me.'

'Which sub is that?' said Winston, automatically feeling for money. About

a quarter of one's salary had to be earmarked for voluntary subscriptions,

which were so numerous that it was difficult to keep track of them.

'For Hate Week. You know--the house-by-house fund. I'm treasurer for our

block. We're making an all-out effort--going to put on a tremendous show.

I tell you, it won't be my fault if old Victory Mansions doesn't have the

biggest outfit of flags in the whole street. Two dollars you promised me.'

Winston found and handed over two creased and filthy notes, which Parsons

entered in a small notebook, in the neat handwriting of the illiterate.

'By the way, old boy,' he said. 'I hear that little beggar of mine let fly

at you with his catapult yesterday. I gave him a good dressing-down for it.

In fact I told him I'd take the catapult away if he does it again.'

'I think he was a little upset at not going to the execution,' said

Winston.

'Ah, well--what I mean to say, shows the right spirit, doesn't it?

Mischievous little beggars they are, both of them, but talk about keenness!

All they think about is the Spies, and the war, of course. D'you know what

that little girl of mine did last Saturday, when her troop was on a hike

out Berkhamsted way? She got two other girls to go with her, slipped off

from the hike, and spent the whole afternoon following a strange man. They

kept on his tail for two hours, right through the woods, and then, when

they got into Amersham, handed him over to the patrols.'

'What did they do that for?' said Winston, somewhat taken aback. Parsons

went on triumphantly:

'My kid made sure he was some kind of enemy agent--might have been dropped

by parachute, for instance. But here's the point, old boy. What do you

think put her on to him in the first place? She spotted he was wearing a

funny kind of shoes--said she'd never seen anyone wearing shoes like that

before. So the chances were he was a foreigner. Pretty smart for a nipper

of seven, eh?'

'What happened to the man?' said Winston.

'Ah, that I couldn't say, of course. But I wouldn't be altogether surprised

if----' Parsons made the motion of aiming a rifle, and clicked his tongue

for the explosion.

'Good,' said Syme abstractedly, without looking up from his strip of paper.

'Of course we can't afford to take chances,' agreed Winston dutifully.

'What I mean to say, there is a war on,' said Parsons.

As though in confirmation of this, a trumpet call floated from the

telescreen just above their heads. However, it was not the proclamation of

a military victory this time, but merely an announcement from the Ministry

of Plenty.

'Comrades!' cried an eager youthful voice. 'Attention, comrades! We have

glorious news for you. We have won the battle for production! Returns now

completed of the output of all classes of consumption goods show that the

standard of living has risen by no less than 20 per cent over the past

year. All over Oceania this morning there were irrepressible spontaneous

demonstrations when workers marched out of factories and offices and

paraded through the streets with banners voicing their gratitude to Big

Brother for the new, happy life which his wise leadership has bestowed

upon us. Here are some of the completed figures. Foodstuffs----'

The phrase 'our new, happy life' recurred several times. It had been a

favourite of late with the Ministry of Plenty. Parsons, his attention

caught by the trumpet call, sat listening with a sort of gaping solemnity,

a sort of edified boredom. He could not follow the figures, but he was

aware that they were in some way a cause for satisfaction. He had lugged

out a huge and filthy pipe which was already half full of charred tobacco.

With the tobacco ration at 100 grammes a week it was seldom possible to

fill a pipe to the top. Winston was smoking a Victory Cigarette which he

held carefully horizontal. The new ration did not start till tomorrow and

he had only four cigarettes left. For the moment he had shut his ears to

the remoter noises and was listening to the stuff that streamed out of the

telescreen. It appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank

Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grammes a week. And

only yesterday, he reflected, it had been announced that the ration was

to be REDUCED to twenty grammes a week. Was it possible that they could

swallow that, after only twenty-four hours? Yes, they swallowed it. Parsons

swallowed it easily, with the stupidity of an animal. The eyeless creature

at the other table swallowed it fanatically, passionately, with a furious

desire to track down, denounce, and vaporize anyone who should suggest that

last week the ration had been thirty grammes. Syme, too--in some more

complex way, involving doublethink, Syme swallowed it. Was he, then, ALONE

in the possession of a memory?

The fabulous statistics continued to pour out of the telescreen. As

compared with last year there was more food, more clothes, more houses,

more furniture, more cooking-pots, more fuel, more ships, more helicopters,

more books, more babies--more of everything except disease, crime, and

insanity. Year by year and minute by minute, everybody and everything was

whizzing rapidly upwards. As Syme had done earlier Winston had taken up

his spoon and was dabbling in the pale-coloured gravy that dribbled across

the table, drawing a long streak of it out into a pattern. He meditated

resentfully on the physical texture of life. Had it always been like

this? Had food always tasted like this? He looked round the canteen.

A low-ceilinged, crowded room, its walls grimy from the contact of

innumerable bodies; battered metal tables and chairs, placed so close

together that you sat with elbows touching; bent spoons, dented trays,

coarse white mugs; all surfaces greasy, grime in every crack; and a

sourish, composite smell of bad gin and bad coffee and metallic stew and

dirty clothes. Always in your stomach and in your skin there was a sort

of protest, a feeling that you had been cheated of something that you had

a right to. It was true that he had no memories of anything greatly

different. In any time that he could accurately remember, there had never

been quite enough to eat, one had never had socks or underclothes that

were not full of holes, furniture had always been battered and rickety,

rooms underheated, tube trains crowded, houses falling to pieces,

bread dark-coloured, tea a rarity, coffee filthy-tasting, cigarettes

insufficient--nothing cheap and plentiful except synthetic gin. And though,

of course, it grew worse as one's body aged, was it not a sign that this

was NOT the natural order of things, if one's heart sickened at the

discomfort and dirt and scarcity, the interminable winters, the stickiness

of one's socks, the lifts that never worked, the cold water, the gritty

soap, the cigarettes that came to pieces, the food with its strange evil

tastes? Why should one feel it to be intolerable unless one had some kind

of ancestral memory that things had once been different?

He looked round the canteen again. Nearly everyone was ugly, and would

still have been ugly even if dressed otherwise than in the uniform blue

overalls. On the far side of the room, sitting at a table alone, a small,

curiously beetle-like man was drinking a cup of coffee, his little eyes

darting suspicious glances from side to side. How easy it was, thought

Winston, if you did not look about you, to believe that the physical type

set up by the Party as an ideal--tall muscular youths and deep-bosomed

maidens, blond-haired, vital, sunburnt, carefree--existed and even

predominated. Actually, so far as he could judge, the majority of people

in Airstrip One were small, dark, and ill-favoured. It was curious how that

beetle-like type proliferated in the Ministries: little dumpy men, growing

stout very early in life, with short legs, swift scuttling movements, and

fat inscrutable faces with very small eyes. It was the type that seemed to

flourish best under the dominion of the Party.

The announcement from the Ministry of Plenty ended on another trumpet call

and gave way to tinny music. Parsons, stirred to vague enthusiasm by the

bombardment of figures, took his pipe out of his mouth.

'The Ministry of Plenty's certainly done a good job this year,' he said

with a knowing shake of his head. 'By the way, Smith old boy, I suppose

you haven't got any razor blades you can let me have?'

'Not one,' said Winston. 'I've been using the same blade for six weeks

myself.'

'Ah, well--just thought I'd ask you, old boy.'

'Sorry,' said Winston.

The quacking voice from the next table, temporarily silenced during the

Ministry's announcement, had started up again, as loud as ever. For some

reason Winston suddenly found himself thinking of Mrs Parsons, with her

wispy hair and the dust in the creases of her face. Within two years those

children would be denouncing her to the Thought Police. Mrs Parsons would

be vaporized. Syme would be vaporized. Winston would be vaporized. O'Brien

would be vaporized. Parsons, on the other hand, would never be vaporized.

The eyeless creature with the quacking voice would never be vaporized.

The little beetle-like men who scuttle so nimbly through the labyrinthine

corridors of Ministries they, too, would never be vaporized. And the girl

with dark hair, the girl from the Fiction Department--she would never be

vaporized either. It seemed to him that he knew instinctively who would

survive and who would perish: though just what it was that made for

survival, it was not easy to say.

At this moment he was dragged out of his reverie with a violent jerk. The

girl at the next table had turned partly round and was looking at him. It

was the girl with dark hair. She was looking at him in a sidelong way, but

with curious intensity. The instant she caught his eye she looked away

again.

The sweat started out on Winston's backbone. A horrible pang of terror

went through him. It was gone almost at once, but it left a sort of nagging

uneasiness behind. Why was she watching him? Why did she keep following him

about? Unfortunately he could not remember whether she had already been at

the table when he arrived, or had come there afterwards. But yesterday, at

any rate, during the Two Minutes Hate, she had sat immediately behind him

when there was no apparent need to do so. Quite likely her real object had

been to listen to him and make sure whether he was shouting loudly enough.

His earlier thought returned to him: probably she was not actually a member

of the Thought Police, but then it was precisely the amateur spy who was

the greatest danger of all. He did not know how long she had been looking

at him, but perhaps for as much as five minutes, and it was possible

that his features had not been perfectly under control. It was terribly

dangerous to let your thoughts wander when you were in any public place

or within range of a telescreen. The smallest thing could give you away.

A nervous tic, an unconscious look of anxiety, a habit of muttering to

yourself--anything that carried with it the suggestion of abnormality, of

having something to hide. In any case, to wear an improper expression on

your face (to look incredulous when a victory was announced, for example)

was itself a punishable offence. There was even a word for it in Newspeak:

FACECRIME, it was called.

The girl had turned her back on him again. Perhaps after all she was not

really following him about, perhaps it was coincidence that she had sat so

close to him two days running. His cigarette had gone out, and he laid it

carefully on the edge of the table. He would finish smoking it after work,

if he could keep the tobacco in it. Quite likely the person at the next

table was a spy of the Thought Police, and quite likely he would be in the

cellars of the Ministry of Love within three days, but a cigarette end

must not be wasted. Syme had folded up his strip of paper and stowed it

away in his pocket. Parsons had begun talking again.

'Did I ever tell you, old boy,' he said, chuckling round the stem of his

pipe, 'about the time when those two nippers of mine set fire to the old

market-woman's skirt because they saw her wrapping up sausages in a poster

of B.B.? Sneaked up behind her and set fire to it with a box of matches.

Burned her quite badly, I believe. Little beggars, eh? But keen as mustard!

That's a first-rate training they give them in the Spies nowadays--better

than in my day, even. What d'you think's the latest thing they've served

them out with? Ear trumpets for listening through keyholes! My little

girl brought one home the other night--tried it out on our sitting-room

door, and reckoned she could hear twice as much as with her ear to the

hole. Of course it's only a toy, mind you. Still, gives 'em the right

idea, eh?'

At this moment the telescreen let out a piercing whistle. It was the

signal to return to work. All three men sprang to their feet to join in

the struggle round the lifts, and the remaining tobacco fell out of

Winston's cigarette.

Chapter 6

Winston was writing in his diary:

It was three years ago. It was on a dark evening, in a narrow

side-street near one of the big railway stations. She was standing near a

doorway in the wall, under a street lamp that hardly gave any light. She

had a young face, painted very thick. It was really the paint that appealed

to me, the whiteness of it, like a mask, and the bright red lips. Party

women never paint their faces. There was nobody else in the street, and no

telescreens. She said two dollars. I----

For the moment it was too difficult to go on. He shut his eyes and pressed

his fingers against them, trying to squeeze out the vision that kept

recurring. He had an almost overwhelming temptation to shout a string of

filthy words at the top of his voice. Or to bang his head against the wall,

to kick over the table, and hurl the inkpot through the window--to do any

violent or noisy or painful thing that might black out the memory that was

tormenting him.

Your worst enemy, he reflected, was your own nervous system. At any moment

the tension inside you was liable to translate itself into some visible

symptom. He thought of a man whom he had passed in the street a few weeks

back; a quite ordinary-looking man, a Party member, aged thirty-five to

forty, tallish and thin, carrying a brief-case. They were a few metres

apart when the left side of the man's face was suddenly contorted by a sort

of spasm. It happened again just as they were passing one another: it was

only a twitch, a quiver, rapid as the clicking of a camera shutter, but

obviously habitual. He remembered thinking at the time: That poor devil is

done for. And what was frightening was that the action was quite possibly

unconscious. The most deadly danger of all was talking in your sleep. There

was no way of guarding against that, so far as he could see.

He drew his breath and went on writing:

I went with her through the doorway and across a backyard into a

basement kitchen. There was a bed against the wall, and a lamp on the

table, turned down very low. She----

His teeth were set on edge. He would have liked to spit. Simultaneously

with the woman in the basement kitchen he thought of Katharine, his wife.

Winston was married--had been married, at any rate: probably he still was

married, so far as he knew his wife was not dead. He seemed to breathe

again the warm stuffy odour of the basement kitchen, an odour compounded

of bugs and dirty clothes and villainous cheap scent, but nevertheless

alluring, because no woman of the Party ever used scent, or could be

imagined as doing so. Only the proles used scent. In his mind the smell

of it was inextricably mixed up with fornication.

When he had gone with that woman it had been his first lapse in two years

or thereabouts. Consorting with prostitutes was forbidden, of course, but

it was one of those rules that you could occasionally nerve yourself to

break. It was dangerous, but it was not a life-and-death matter. To be

caught with a prostitute might mean five years in a forced-labour camp:

not more, if you had committed no other offence. And it was easy enough,

provided that you could avoid being caught in the act. The poorer quarters

swarmed with women who were ready to sell themselves. Some could even be

purchased for a bottle of gin, which the proles were not supposed to drink.

Tacitly the Party was even inclined to encourage prostitution, as an outlet

for instincts which could not be altogether suppressed. Mere debauchery

did not matter very much, so long as it was furtive and joyless and only

involved the women of a submerged and despised class. The unforgivable

crime was promiscuity between Party members. But--though this was one

of the crimes that the accused in the great purges invariably confessed

to--it was difficult to imagine any such thing actually happening.

The aim of the Party was not merely to prevent men and women from forming

loyalties which it might not be able to control. Its real, undeclared

purpose was to remove all pleasure from the sexual act. Not love so much

as eroticism was the enemy, inside marriage as well as outside it. All

marriages between Party members had to be approved by a committee

appointed for the purpose, and--though the principle was never clearly

stated--permission was always refused if the couple concerned gave

the impression of being physically attracted to one another. The only

recognized purpose of marriage was to beget children for the service of

the Party. Sexual intercourse was to be looked on as a slightly disgusting

minor operation, like having an enema. This again was never put into plain

words, but in an indirect way it was rubbed into every Party member from

childhood onwards. There were even organizations such as the Junior

Anti-Sex League, which advocated complete celibacy for both sexes. All

children were to be begotten by artificial insemination (ARTSEM, it was

called in Newspeak) and brought up in public institutions. This, Winston

was aware, was not meant altogether seriously, but somehow it fitted in

with the general ideology of the Party. The Party was trying to kill the

sex instinct, or, if it could not be killed, then to distort it and dirty

it. He did not know why this was so, but it seemed natural that it should

be so. And as far as the women were concerned, the Party's efforts were

largely successful.

He thought again of Katharine. It must be nine, ten--nearly eleven years

since they had parted. It was curious how seldom he thought of her. For

days at a time he was capable of forgetting that he had ever been married.

They had only been together for about fifteen months. The Party did not

permit divorce, but it rather encouraged separation in cases where there

were no children.

Katharine was a tall, fair-haired girl, very straight, with splendid

movements. She had a bold, aquiline face, a face that one might have called

noble until one discovered that there was as nearly as possible nothing

behind it. Very early in her married life he had decided--though perhaps

it was only that he knew her more intimately than he knew most people--that

she had without exception the most stupid, vulgar, empty mind that he had

ever encountered. She had not a thought in her head that was not a slogan,

and there was no imbecility, absolutely none that she was not capable of

swallowing if the Party handed it out to her. 'The human sound-track' he

nicknamed her in his own mind. Yet he could have endured living with her

if it had not been for just one thing--sex.

As soon as he touched her she seemed to wince and stiffen. To embrace her

was like embracing a jointed wooden image. And what was strange was that

even when she was clasping him against her he had the feeling that she

was simultaneously pushing him away with all her strength. The rigidity

of her muscles managed to convey that impression. She would lie there

with shut eyes, neither resisting nor co-operating but SUBMITTING. It was

extraordinarily embarrassing, and, after a while, horrible. But even then

he could have borne living with her if it had been agreed that they should

remain celibate. But curiously enough it was Katharine who refused this.

They must, she said, produce a child if they could. So the performance

continued to happen, once a week quite regularly, whenever it was not

impossible. She even used to remind him of it in the morning, as something

which had to be done that evening and which must not be forgotten. She had

two names for it. One was 'making a baby', and the other was 'our duty to

the Party' (yes, she had actually used that phrase). Quite soon he grew to

have a feeling of positive dread when the appointed day came round. But

luckily no child appeared, and in the end she agreed to give up trying,

and soon afterwards they parted.

Winston sighed inaudibly. He picked up his pen again and

wrote:

She threw herself down on the bed, and at once, without any kind of

preliminary in the most coarse, horrible way you can imagine, pulled up

her skirt. I----

He saw himself standing there in the dim lamplight, with the smell of bugs

and cheap scent in his nostrils, and in his heart a feeling of defeat and

resentment which even at that moment was mixed up with the thought of

Katharine's white body, frozen for ever by the hypnotic power of the Party.

Why did it always have to be like this? Why could he not have a woman of

his own instead of these filthy scuffles at intervals of years? But a real

love affair was an almost unthinkable event. The women of the Party were

all alike. Chastity was as deep ingrained in them as Party loyalty. By

careful early conditioning, by games and cold water, by the rubbish that

was dinned into them at school and in the Spies and the Youth League, by

lectures, parades, songs, slogans, and martial music, the natural feeling

had been driven out of them. His reason told him that there must be

exceptions, but his heart did not believe it. They were all impregnable,

as the Party intended that they should be. And what he wanted, more even

than to be loved, was to break down that wall of virtue, even if it were

only once in his whole life. The sexual act, successfully performed, was

rebellion. Desire was thoughtcrime. Even to have awakened Katharine, if he

could have achieved it, would have been like a seduction, although she was

his wife.

But the rest of the story had got to be written down. He wrote:

I turned up the lamp. When I saw her in the light----

After the darkness the feeble light of the paraffin lamp had seemed very

bright. For the first time he could see the woman properly. He had taken a

step towards her and then halted, full of lust and terror. He was painfully

conscious of the risk he had taken in coming here. It was perfectly

possible that the patrols would catch him on the way out: for that matter

they might be waiting outside the door at this moment. If he went away

without even doing what he had come here to do----!

It had got to be written down, it had got to be confessed. What he had

suddenly seen in the lamplight was that the woman was OLD. The paint was

plastered so thick on her face that it looked as though it might crack

like a cardboard mask. There were streaks of white in her hair; but the

truly dreadful detail was that her mouth had fallen a little open,

revealing nothing except a cavernous blackness. She had no teeth at all.

He wrote hurriedly, in scrabbling handwriting:

When I saw her in the light she was quite an old woman, fifty years old

at least. But I went ahead and did it just the same.

He pressed his fingers against his eyelids again. He had written it down

at last, but it made no difference. The therapy had not worked. The urge

to shout filthy words at the top of his voice was as strong as ever.

Chapter 7

'If there is hope,' wrote Winston, 'it lies in the proles.'

If there was hope, it MUST lie in the proles, because only there in those

swarming disregarded masses, 85 per cent of the population of Oceania,

could the force to destroy the Party ever be generated. The Party could

not be overthrown from within. Its enemies, if it had any enemies, had

no way of coming together or even of identifying one another. Even if

the legendary Brotherhood existed, as just possibly it might, it was

inconceivable that its members could ever assemble in larger numbers than

twos and threes. Rebellion meant a look in the eyes, an inflexion of the

voice, at the most, an occasional whispered word. But the proles, if only

they could somehow become conscious of their own strength. would have no

need to conspire. They needed only to rise up and shake themselves like

a horse shaking off flies. If they chose they could blow the Party to

pieces tomorrow morning. Surely sooner or later it must occur to them to

do it? And yet----!

He remembered how once he had been walking down a crowded street when a

tremendous shout of hundreds of voices women's voices--had burst from a

side-street a little way ahead. It was a great formidable cry of anger

and despair, a deep, loud 'Oh-o-o-o-oh!' that went humming on like the

reverberation of a bell. His heart had leapt. It's started! he had thought.

A riot! The proles are breaking loose at last! When he had reached the spot

it was to see a mob of two or three hundred women crowding round the stalls

of a street market, with faces as tragic as though they had been the doomed

passengers on a sinking ship. But at this moment the general despair broke

down into a multitude of individual quarrels. It appeared that one of the

stalls had been selling tin saucepans. They were wretched, flimsy things,

but cooking-pots of any kind were always difficult to get. Now the supply

had unexpectedly given out. The successful women, bumped and jostled by

the rest, were trying to make off with their saucepans while dozens of

others clamoured round the stall, accusing the stall-keeper of favouritism

and of having more saucepans somewhere in reserve. There was a fresh

outburst of yells. Two bloated women, one of them with her hair coming

down, had got hold of the same saucepan and were trying to tear it out of

one another's hands. For a moment they were both tugging, and then the

handle came off. Winston watched them disgustedly. And yet, just for a

moment, what almost frightening power had sounded in that cry from only

a few hundred throats! Why was it that they could never shout like that

about anything that mattered?

He wrote:

Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they

have rebelled they cannot become conscious.

That, he reflected, might almost have been a transcription from one of the

Party textbooks. The Party claimed, of course, to have liberated the proles

from bondage. Before the Revolution they had been hideously oppressed by

the capitalists, they had been starved and flogged, women had been forced

to work in the coal mines (women still did work in the coal mines, as a

matter of fact), children had been sold into the factories at the age

of six. But simultaneously, true to the Principles of doublethink, the

Party taught that the proles were natural inferiors who must be kept in

subjection, like animals, by the application of a few simple rules. In

reality very little was known about the proles. It was not necessary to

know much. So long as they continued to work and breed, their other

activities were without importance. Left to themselves, like cattle turned

loose upon the plains of Argentina, they had reverted to a style of life

that appeared to be natural to them, a sort of ancestral pattern. They were

born, they grew up in the gutters, they went to work at twelve, they passed

through a brief blossoming-period of beauty and sexual desire, they married

at twenty, they were middle-aged at thirty, they died, for the most part,

at sixty. Heavy physical work, the care of home and children, petty

quarrels with neighbours, films, football, beer, and above all, gambling,

filled up the horizon of their minds. To keep them in control was not

difficult. A few agents of the Thought Police moved always among them,

spreading false rumours and marking down and eliminating the few

individuals who were judged capable of becoming dangerous; but no attempt

was made to indoctrinate them with the ideology of the Party. It was not

desirable that the proles should have strong political feelings. All that

was required of them was a primitive patriotism which could be appealed to

whenever it was necessary to make them accept longer working-hours or

shorter rations. And even when they became discontented, as they sometimes

did, their discontent led nowhere, because being without general ideas,

they could only focus it on petty specific grievances. The larger evils

invariably escaped their notice. The great majority of proles did not even

have telescreens in their homes. Even the civil police interfered with them

very little. There was a vast amount of criminality in London, a whole

world-within-a-world of thieves, bandits, prostitutes, drug-peddlers, and

racketeers of every description; but since it all happened among the proles

themselves, it was of no importance. In all questions of morals they were

allowed to follow their ancestral code. The sexual puritanism of the

Party was not imposed upon them. Promiscuity went unpunished, divorce

was permitted. For that matter, even religious worship would have been

permitted if the proles had shown any sign of needing or wanting it.

They were beneath suspicion. As the Party slogan put it: 'Proles and

animals are free.'

Winston reached down and cautiously scratched his varicose ulcer. It

had begun itching again. The thing you invariably came back to was the

impossibility of knowing what life before the Revolution had really been

like. He took out of the drawer a copy of a children's history textbook

which he had borrowed from Mrs Parsons, and began copying a passage into

the diary:

In the old days (it ran), before the glorious Revolution, London was

not the beautiful city that we know today. It was a dark, dirty, miserable

place where hardly anybody had enough to eat and where hundreds and

thousands of poor people had no boots on their feet and not even a roof to

sleep under. Children no older than you had to work twelve hours a day for

cruel masters who flogged them with whips if they worked too slowly and

fed them on nothing but stale breadcrusts and water. But in among all

this terrible poverty there were just a few great big beautiful houses

that were lived in by rich men who had as many as thirty servants to look

after them. These rich men were called capitalists. They were fat, ugly

men with wicked faces, like the one in the picture on the opposite page.

You can see that he is dressed in a long black coat which was called a

frock coat, and a queer, shiny hat shaped like a stovepipe, which was

called a top hat. This was the uniform of the capitalists, and no one else

was allowed to wear it. The capitalists owned everything in the world, and

everyone else was their slave. They owned all the land, all the houses,

all the factories, and all the money. If anyone disobeyed them they could

throw them into prison, or they could take his job away and starve him to

death. When any ordinary person spoke to a capitalist he had to cringe and

bow to him, and take off his cap and address him as 'Sir'. The chief of

all the capitalists was called the King, and----

But he knew the rest of the catalogue. There would be mention of the

bishops in their lawn sleeves, the judges in their ermine robes, the

pillory, the stocks, the treadmill, the cat-o'-nine tails, the Lord Mayor's

Banquet, and the practice of kissing the Pope's toe. There was also

something called the JUS PRIMAE NOCTIS, which would probably not be

mentioned in a textbook for children. It was the law by which every

capitalist had the right to sleep with any woman working in one of his

factories.

How could you tell how much of it was lies? It MIGHT be true that the

average human being was better off now than he had been before the

Revolution. The only evidence to the contrary was the mute protest in your

own bones, the instinctive feeling that the conditions you lived in were

intolerable and that at some other time they must have been different. It

struck him that the truly characteristic thing about modern life was not

its cruelty and insecurity, but simply its bareness, its dinginess, its

listlessness. Life, if you looked about you, bore no resemblance not only

to the lies that streamed out of the telescreens, but even to the ideals

that the Party was trying to achieve. Great areas of it, even for a Party

member, were neutral and non-political, a matter of slogging through dreary

jobs, fighting for a place on the Tube, darning a worn-out sock, cadging

a saccharine tablet, saving a cigarette end. The ideal set up by the

Party was something huge, terrible, and glittering--a world of steel

and concrete, of monstrous machines and terrifying weapons--a nation of

warriors and fanatics, marching forward in perfect unity, all thinking the

same thoughts and shouting the same slogans, perpetually working, fighting,

triumphing, persecuting--three hundred million people all with the same

face. The reality was decaying, dingy cities where underfed people shuffled

to and fro in leaky shoes, in patched-up nineteenth-century houses that

smelt always of cabbage and bad lavatories. He seemed to see a vision of

London, vast and ruinous, city of a million dustbins, and mixed up with it

was a picture of Mrs Parsons, a woman with lined face and wispy hair,

fiddling helplessly with a blocked waste-pipe.

He reached down and scratched his ankle again. Day and night the

telescreens bruised your ears with statistics proving that people today

had more food, more clothes, better houses, better recreations--that they

lived longer, worked shorter hours, were bigger, healthier, stronger,

happier, more intelligent, better educated, than the people of fifty years

ago. Not a word of it could ever be proved or disproved. The Party claimed,

for example, that today 40 per cent of adult proles were literate: before

the Revolution, it was said, the number had only been 15 per cent. The

Party claimed that the infant mortality rate was now only 160 per

thousand, whereas before the Revolution it had been 300--and so it went

on. It was like a single equation with two unknowns. It might very well be

that literally every word in the history books, even the things that one

accepted without question, was pure fantasy. For all he knew there might

never have been any such law as the JUS PRIMAE NOCTIS, or any such creature

as a capitalist, or any such garment as a top hat.

Everything faded into mist. The past was erased, the erasure was forgotten,

the lie became truth. Just once in his life he had possessed--AFTER the

event: that was what counted--concrete, unmistakable evidence of an act of

falsification. He had held it between his fingers for as long as thirty

seconds. In 1973, it must have been--at any rate, it was at about the time

when he and Katharine had parted. But the really relevant date was seven

or eight years earlier.

The story really began in the middle sixties, the period of the great

purges in which the original leaders of the Revolution were wiped out

once and for all. By 1970 none of them was left, except Big Brother

himself. All the rest had by that time been exposed as traitors and

counter-revolutionaries. Goldstein had fled and was hiding no one knew

where, and of the others, a few had simply disappeared, while the majority

had been executed after spectacular public trials at which they made

confession of their crimes. Among the last survivors were three men named

Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford. It must have been in 1965 that these three

had been arrested. As often happened, they had vanished for a year or more,

so that one did not know whether they were alive or dead, and then had

suddenly been brought forth to incriminate themselves in the usual way.

They had confessed to intelligence with the enemy (at that date, too, the

enemy was Eurasia), embezzlement of public funds, the murder of various

trusted Party members, intrigues against the leadership of Big Brother

which had started long before the Revolution happened, and acts of sabotage

causing the death of hundreds of thousands of people. After confessing to

these things they had been pardoned, reinstated in the Party, and given

posts which were in fact sinecures but which sounded important. All three

had written long, abject articles in 'The Times', analysing the reasons

for their defection and promising to make amends.

Some time after their release Winston had actually seen all three of them

in the Chestnut Tree Cafe. He remembered the sort of terrified fascination

with which he had watched them out of the corner of his eye. They were men

far older than himself, relics of the ancient world, almost the last great

figures left over from the heroic days of the Party. The glamour of the

underground struggle and the civil war still faintly clung to them. He had

the feeling, though already at that time facts and dates were growing

blurry, that he had known their names years earlier than he had known that

of Big Brother. But also they were outlaws, enemies, untouchables, doomed

with absolute certainty to extinction within a year or two. No one who had

once fallen into the hands of the Thought Police ever escaped in the end.

They were corpses waiting to be sent back to the grave.

There was no one at any of the tables nearest to them. It was not wise

even to be seen in the neighbourhood of such people. They were sitting

in silence before glasses of the gin flavoured with cloves which was the

speciality of the cafe. Of the three, it was Rutherford whose appearance

had most impressed Winston. Rutherford had once been a famous caricaturist,

whose brutal cartoons had helped to inflame popular opinion before and

during the Revolution. Even now, at long intervals, his cartoons were

appearing in The Times. They were simply an imitation of his earlier

manner, and curiously lifeless and unconvincing. Always they were a

rehashing of the ancient themes--slum tenements, starving children, street

battles, capitalists in top hats--even on the barricades the capitalists

still seemed to cling to their top hats an endless, hopeless effort to

get back into the past. He was a monstrous man, with a mane of greasy

grey hair, his face pouched and seamed, with thick negroid lips. At one

time he must have been immensely strong; now his great body was sagging,

sloping, bulging, falling away in every direction. He seemed to be breaking

up before one's eyes, like a mountain crumbling.

It was the lonely hour of fifteen. Winston could not now remember how he

had come to be in the cafe at such a time. The place was almost empty. A

tinny music was trickling from the telescreens. The three men sat in their

corner almost motionless, never speaking. Uncommanded, the waiter brought

fresh glasses of gin. There was a chessboard on the table beside them, with

the pieces set out but no game started. And then, for perhaps half a minute

in all, something happened to the telescreens. The tune that they were

playing changed, and the tone of the music changed too. There came into

it--but it was something hard to describe. It was a peculiar, cracked,

braying, jeering note: in his mind Winston called it a yellow note. And

then a voice from the telescreen was singing:

Under the spreading chestnut tree

I sold you and you sold me:

There lie they, and here lie we

Under the spreading chestnut tree.

The three men never stirred. But when Winston glanced again at Rutherford's

ruinous face, he saw that his eyes were full of tears. And for the first

time he noticed, with a kind of inward shudder, and yet not knowing

AT WHAT he shuddered, that both Aaronson and Rutherford had broken noses.

A little later all three were re-arrested. It appeared that they had

engaged in fresh conspiracies from the very moment of their release. At

their second trial they confessed to all their old crimes over again, with

a whole string of new ones. They were executed, and their fate was recorded

in the Party histories, a warning to posterity. About five years after

this, in 1973, Winston was unrolling a wad of documents which had just

flopped out of the pneumatic tube on to his desk when he came on a fragment

of paper which had evidently been slipped in among the others and then

forgotten. The instant he had flattened it out he saw its significance.

It was a half-page torn out of 'The Times' of about ten years earlier--the

top half of the page, so that it included the date--and it contained a

photograph of the delegates at some Party function in New York. Prominent

in the middle of the group were Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford. There was

no mistaking them, in any case their names were in the caption at the

bottom.

The point was that at both trials all three men had confessed that on that

date they had been on Eurasian soil. They had flown from a secret airfield

in Canada to a rendezvous somewhere in Siberia, and had conferred with

members of the Eurasian General Staff, to whom they had betrayed important

military secrets. The date had stuck in Winston's memory because it chanced

to be midsummer day; but the whole story must be on record in countless

other places as well. There was only one possible conclusion: the

confessions were lies.

Of course, this was not in itself a discovery. Even at that time Winston

had not imagined that the people who were wiped out in the purges had

actually committed the crimes that they were accused of. But this was

concrete evidence; it was a fragment of the abolished past, like a fossil

bone which turns up in the wrong stratum and destroys a geological theory.

It was enough to blow the Party to atoms, if in some way it could have

been published to the world and its significance made known.

He had gone straight on working. As soon as he saw what the photograph

was, and what it meant, he had covered it up with another sheet of paper.

Luckily, when he unrolled it, it had been upside-down from the point of

view of the telescreen.

He took his scribbling pad on his knee and pushed back his chair so as

to get as far away from the telescreen as possible. To keep your face

expressionless was not difficult, and even your breathing could be

controlled, with an effort: but you could not control the beating of your

heart, and the telescreen was quite delicate enough to pick it up. He let

what he judged to be ten minutes go by, tormented all the while by the

fear that some accident--a sudden draught blowing across his desk, for

instance--would betray him. Then, without uncovering it again, he dropped

the photograph into the memory hole, along with some other waste papers.

Within another minute, perhaps, it would have crumbled into ashes.

That was ten--eleven years ago. Today, probably, he would have kept that

photograph. It was curious that the fact of having held it in his fingers

seemed to him to make a difference even now, when the photograph itself,

as well as the event it recorded, was only memory. Was the Party's hold

upon the past less strong, he wondered, because a piece of evidence which

existed no longer HAD ONCE existed?

But today, supposing that it could be somehow resurrected from its ashes,

the photograph might not even be evidence. Already, at the time when he

made his discovery, Oceania was no longer at war with Eurasia, and it must

have been to the agents of Eastasia that the three dead men had betrayed

their country. Since then there had been other changes--two, three,

he could not remember how many. Very likely the confessions had been

rewritten and rewritten until the original facts and dates no longer

had the smallest significance. The past not only changed, but changed

continuously. What most afflicted him with the sense of nightmare was that

he had never clearly understood why the huge imposture was undertaken.

The immediate advantages of falsifying the past were obvious, but the

ultimate motive was mysterious. He took up his pen again and wrote:

I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY.

He wondered, as he had many times wondered before, whether he himself was

a lunatic. Perhaps a lunatic was simply a minority of one. At one time it

had been a sign of madness to believe that the earth goes round the sun;

today, to believe that the past is unalterable. He might be ALONE in

holding that belief, and if alone, then a lunatic. But the thought of being

a lunatic did not greatly trouble him: the horror was that he might also

be wrong.

He picked up the children's history book and looked at the portrait of

Big Brother which formed its frontispiece. The hypnotic eyes gazed into

his own. It was as though some huge force were pressing down upon

you--something that penetrated inside your skull, battering against your

brain, frightening you out of your beliefs, persuading you, almost, to

deny the evidence of your senses. In the end the Party would announce that

two and two made five, and you would have to believe it. It was inevitable

that they should make that claim sooner or later: the logic of their

position demanded it. Not merely the validity of experience, but the very

existence of external reality, was tacitly denied by their philosophy. The

heresy of heresies was common sense. And what was terrifying was not that

they would kill you for thinking otherwise, but that they might be right.

For, after all, how do we know that two and two make four? Or that the

force of gravity works? Or that the past is unchangeable? If both the past

and the external world exist only in the mind, and if the mind itself is

controllable what then?

But no! His courage seemed suddenly to stiffen of its own accord. The face

of O'Brien, not called up by any obvious association, had floated into his

mind. He knew, with more certainty than before, that O'Brien was on his

side. He was writing the diary for O'Brien--TO O'Brien: it was like an

interminable letter which no one would ever read, but which was addressed

to a particular person and took its colour from that fact.

The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was

their final, most essential command. His heart sank as he thought of

the enormous power arrayed against him, the ease with which any Party

intellectual would overthrow him in debate, the subtle arguments which he

would not be able to understand, much less answer. And yet he was in the

right! They were wrong and he was right. The obvious, the silly, and the

true had got to be defended. Truisms are true, hold on to that! The solid

world exists, its laws do not change. Stones are hard, water is wet,

objects unsupported fall towards the earth's centre. With the feeling that

he was speaking to O'Brien, and also that he was setting forth an important

axiom, he wrote:

Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is

granted, all else follows.

Chapter 8

From somewhere at the bottom of a passage the smell of roasting

coffee--real coffee, not Victory Coffee--came floating out into the street.

Winston paused involuntarily. For perhaps two seconds he was back in the

half-forgotten world of his childhood. Then a door banged, seeming to cut

off the smell as abruptly as though it had been a sound.

He had walked several kilometres over pavements, and his varicose ulcer

was throbbing. This was the second time in three weeks that he had missed

an evening at the Community Centre: a rash act, since you could be certain

that the number of your attendances at the Centre was carefully checked.

In principle a Party member had no spare time, and was never alone except

in bed. It was assumed that when he was not working, eating, or sleeping

he would be taking part in some kind of communal recreation: to do anything

that suggested a taste for solitude, even to go for a walk by yourself,

was always slightly dangerous. There was a word for it in Newspeak:

OWNLIFE, it was called, meaning individualism and eccentricity. But this

evening as he came out of the Ministry the balminess of the April air had

tempted him. The sky was a warmer blue than he had seen it that year, and

suddenly the long, noisy evening at the Centre, the boring, exhausting

games, the lectures, the creaking camaraderie oiled by gin, had seemed

intolerable. On impulse he had turned away from the bus-stop and wandered

off into the labyrinth of London, first south, then east, then north again,

losing himself among unknown streets and hardly bothering in which

direction he was going.

'If there is hope,' he had written in the diary, 'it lies in the proles.'

The words kept coming back to him, statement of a mystical truth and a

palpable absurdity. He was somewhere in the vague, brown-coloured slums

to the north and east of what had once been Saint Pancras Station. He was

walking up a cobbled street of little two-storey houses with battered

doorways which gave straight on the pavement and which were somehow

curiously suggestive of ratholes. There were puddles of filthy water here

and there among the cobbles. In and out of the dark doorways, and down

narrow alley-ways that branched off on either side, people swarmed in

astonishing numbers--girls in full bloom, with crudely lipsticked mouths,

and youths who chased the girls, and swollen waddling women who showed you

what the girls would be like in ten years' time, and old bent creatures

shuffling along on splayed feet, and ragged barefooted children who played

in the puddles and then scattered at angry yells from their mothers.

Perhaps a quarter of the windows in the street were broken and boarded up.

Most of the people paid no attention to Winston; a few eyed him with a

sort of guarded curiosity. Two monstrous women with brick-red forearms

folded across their aprons were talking outside a doorway. Winston caught

scraps of conversation as he approached.

'"Yes," I says to 'er, "that's all very well," I says. "But if you'd of

been in my place you'd of done the same as what I done. It's easy to

criticize," I says, "but you ain't got the same problems as what I got."'

'Ah,' said the other, 'that's jest it. That's jest where it is.'

The strident voices stopped abruptly. The women studied him in hostile

silence as he went past. But it was not hostility, exactly; merely a kind

of wariness, a momentary stiffening, as at the passing of some unfamiliar

animal. The blue overalls of the Party could not be a common sight in a

street like this. Indeed, it was unwise to be seen in such places, unless

you had definite business there. The patrols might stop you if you happened

to run into them. 'May I see your papers, comrade? What are you doing here?

What time did you leave work? Is this your usual way home?'--and so on and

so forth. Not that there was any rule against walking home by an unusual

route: but it was enough to draw attention to you if the Thought Police

heard about it.

Suddenly the whole street was in commotion. There were yells of warning

from all sides. People were shooting into the doorways like rabbits. A

young woman leapt out of a doorway a little ahead of Winston, grabbed up a

tiny child playing in a puddle, whipped her apron round it, and leapt back

again, all in one movement. At the same instant a man in a concertina-like

black suit, who had emerged from a side alley, ran towards Winston,

pointing excitedly to the sky.

'Steamer!' he yelled. 'Look out, guv'nor! Bang over'ead! Lay down quick!'

'Steamer' was a nickname which, for some reason, the proles applied to

rocket bombs. Winston promptly flung himself on his face. The proles were

nearly always right when they gave you a warning of this kind. They seemed

to possess some kind of instinct which told them several seconds in advance

when a rocket was coming, although the rockets supposedly travelled faster

than sound. Winston clasped his forearms above his head. There was a roar

that seemed to make the pavement heave; a shower of light objects pattered

on to his back. When he stood up he found that he was covered with

fragments of glass from the nearest window.

He walked on. The bomb had demolished a group of houses 200 metres up the

street. A black plume of smoke hung in the sky, and below it a cloud of

plaster dust in which a crowd was already forming around the ruins. There

was a little pile of plaster lying on the pavement ahead of him, and in

the middle of it he could see a bright red streak. When he got up to it he

saw that it was a human hand severed at the wrist. Apart from the bloody

stump, the hand was so completely whitened as to resemble a plaster cast.

He kicked the thing into the gutter, and then, to avoid the crowd, turned

down a side-street to the right. Within three or four minutes he was out

of the area which the bomb had affected, and the sordid swarming life of

the streets was going on as though nothing had happened. It was nearly

twenty hours, and the drinking-shops which the proles frequented ('pubs',

they called them) were choked with customers. From their grimy swing doors,

endlessly opening and shutting, there came forth a smell of urine, sawdust,

and sour beer. In an angle formed by a projecting house-front three men

were standing very close together, the middle one of them holding a

folded-up newspaper which the other two were studying over his shoulder.

Even before he was near enough to make out the expression on their faces,

Winston could see absorption in every line of their bodies. It was

obviously some serious piece of news that they were reading. He was a few

paces away from them when suddenly the group broke up and two of the men

were in violent altercation. For a moment they seemed almost on the point

of blows.

'Can't you bleeding well listen to what I say? I tell you no number ending

in seven ain't won for over fourteen months!'

'Yes, it 'as, then!'

'No, it 'as not! Back 'ome I got the 'ole lot of 'em for over two years

wrote down on a piece of paper. I takes 'em down reg'lar as the clock. An'

I tell you, no number ending in seven----'

'Yes, a seven 'AS won! I could pretty near tell you the bleeding number.

Four oh seven, it ended in. It were in February--second week in February.'

'February your grandmother! I got it all down in black and white. An' I

tell you, no number----'

'Oh, pack it in!' said the third man.

They were talking about the Lottery. Winston looked back when he had gone

thirty metres. They were still arguing, with vivid, passionate faces.

The Lottery, with its weekly pay-out of enormous prizes, was the one public

event to which the proles paid serious attention. It was probable that

there were some millions of proles for whom the Lottery was the principal

if not the only reason for remaining alive. It was their delight, their

folly, their anodyne, their intellectual stimulant. Where the Lottery was

concerned, even people who could barely read and write seemed capable of

intricate calculations and staggering feats of memory. There was a whole

tribe of men who made a living simply by selling systems, forecasts, and

lucky amulets. Winston had nothing to do with the running of the Lottery,

which was managed by the Ministry of Plenty, but he was aware (indeed

everyone in the party was aware) that the prizes were largely imaginary.

Only small sums were actually paid out, the winners of the big prizes being

non-existent persons. In the absence of any real intercommunication between

one part of Oceania and another, this was not difficult to arrange.

But if there was hope, it lay in the proles. You had to cling on to that.

When you put it in words it sounded reasonable: it was when you looked at

the human beings passing you on the pavement that it became an act of

faith. The street into which he had turned ran downhill. He had a feeling

that he had been in this neighbourhood before, and that there was a main

thoroughfare not far away. From somewhere ahead there came a din of

shouting voices. The street took a sharp turn and then ended in a flight

of steps which led down into a sunken alley where a few stall-keepers

were selling tired-looking vegetables. At this moment Winston remembered

where he was. The alley led out into the main street, and down the next

turning, not five minutes away, was the junk-shop where he had bought the

blank book which was now his diary. And in a small stationer's shop not

far away he had bought his penholder and his bottle of ink.

He paused for a moment at the top of the steps. On the opposite side of

the alley there was a dingy little pub whose windows appeared to be frosted

over but in reality were merely coated with dust. A very old man, bent but

active, with white moustaches that bristled forward like those of a prawn,

pushed open the swing door and went in. As Winston stood watching, it

occurred to him that the old man, who must be eighty at the least, had

already been middle-aged when the Revolution happened. He and a few others

like him were the last links that now existed with the vanished world of

capitalism. In the Party itself there were not many people left whose ideas

had been formed before the Revolution. The older generation had mostly

been wiped out in the great purges of the fifties and sixties, and the few

who survived had long ago been terrified into complete intellectual

surrender. If there was any one still alive who could give you a truthful

account of conditions in the early part of the century, it could only be a

prole. Suddenly the passage from the history book that he had copied into

his diary came back into Winston's mind, and a lunatic impulse took hold

of him. He would go into the pub, he would scrape acquaintance with that

old man and question him. He would say to him: 'Tell me about your life

when you were a boy. What was it like in those days? Were things better

than they are now, or were they worse?'

Hurriedly, lest he should have time to become frightened, he descended the

steps and crossed the narrow street. It was madness of course. As usual,

there was no definite rule against talking to proles and frequenting their

pubs, but it was far too unusual an action to pass unnoticed. If the

patrols appeared he might plead an attack of faintness, but it was not

likely that they would believe him. He pushed open the door, and a hideous

cheesy smell of sour beer hit him in the face. As he entered the din of

voices dropped to about half its volume. Behind his back he could feel

everyone eyeing his blue overalls. A game of darts which was going on at

the other end of the room interrupted itself for perhaps as much as thirty

seconds. The old man whom he had followed was standing at the bar, having

some kind of altercation with the barman, a large, stout, hook-nosed young

man with enormous forearms. A knot of others, standing round with glasses

in their hands, were watching the scene.

'I arst you civil enough, didn't I?' said the old man, straightening his

shoulders pugnaciously. 'You telling me you ain't got a pint mug in the

'ole bleeding boozer?'

'And what in hell's name IS a pint?' said the barman, leaning forward with

the tips of his fingers on the counter.

''Ark at 'im! Calls 'isself a barman and don't know what a pint is! Why,

a pint's the 'alf of a quart, and there's four quarts to the gallon.

'Ave to teach you the A, B, C next.'

'Never heard of 'em,' said the barman shortly. 'Litre and half

litre--that's all we serve. There's the glasses on the shelf in front

of you.'

'I likes a pint,' persisted the old man. 'You could 'a drawed me off a pint

easy enough. We didn't 'ave these bleeding litres when I was a young man.'

'When you were a young man we were all living in the treetops,' said the

barman, with a glance at the other customers.

There was a shout of laughter, and the uneasiness caused by Winston's entry

seemed to disappear. The old man's white-stubbled face had flushed pink. He

turned away, muttering to himself, and bumped into Winston. Winston caught

him gently by the arm.

'May I offer you a drink?' he said.

'You're a gent,' said the other, straightening his shoulders again. He

appeared not to have noticed Winston's blue overalls. 'Pint!' he added

aggressively to the barman. 'Pint of wallop.'

The barman swished two half-litres of dark-brown beer into thick glasses

which he had rinsed in a bucket under the counter. Beer was the only drink

you could get in prole pubs. The proles were supposed not to drink gin,

though in practice they could get hold of it easily enough. The game of

darts was in full swing again, and the knot of men at the bar had begun

talking about lottery tickets. Winston's presence was forgotten for a

moment. There was a deal table under the window where he and the old man

could talk without fear of being overheard. It was horribly dangerous, but

at any rate there was no telescreen in the room, a point he had made sure

of as soon as he came in.

''E could 'a drawed me off a pint,' grumbled the old man as he settled down

behind a glass. 'A 'alf litre ain't enough. It don't satisfy. And a 'ole

litre's too much. It starts my bladder running. Let alone the price.'

'You must have seen great changes since you were a young man,' said

Winston tentatively.

The old man's pale blue eyes moved from the darts board to the bar, and

from the bar to the door of the Gents, as though it were in the bar-room

that he expected the changes to have occurred.

'The beer was better,' he said finally. 'And cheaper! When I was a young

man, mild beer--wallop we used to call it--was fourpence a pint. That was

before the war, of course.'

'Which war was that?' said Winston.

'It's all wars,' said the old man vaguely. He took up his glass, and his

shoulders straightened again. ''Ere's wishing you the very best of 'ealth!'

In his lean throat the sharp-pointed Adam's apple made a surprisingly rapid

up-and-down movement, and the beer vanished. Winston went to the bar and

came back with two more half-litres. The old man appeared to have forgotten

his prejudice against drinking a full litre.

'You are very much older than I am,' said Winston. 'You must have been a

grown man before I was born. You can remember what it was like in the old

days, before the Revolution. People of my age don't really know anything

about those times. We can only read about them in books, and what it says

in the books may not be true. I should like your opinion on that. The

history books say that life before the Revolution was completely different

from what it is now. There was the most terrible oppression, injustice,

poverty worse than anything we can imagine. Here in London, the great mass

of the people never had enough to eat from birth to death. Half of them

hadn't even boots on their feet. They worked twelve hours a day, they left

school at nine, they slept ten in a room. And at the same time there were

a very few people, only a few thousands--the capitalists, they were

called--who were rich and powerful. They owned everything that there was

to own. They lived in great gorgeous houses with thirty servants, they

rode about in motor-cars and four-horse carriages, they drank champagne,

they wore top hats----'

The old man brightened suddenly.

'Top 'ats!' he said. 'Funny you should mention 'em. The same thing come

into my 'ead only yesterday, I dono why. I was jest thinking, I ain't seen

a top 'at in years. Gorn right out, they 'ave. The last time I wore one

was at my sister-in-law's funeral. And that was--well, I couldn't give you

the date, but it must'a been fifty years ago. Of course it was only 'ired

for the occasion, you understand.'

'It isn't very important about the top hats,' said Winston patiently.

'The point is, these capitalists--they and a few lawyers and priests and

so forth who lived on them--were the lords of the earth. Everything existed

for their benefit. You--the ordinary people, the workers--were their

slaves. They could do what they liked with you. They could ship you off to

Canada like cattle. They could sleep with your daughters if they chose.

They could order you to be flogged with something called a cat-o'-nine

tails. You had to take your cap off when you passed them. Every capitalist

went about with a gang of lackeys who----'

The old man brightened again.

'Lackeys!' he said. 'Now there's a word I ain't 'eard since ever so long.

Lackeys! That reg'lar takes me back, that does. I recollect--oh, donkey's

years ago--I used to sometimes go to 'Yde Park of a Sunday afternoon to

'ear the blokes making speeches. Salvation Army, Roman Catholics, Jews,

Indians--all sorts there was. And there was one bloke--well, I couldn't

give you 'is name, but a real powerful speaker 'e was. 'E didn't 'alf

give it 'em! "Lackeys!" 'e says, "lackeys of the bourgeoisie! Flunkies of

the ruling class!" Parasites--that was another of them. And 'yenas--'e

definitely called 'em 'yenas. Of course 'e was referring to the Labour

Party, you understand.'

Winston had the feeling that they were talking at cross-purposes.

'What I really wanted to know was this,' he said. 'Do you feel that you

have more freedom now than you had in those days? Are you treated more

like a human being? In the old days, the rich people, the people at the

top----'

'The 'Ouse of Lords,' put in the old man reminiscently.

'The House of Lords, if you like. What I am asking is, were these people

able to treat you as an inferior, simply because they were rich and you

were poor? Is it a fact, for instance, that you had to call them "Sir" and

take off your cap when you passed them?'

The old man appeared to think deeply. He drank off about a quarter of his

beer before answering.

'Yes,' he said. 'They liked you to touch your cap to 'em. It showed

respect, like. I didn't agree with it, myself, but I done it often enough.

Had to, as you might say.'

'And was it usual--I'm only quoting what I've read in history books--was

it usual for these people and their servants to push you off the pavement

into the gutter?'

'One of 'em pushed me once,' said the old man. 'I recollect it as if it

was yesterday. It was Boat Race night--terribly rowdy they used to get on

Boat Race night--and I bumps into a young bloke on Shaftesbury Avenue.

Quite a gent, 'e was--dress shirt, top 'at, black overcoat. 'E was kind

of zig-zagging across the pavement, and I bumps into 'im accidental-like.

'E says, "Why can't you look where you're going?" 'e says. I say, "Ju think

you've bought the bleeding pavement?" 'E says, "I'll twist your bloody 'ead

off if you get fresh with me." I says, "You're drunk. I'll give you in

charge in 'alf a minute," I says. An' if you'll believe me, 'e puts 'is

'and on my chest and gives me a shove as pretty near sent me under the

wheels of a bus. Well, I was young in them days, and I was going to 'ave

fetched 'im one, only----'

A sense of helplessness took hold of Winston. The old man's memory was

nothing but a rubbish-heap of details. One could question him all day

without getting any real information. The party histories might still be

true, after a fashion: they might even be completely true. He made a last

attempt.

'Perhaps I have not made myself clear,' he said. 'What I'm trying to say

is this. You have been alive a very long time; you lived half your life

before the Revolution. In 1925, for instance, you were already grown up.

Would you say from what you can remember, that life in 1925 was better

than it is now, or worse? If you could choose, would you prefer to live

then or now?'

The old man looked meditatively at the darts board. He finished up his

beer, more slowly than before. When he spoke it was with a tolerant

philosophical air, as though the beer had mellowed him.

'I know what you expect me to say,' he said. 'You expect me to say as I'd

sooner be young again. Most people'd say they'd sooner be young, if you

arst 'em. You got your 'ealth and strength when you're young. When you

get to my time of life you ain't never well. I suffer something wicked

from my feet, and my bladder's jest terrible. Six and seven times a night

it 'as me out of bed. On the other 'and, there's great advantages in being

a old man. You ain't got the same worries. No truck with women, and that's

a great thing. I ain't 'ad a woman for near on thirty year, if you'd

credit it. Nor wanted to, what's more.'

Winston sat back against the window-sill. It was no use going on. He was

about to buy some more beer when the old man suddenly got up and shuffled

rapidly into the stinking urinal at the side of the room. The extra

half-litre was already working on him. Winston sat for a minute or two

gazing at his empty glass, and hardly noticed when his feet carried him out

into the street again. Within twenty years at the most, he reflected, the

huge and simple question, 'Was life better before the Revolution than it

is now?' would have ceased once and for all to be answerable. But in effect

it was unanswerable even now, since the few scattered survivors from the

ancient world were incapable of comparing one age with another. They

remembered a million useless things, a quarrel with a workmate, a hunt for

a lost bicycle pump, the expression on a long-dead sister's face, the

swirls of dust on a windy morning seventy years ago: but all the relevant

facts were outside the range of their vision. They were like the ant,

which can see small objects but not large ones. And when memory failed and

written records were falsified--when that happened, the claim of the Party

to have improved the conditions of human life had got to be accepted,

because there did not exist, and never again could exist, any standard

against which it could be tested.

At this moment his train of thought stopped abruptly. He halted and looked

up. He was in a narrow street, with a few dark little shops, interspersed

among dwelling-houses. Immediately above his head there hung three

discoloured metal balls which looked as if they had once been gilded. He

seemed to know the place. Of course! He was standing outside the junk-shop

where he had bought the diary.

A twinge of fear went through him. It had been a sufficiently rash act to

buy the book in the beginning, and he had sworn never to come near the

place again. And yet the instant that he allowed his thoughts to wander,

his feet had brought him back here of their own accord. It was precisely

against suicidal impulses of this kind that he had hoped to guard himself

by opening the diary. At the same time he noticed that although it was

nearly twenty-one hours the shop was still open. With the feeling that he

would be less conspicuous inside than hanging about on the pavement, he

stepped through the doorway. If questioned, he could plausibly say that

he was trying to buy razor blades.

The proprietor had just lighted a hanging oil lamp which gave off an

unclean but friendly smell. He was a man of perhaps sixty, frail and

bowed, with a long, benevolent nose, and mild eyes distorted by thick

spectacles. His hair was almost white, but his eyebrows were bushy and

still black. His spectacles, his gentle, fussy movements, and the fact

that he was wearing an aged jacket of black velvet, gave him a vague air

of intellectuality, as though he had been some kind of literary man, or

perhaps a musician. His voice was soft, as though faded, and his accent

less debased than that of the majority of proles.

'I recognized you on the pavement,' he said immediately. 'You're the

gentleman that bought the young lady's keepsake album. That was a beautiful

bit of paper, that was. Cream-laid, it used to be called. There's been no

paper like that made for--oh, I dare say fifty years.' He peered at Winston

over the top of his spectacles. 'Is there anything special I can do for

you? Or did you just want to look round?'

'I was passing,' said Winston vaguely. 'I just looked in. I don't want

anything in particular.'

'It's just as well,' said the other, 'because I don't suppose I could have

satisfied you.' He made an apologetic gesture with his softpalmed hand.

'You see how it is; an empty shop, you might say. Between you and me, the

antique trade's just about finished. No demand any longer, and no stock

either. Furniture, china, glass it's all been broken up by degrees. And

of course the metal stuff's mostly been melted down. I haven't seen a brass

candlestick in years.'

The tiny interior of the shop was in fact uncomfortably full, but there

was almost nothing in it of the slightest value. The floorspace was very

restricted, because all round the walls were stacked innumerable dusty

picture-frames. In the window there were trays of nuts and bolts, worn-out

chisels, penknives with broken blades, tarnished watches that did not even

pretend to be in going order, and other miscellaneous rubbish. Only on a

small table in the corner was there a litter of odds and ends--lacquered

snuffboxes, agate brooches, and the like--which looked as though they might

include something interesting. As Winston wandered towards the table his

eye was caught by a round, smooth thing that gleamed softly in the

lamplight, and he picked it up.

It was a heavy lump of glass, curved on one side, flat on the other, making

almost a hemisphere. There was a peculiar softness, as of rainwater, in

both the colour and the texture of the glass. At the heart of it, magnified

by the curved surface, there was a strange, pink, convoluted object that

recalled a rose or a sea anemone.

'What is it?' said Winston, fascinated.

'That's coral, that is,' said the old man. 'It must have come from the

Indian Ocean. They used to kind of embed it in the glass. That wasn't made

less than a hundred years ago. More, by the look of it.'

'It's a beautiful thing,' said Winston.

'It is a beautiful thing,' said the other appreciatively. 'But there's not

many that'd say so nowadays.' He coughed. 'Now, if it so happened that you

wanted to buy it, that'd cost you four dollars. I can remember when a thing

like that would have fetched eight pounds, and eight pounds was--well, I

can't work it out, but it was a lot of money. But who cares about genuine

antiques nowadays--even the few that's left?'

Winston immediately paid over the four dollars and slid the coveted thing

into his pocket. What appealed to him about it was not so much its beauty

as the air it seemed to possess of belonging to an age quite different

from the present one. The soft, rainwatery glass was not like any glass

that he had ever seen. The thing was doubly attractive because of its

apparent uselessness, though he could guess that it must once have been

intended as a paperweight. It was very heavy in his pocket, but fortunately

it did not make much of a bulge. It was a queer thing, even a compromising

thing, for a Party member to have in his possession. Anything old, and for

that matter anything beautiful, was always vaguely suspect. The old man had

grown noticeably more cheerful after receiving the four dollars. Winston

realized that he would have accepted three or even two.

'There's another room upstairs that you might care to take a look at,' he

said. 'There's not much in it. Just a few pieces. We'll do with a light if

we're going upstairs.'

He lit another lamp, and, with bowed back, led the way slowly up the

steep and worn stairs and along a tiny passage, into a room which did

not give on the street but looked out on a cobbled yard and a forest of

chimney-pots. Winston noticed that the furniture was still arranged as

though the room were meant to be lived in. There was a strip of carpet on

the floor, a picture or two on the walls, and a deep, slatternly arm-chair

drawn up to the fireplace. An old-fashioned glass clock with a twelve-hour

face was ticking away on the mantelpiece. Under the window, and occupying

nearly a quarter of the room, was an enormous bed with the mattress still

on it.

'We lived here till my wife died,' said the old man half apologetically.

'I'm selling the furniture off by little and little. Now that's a beautiful

mahogany bed, or at least it would be if you could get the bugs out of it.

But I dare say you'd find it a little bit cumbersome.'

He was holding the lamp high up, so as to illuminate the whole room, and

in the warm dim light the place looked curiously inviting. The thought

flitted through Winston's mind that it would probably be quite easy to

rent the room for a few dollars a week, if he dared to take the risk. It

was a wild, impossible notion, to be abandoned as soon as thought of; but

the room had awakened in him a sort of nostalgia, a sort of ancestral

memory. It seemed to him that he knew exactly what it felt like to sit in

a room like this, in an arm-chair beside an open fire with your feet in

the fender and a kettle on the hob; utterly alone, utterly secure, with

nobody watching you, no voice pursuing you, no sound except the singing

of the kettle and the friendly ticking of the clock.

'There's no telescreen!' he could not help murmuring.

'Ah,' said the old man, 'I never had one of those things. Too expensive.

And I never seemed to feel the need of it, somehow. Now that's a nice

gateleg table in the corner there. Though of course you'd have to put new

hinges on it if you wanted to use the flaps.'

There was a small bookcase in the other corner, and Winston had already

gravitated towards it. It contained nothing but rubbish. The hunting-down

and destruction of books had been done with the same thoroughness in the

prole quarters as everywhere else. It was very unlikely that there existed

anywhere in Oceania a copy of a book printed earlier than 1960. The old

man, still carrying the lamp, was standing in front of a picture in a

rosewood frame which hung on the other side of the fireplace, opposite

the bed.

'Now, if you happen to be interested in old prints at all----' he began

delicately.

Winston came across to examine the picture. It was a steel engraving of an

oval building with rectangular windows, and a small tower in front. There

was a railing running round the building, and at the rear end there was

what appeared to be a statue. Winston gazed at it for some moments. It

seemed vaguely familiar, though he did not remember the statue.

'The frame's fixed to the wall,' said the old man, 'but I could unscrew it

for you, I dare say.'

'I know that building,' said Winston finally. 'It's a ruin now. It's in

the middle of the street outside the Palace of Justice.'

'That's right. Outside the Law Courts. It was bombed in--oh, many years

ago. It was a church at one time, St Clement Danes, its name was.' He

smiled apologetically, as though conscious of saying something slightly

ridiculous, and added: 'Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St Clement's!'

'What's that?' said Winston.

'Oh--"Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St Clement's." That was a rhyme

we had when I was a little boy. How it goes on I don't remember, but I do

know it ended up, "Here comes a candle to light you to bed, Here comes a

chopper to chop off your head." It was a kind of a dance. They held out

their arms for you to pass under, and when they came to "Here comes a

chopper to chop off your head" they brought their arms down and caught you.

It was just names of churches. All the London churches were in it--all the

principal ones, that is.'

Winston wondered vaguely to what century the church belonged. It was always

difficult to determine the age of a London building. Anything large and

impressive, if it was reasonably new in appearance, was automatically

claimed as having been built since the Revolution, while anything that was

obviously of earlier date was ascribed to some dim period called the Middle

Ages. The centuries of capitalism were held to have produced nothing of any

value. One could not learn history from architecture any more than one

could learn it from books. Statues, inscriptions, memorial stones, the

names of streets--anything that might throw light upon the past had been

systematically altered.

'I never knew it had been a church,' he said.

'There's a lot of them left, really,' said the old man, 'though they've

been put to other uses. Now, how did that rhyme go? Ah! I've got it!

"Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St Clement's,

You owe me three farthings, say the bells of St Martin's----"

there, now, that's as far as I can get. A farthing, that was a small copper

coin, looked something like a cent.'

'Where was St Martin's?' said Winston.

'St Martin's? That's still standing. It's in Victory Square, alongside the

picture gallery. A building with a kind of a triangular porch and pillars

in front, and a big flight of steps.'

Winston knew the place well. It was a museum used for propaganda displays

of various kinds--scale models of rocket bombs and Floating Fortresses,

waxwork tableaux illustrating enemy atrocities, and the like.

'St Martin's-in-the-Fields it used to be called,' supplemented the old man,

'though I don't recollect any fields anywhere in those parts.'

Winston did not buy the picture. It would have been an even more

incongruous possession than the glass paperweight, and impossible to carry

home, unless it were taken out of its frame. But he lingered for some

minutes more, talking to the old man, whose name, he discovered, was not

Weeks--as one might have gathered from the inscription over the

shop-front--but Charrington. Mr Charrington, it seemed, was a widower aged

sixty-three and had inhabited this shop for thirty years. Throughout that

time he had been intending to alter the name over the window, but had never

quite got to the point of doing it. All the while that they were talking

the half-remembered rhyme kept running through Winston's head. Oranges and

lemons say the bells of St Clement's, You owe me three farthings, say

the bells of St Martin's! It was curious, but when you said it to yourself

you had the illusion of actually hearing bells, the bells of a lost London

that still existed somewhere or other, disguised and forgotten. From one

ghostly steeple after another he seemed to hear them pealing forth. Yet so

far as he could remember he had never in real life heard church bells

ringing.

He got away from Mr Charrington and went down the stairs alone, so as not

to let the old man see him reconnoitring the street before stepping out of

the door. He had already made up his mind that after a suitable

interval--a month, say--he would take the risk of visiting the shop again.

It was perhaps not more dangerous than shirking an evening at the Centre.

The serious piece of folly had been to come back here in the first place,

after buying the diary and without knowing whether the proprietor of the

shop could be trusted. However----!

Yes, he thought again, he would come back. He would buy further scraps of

beautiful rubbish. He would buy the engraving of St Clement Danes, take

it out of its frame, and carry it home concealed under the jacket of his

overalls. He would drag the rest of that poem out of Mr Charrington's

memory. Even the lunatic project of renting the room upstairs flashed

momentarily through his mind again. For perhaps five seconds exaltation

made him careless, and he stepped out on to the pavement without so much

as a preliminary glance through the window. He had even started humming

to an improvised tune

Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St Clement's,

You owe me three farthings, say the----

Suddenly his heart seemed to turn to ice and his bowels to water. A figure

in blue overalls was coming down the pavement, not ten metres away. It was

the girl from the Fiction Department, the girl with dark hair. The light

was failing, but there was no difficulty in recognizing her. She looked

him straight in the face, then walked quickly on as though she had not

seen him.

For a few seconds Winston was too paralysed to move. Then he turned to the

right and walked heavily away, not noticing for the moment that he was

going in the wrong direction. At any rate, one question was settled. There

was no doubting any longer that the girl was spying on him. She must have

followed him here, because it was not credible that by pure chance she

should have happened to be walking on the same evening up the same obscure

backstreet, kilometres distant from any quarter where Party members lived.

It was too great a coincidence. Whether she was really an agent of the

Thought Police, or simply an amateur spy actuated by officiousness, hardly

mattered. It was enough that she was watching him. Probably she had seen

him go into the pub as well.

It was an effort to walk. The lump of glass in his pocket banged against

his thigh at each step, and he was half minded to take it out and throw it

away. The worst thing was the pain in his belly. For a couple of minutes

he had the feeling that he would die if he did not reach a lavatory soon.

But there would be no public lavatories in a quarter like this. Then the

spasm passed, leaving a dull ache behind.

The street was a blind alley. Winston halted, stood for several seconds

wondering vaguely what to do, then turned round and began to retrace his

steps. As he turned it occurred to him that the girl had only passed him

three minutes ago and that by running he could probably catch up with her.

He could keep on her track till they were in some quiet place, and then

smash her skull in with a cobblestone. The piece of glass in his pocket

would be heavy enough for the job. But he abandoned the idea immediately,

because even the thought of making any physical effort was unbearable. He

could not run, he could not strike a blow. Besides, she was young and lusty

and would defend herself. He thought also of hurrying to the Community

Centre and staying there till the place closed, so as to establish a

partial alibi for the evening. But that too was impossible. A deadly

lassitude had taken hold of him. All he wanted was to get home quickly and

then sit down and be quiet.

It was after twenty-two hours when he got back to the flat. The lights

would be switched off at the main at twenty-three thirty. He went into the

kitchen and swallowed nearly a teacupful of Victory Gin. Then he went to

the table in the alcove, sat down, and took the diary out of the drawer.

But he did not open it at once. From the telescreen a brassy female voice

was squalling a patriotic song. He sat staring at the marbled cover of the

book, trying without success to shut the voice out of his consciousness.

It was at night that they came for you, always at night. The proper thing

was to kill yourself before they got you. Undoubtedly some people did so.

Many of the disappearances were actually suicides. But it needed desperate

courage to kill yourself in a world where firearms, or any quick and

certain poison, were completely unprocurable. He thought with a kind of

astonishment of the biological uselessness of pain and fear, the treachery

of the human body which always freezes into inertia at exactly the moment

when a special effort is needed. He might have silenced the dark-haired

girl if only he had acted quickly enough: but precisely because of the

extremity of his danger he had lost the power to act. It struck him that

in moments of crisis one is never fighting against an external enemy, but

always against one's own body. Even now, in spite of the gin, the dull

ache in his belly made consecutive thought impossible. And it is the same,

he perceived, in all seemingly heroic or tragic situations. On the

battlefield, in the torture chamber, on a sinking ship, the issues that

you are fighting for are always forgotten, because the body swells up until

it fills the universe, and even when you are not paralysed by fright or

screaming with pain, life is a moment-to-moment struggle against hunger or

cold or sleeplessness, against a sour stomach or an aching tooth.

He opened the diary. It was important to write something down. The woman

on the telescreen had started a new song. Her voice seemed to stick into

his brain like jagged splinters of glass. He tried to think of O'Brien,

for whom, or to whom, the diary was written, but instead he began thinking

of the things that would happen to him after the Thought Police took him

away. It would not matter if they killed you at once. To be killed was

what you expected. But before death (nobody spoke of such things, yet

everybody knew of them) there was the routine of confession that had to

be gone through: the grovelling on the floor and screaming for mercy, the

crack of broken bones, the smashed teeth and bloody clots of hair.

Why did you have to endure it, since the end was always the same? Why was

it not possible to cut a few days or weeks out of your life? Nobody ever

escaped detection, and nobody ever failed to confess. When once you had

succumbed to thoughtcrime it was certain that by a given date you would be

dead. Why then did that horror, which altered nothing, have to lie embedded

in future time?

He tried with a little more success than before to summon up the image of

O'Brien. 'We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness,' O'Brien

had said to him. He knew what it meant, or thought he knew. The place where

there is no darkness was the imagined future, which one would never see,

but which, by foreknowledge, one could mystically share in. But with the

voice from the telescreen nagging at his ears he could not follow the train

of thought further. He put a cigarette in his mouth. Half the tobacco

promptly fell out on to his tongue, a bitter dust which was difficult to

spit out again. The face of Big Brother swam into his mind, displacing that

of O'Brien. Just as he had done a few days earlier, he slid a coin out of

his pocket and looked at it. The face gazed up at him, heavy, calm,

protecting: but what kind of smile was hidden beneath the dark moustache?

Like a leaden knell the words came back at him:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

PART TWO

Chapter 1

It was the middle of the morning, and Winston had left the cubicle to go

to the lavatory.

A solitary figure was coming towards him from the other end of the long,

brightly-lit corridor. It was the girl with dark hair. Four days had gone

past since the evening when he had run into her outside the junk-shop.

As she came nearer he saw that her right arm was in a sling, not noticeable

at a distance because it was of the same colour as her overalls. Probably

she had crushed her hand while swinging round one of the big kaleidoscopes

on which the plots of novels were 'roughed in'. It was a common accident

in the Fiction Department.

They were perhaps four metres apart when the girl stumbled and fell almost

flat on her face. A sharp cry of pain was wrung out of her. She must have

fallen right on the injured arm. Winston stopped short. The girl had risen

to her knees. Her face had turned a milky yellow colour against which her

mouth stood out redder than ever. Her eyes were fixed on his, with an

appealing expression that looked more like fear than pain.

A curious emotion stirred in Winston's heart. In front of him was an enemy

who was trying to kill him: in front of him, also, was a human creature,

in pain and perhaps with a broken bone. Already he had instinctively

started forward to help her. In the moment when he had seen her fall on

the bandaged arm, it had been as though he felt the pain in his own body.

'You're hurt?' he said.

'It's nothing. My arm. It'll be all right in a second.'

She spoke as though her heart were fluttering. She had certainly turned

very pale.

'You haven't broken anything?'

'No, I'm all right. It hurt for a moment, that's all.'

She held out her free hand to him, and he helped her up. She had regained

some of her colour, and appeared very much better.

'It's nothing,' she repeated shortly. 'I only gave my wrist a bit of a

bang. Thanks, comrade!'

And with that she walked on in the direction in which she had been going,

as briskly as though it had really been nothing. The whole incident could

not have taken as much as half a minute. Not to let one's feelings appear

in one's face was a habit that had acquired the status of an instinct,

and in any case they had been standing straight in front of a telescreen

when the thing happened. Nevertheless it had been very difficult not to

betray a momentary surprise, for in the two or three seconds while he was

helping her up the girl had slipped something into his hand. There was no

question that she had done it intentionally. It was something small and

flat. As he passed through the lavatory door he transferred it to his

pocket and felt it with the tips of his fingers. It was a scrap of paper

folded into a square.

While he stood at the urinal he managed, with a little more fingering, to

get it unfolded. Obviously there must be a message of some kind written on

it. For a moment he was tempted to take it into one of the water-closets

and read it at once. But that would be shocking folly, as he well knew.

There was no place where you could be more certain that the telescreens

were watched continuously.

He went back to his cubicle, sat down, threw the fragment of paper

casually among the other papers on the desk, put on his spectacles and

hitched the speakwrite towards him. 'Five minutes,' he told himself,

'five minutes at the very least!' His heart bumped in his breast with

frightening loudness. Fortunately the piece of work he was engaged on was

mere routine, the rectification of a long list of figures, not needing

close attention.

Whatever was written on the paper, it must have some kind of political

meaning. So far as he could see there were two possibilities. One, much

the more likely, was that the girl was an agent of the Thought Police,

just as he had feared. He did not know why the Thought Police should

choose to deliver their messages in such a fashion, but perhaps they had

their reasons. The thing that was written on the paper might be a threat, a

summons, an order to commit suicide, a trap of some description. But there

was another, wilder possibility that kept raising its head, though he

tried vainly to suppress it. This was, that the message did not come from

the Thought Police at all, but from some kind of underground organization.

Perhaps the Brotherhood existed after all! Perhaps the girl was part of it!

No doubt the idea was absurd, but it had sprung into his mind in the very

instant of feeling the scrap of paper in his hand. It was not till a couple

of minutes later that the other, more probable explanation had occurred to

him. And even now, though his intellect told him that the message probably

meant death--still, that was not what he believed, and the unreasonable

hope persisted, and his heart banged, and it was with difficulty that he

kept his voice from trembling as he murmured his figures into the

speakwrite.

He rolled up the completed bundle of work and slid it into the pneumatic

tube. Eight minutes had gone by. He re-adjusted his spectacles on his nose,

sighed, and drew the next batch of work towards him, with the scrap of

paper on top of it. He flattened it out. On it was written, in a large

unformed handwriting:

I LOVE YOU.

For several seconds he was too stunned even to throw the incriminating

thing into the memory hole. When he did so, although he knew very well the

danger of showing too much interest, he could not resist reading it once

again, just to make sure that the words were really there.

For the rest of the morning it was very difficult to work. What was even

worse than having to focus his mind on a series of niggling jobs was the

need to conceal his agitation from the telescreen. He felt as though a

fire were burning in his belly. Lunch in the hot, crowded, noise-filled

canteen was torment. He had hoped to be alone for a little while during

the lunch hour, but as bad luck would have it the imbecile Parsons flopped

down beside him, the tang of his sweat almost defeating the tinny smell of

stew, and kept up a stream of talk about the preparations for Hate Week.

He was particularly enthusiastic about a papier-mache model of Big

Brother's head, two metres wide, which was being made for the occasion by

his daughter's troop of Spies. The irritating thing was that in the racket

of voices Winston could hardly hear what Parsons was saying, and was

constantly having to ask for some fatuous remark to be repeated. Just once

he caught a glimpse of the girl, at a table with two other girls at the

far end of the room. She appeared not to have seen him, and he did not

look in that direction again.

The afternoon was more bearable. Immediately after lunch there arrived a

delicate, difficult piece of work which would take several hours and

necessitated putting everything else aside. It consisted in falsifying a

series of production reports of two years ago, in such a way as to cast

discredit on a prominent member of the Inner Party, who was now under a

cloud. This was the kind of thing that Winston was good at, and for more

than two hours he succeeded in shutting the girl out of his mind

altogether. Then the memory of her face came back, and with it a raging,

intolerable desire to be alone. Until he could be alone it was impossible

to think this new development out. Tonight was one of his nights at the

Community Centre. He wolfed another tasteless meal in the canteen, hurried

off to the Centre, took part in the solemn foolery of a 'discussion group',

played two games of table tennis, swallowed several glasses of gin, and

sat for half an hour through a lecture entitled 'Ingsoc in relation to

chess'. His soul writhed with boredom, but for once he had had no impulse

to shirk his evening at the Centre. At the sight of the words I LOVE YOU

the desire to stay alive had welled up in him, and the taking of minor

risks suddenly seemed stupid. It was not till twenty-three hours, when he

was home and in bed--in the darkness, where you were safe even from the

telescreen so long as you kept silent--that he was able to think

continuously.

It was a physical problem that had to be solved: how to get in touch with

the girl and arrange a meeting. He did not consider any longer the

possibility that she might be laying some kind of trap for him. He knew

that it was not so, because of her unmistakable agitation when she handed

him the note. Obviously she had been frightened out of her wits, as well

she might be. Nor did the idea of refusing her advances even cross his

mind. Only five nights ago he had contemplated smashing her skull in with

a cobblestone, but that was of no importance. He thought of her naked,

youthful body, as he had seen it in his dream. He had imagined her a fool

like all the rest of them, her head stuffed with lies and hatred, her

belly full of ice. A kind of fever seized him at the thought that he might

lose her, the white youthful body might slip away from him! What he feared

more than anything else was that she would simply change her mind if he

did not get in touch with her quickly. But the physical difficulty of

meeting was enormous. It was like trying to make a move at chess when you

were already mated. Whichever way you turned, the telescreen faced you.

Actually, all the possible ways of communicating with her had occurred to

him within five minutes of reading the note; but now, with time to think,

he went over them one by one, as though laying out a row of instruments

on a table.

Obviously the kind of encounter that had happened this morning could not

be repeated. If she had worked in the Records Department it might have

been comparatively simple, but he had only a very dim idea whereabouts in

the building the Fiction Department lay, and he had no pretext for going

there. If he had known where she lived, and at what time she left work,

he could have contrived to meet her somewhere on her way home; but to try

to follow her home was not safe, because it would mean loitering about

outside the Ministry, which was bound to be noticed. As for sending a

letter through the mails, it was out of the question. By a routine that

was not even secret, all letters were opened in transit. Actually, few

people ever wrote letters. For the messages that it was occasionally

necessary to send, there were printed postcards with long lists of phrases,

and you struck out the ones that were inapplicable. In any case he did not

know the girl's name, let alone her address. Finally he decided that the

safest place was the canteen. If he could get her at a table by herself,

somewhere in the middle of the room, not too near the telescreens, and

with a sufficient buzz of conversation all round--if these conditions

endured for, say, thirty seconds, it might be possible to exchange a few

words.

For a week after this, life was like a restless dream. On the next day she

did not appear in the canteen until he was leaving it, the whistle having

already blown. Presumably she had been changed on to a later shift. They

passed each other without a glance. On the day after that she was in the

canteen at the usual time, but with three other girls and immediately

under a telescreen. Then for three dreadful days she did not appear at

all. His whole mind and body seemed to be afflicted with an unbearable

sensitivity, a sort of transparency, which made every movement, every

sound, every contact, every word that he had to speak or listen to, an

agony. Even in sleep he could not altogether escape from her image. He did

not touch the diary during those days. If there was any relief, it was in

his work, in which he could sometimes forget himself for ten minutes at a

stretch. He had absolutely no clue as to what had happened to her. There

was no enquiry he could make. She might have been vaporized, she might

have committed suicide, she might have been transferred to the other end

of Oceania: worst and likeliest of all, she might simply have changed her

mind and decided to avoid him.

The next day she reappeared. Her arm was out of the sling and she had a

band of sticking-plaster round her wrist. The relief of seeing her was

so great that he could not resist staring directly at her for several

seconds. On the following day he very nearly succeeded in speaking to her.

When he came into the canteen she was sitting at a table well out from the

wall, and was quite alone. It was early, and the place was not very full.

The queue edged forward till Winston was almost at the counter, then was

held up for two minutes because someone in front was complaining that he

had not received his tablet of saccharine. But the girl was still alone

when Winston secured his tray and began to make for her table. He walked

casually towards her, his eyes searching for a place at some table beyond

her. She was perhaps three metres away from him. Another two seconds would

do it. Then a voice behind him called, 'Smith!' He pretended not to hear.

'Smith!' repeated the voice, more loudly. It was no use. He turned round.

A blond-headed, silly-faced young man named Wilsher, whom he barely knew,

was inviting him with a smile to a vacant place at his table. It was not

safe to refuse. After having been recognized, he could not go and sit at

a table with an unattended girl. It was too noticeable. He sat down with

a friendly smile. The silly blond face beamed into his. Winston had a

hallucination of himself smashing a pick-axe right into the middle of it.

The girl's table filled up a few minutes later.

But she must have seen him coming towards her, and perhaps she would take

the hint. Next day he took care to arrive early. Surely enough, she was at

a table in about the same place, and again alone. The person immediately

ahead of him in the queue was a small, swiftly-moving, beetle-like man

with a flat face and tiny, suspicious eyes. As Winston turned away from

the counter with his tray, he saw that the little man was making straight

for the girl's table. His hopes sank again. There was a vacant place at a

table further away, but something in the little man's appearance suggested

that he would be sufficiently attentive to his own comfort to choose the

emptiest table. With ice at his heart Winston followed. It was no use

unless he could get the girl alone. At this moment there was a tremendous

crash. The little man was sprawling on all fours, his tray had gone flying,

two streams of soup and coffee were flowing across the floor. He started

to his feet with a malignant glance at Winston, whom he evidently

suspected of having tripped him up. But it was all right. Five seconds

later, with a thundering heart, Winston was sitting at the girl's table.

He did not look at her. He unpacked his tray and promptly began eating.

It was all-important to speak at once, before anyone else came, but now

a terrible fear had taken possession of him. A week had gone by since

she had first approached him. She would have changed her mind, she must

have changed her mind! It was impossible that this affair should end

successfully; such things did not happen in real life. He might have

flinched altogether from speaking if at this moment he had not seen

Ampleforth, the hairy-eared poet, wandering limply round the room with

a tray, looking for a place to sit down. In his vague way Ampleforth

was attached to Winston, and would certainly sit down at his table if

he caught sight of him. There was perhaps a minute in which to act. Both

Winston and the girl were eating steadily. The stuff they were eating was

a thin stew, actually a soup, of haricot beans. In a low murmur Winston

began speaking. Neither of them looked up; steadily they spooned the

watery stuff into their mouths, and between spoonfuls exchanged the few

necessary words in low expressionless voices.

'What time do you leave work?'

'Eighteen-thirty.'

'Where can we meet?'

'Victory Square, near the monument.'

'It's full of telescreens.'

'It doesn't matter if there's a crowd.'

'Any signal?'

'No. Don't come up to me until you see me among a lot of people. And don't

look at me. Just keep somewhere near me.'

'What time?'

'Nineteen hours.'

'All right.'

Ampleforth failed to see Winston and sat down at another table. They did

not speak again, and, so far as it was possible for two people sitting on

opposite sides of the same table, they did not look at one another. The

girl finished her lunch quickly and made off, while Winston stayed to

smoke a cigarette.

Winston was in Victory Square before the appointed time. He wandered round

the base of the enormous fluted column, at the top of which Big Brother's

statue gazed southward towards the skies where he had vanquished the

Eurasian aeroplanes (the Eastasian aeroplanes, it had been, a few years

ago) in the Battle of Airstrip One. In the street in front of it there was

a statue of a man on horseback which was supposed to represent Oliver

Cromwell. At five minutes past the hour the girl had still not appeared.

Again the terrible fear seized upon Winston. She was not coming, she had

changed her mind! He walked slowly up to the north side of the square and

got a sort of pale-coloured pleasure from identifying St Martin's Church,

whose bells, when it had bells, had chimed 'You owe me three farthings.'

Then he saw the girl standing at the base of the monument, reading or

pretending to read a poster which ran spirally up the column. It was not

safe to go near her until some more people had accumulated. There were

telescreens all round the pediment. But at this moment there was a din of

shouting and a zoom of heavy vehicles from somewhere to the left. Suddenly

everyone seemed to be running across the square. The girl nipped nimbly

round the lions at the base of the monument and joined in the rush.

Winston followed. As he ran, he gathered from some shouted remarks that

a convoy of Eurasian prisoners was passing.

Already a dense mass of people was blocking the south side of the square.

Winston, at normal times the kind of person who gravitates to the outer

edge of any kind of scrimmage, shoved, butted, squirmed his way forward

into the heart of the crowd. Soon he was within arm's length of the girl,

but the way was blocked by an enormous prole and an almost equally enormous

woman, presumably his wife, who seemed to form an impenetrable wall of

flesh. Winston wriggled himself sideways, and with a violent lunge managed

to drive his shoulder between them. For a moment it felt as though his

entrails were being ground to pulp between the two muscular hips, then he

had broken through, sweating a little. He was next to the girl. They were

shoulder to shoulder, both staring fixedly in front of them.

A long line of trucks, with wooden-faced guards armed with sub-machine

guns standing upright in each corner, was passing slowly down the street.

In the trucks little yellow men in shabby greenish uniforms were squatting,

jammed close together. Their sad, Mongolian faces gazed out over the sides

of the trucks utterly incurious. Occasionally when a truck jolted there

was a clank-clank of metal: all the prisoners were wearing leg-irons.

Truck-load after truck-load of the sad faces passed. Winston knew they

were there but he saw them only intermittently. The girl's shoulder, and

her arm right down to the elbow, were pressed against his. Her cheek was

almost near enough for him to feel its warmth. She had immediately taken

charge of the situation, just as she had done in the canteen. She began

speaking in the same expressionless voice as before, with lips barely

moving, a mere murmur easily drowned by the din of voices and the rumbling

of the trucks.

'Can you hear me?'

'Yes.'

'Can you get Sunday afternoon off?'

'Yes.'

'Then listen carefully. You'll have to remember this. Go to Paddington

Station----'

With a sort of military precision that astonished him, she outlined the

route that he was to follow. A half-hour railway journey; turn left outside

the station; two kilometres along the road; a gate with the top bar

missing; a path across a field; a grass-grown lane; a track between bushes;

a dead tree with moss on it. It was as though she had a map inside her

head. 'Can you remember all that?' she murmured finally.

'Yes.'

'You turn left, then right, then left again. And the gate's got no top bar.'

'Yes. What time?'

'About fifteen. You may have to wait. I'll get there by another way. Are

you sure you remember everything?'

'Yes.'

'Then get away from me as quick as you can.'

She need not have told him that. But for the moment they could not

extricate themselves from the crowd. The trucks were still filing past,

the people still insatiably gaping. At the start there had been a few boos

and hisses, but it came only from the Party members among the crowd, and

had soon stopped. The prevailing emotion was simply curiosity. Foreigners,

whether from Eurasia or from Eastasia, were a kind of strange animal. One

literally never saw them except in the guise of prisoners, and even as

prisoners one never got more than a momentary glimpse of them. Nor did

one know what became of them, apart from the few who were hanged as

war-criminals: the others simply vanished, presumably into forced-labour

camps. The round Mogol faces had given way to faces of a more European

type, dirty, bearded and exhausted. From over scrubby cheekbones eyes

looked into Winston's, sometimes with strange intensity, and flashed away

again. The convoy was drawing to an end. In the last truck he could see an

aged man, his face a mass of grizzled hair, standing upright with wrists

crossed in front of him, as though he were used to having them bound

together. It was almost time for Winston and the girl to part. But at the

last moment, while the crowd still hemmed them in, her hand felt for his

and gave it a fleeting squeeze.

It could not have been ten seconds, and yet it seemed a long time that

their hands were clasped together. He had time to learn every detail

of her hand. He explored the long fingers, the shapely nails, the

work-hardened palm with its row of callouses, the smooth flesh under the

wrist. Merely from feeling it he would have known it by sight. In the

same instant it occurred to him that he did not know what colour the

girl's eyes were. They were probably brown, but people with dark hair

sometimes had blue eyes. To turn his head and look at her would have

been inconceivable folly. With hands locked together, invisible among

the press of bodies, they stared steadily in front of them, and instead

of the eyes of the girl, the eyes of the aged prisoner gazed mournfully

at Winston out of nests of hair.

Chapter 2

Winston picked his way up the lane through dappled light and shade,

stepping out into pools of gold wherever the boughs parted. Under the

trees to the left of him the ground was misty with bluebells. The air

seemed to kiss one's skin. It was the second of May. From somewhere deeper

in the heart of the wood came the droning of ring-doves.

He was a bit early. There had been no difficulties about the journey, and

the girl was so evidently experienced that he was less frightened than he

would normally have been. Presumably she could be trusted to find a safe

place. In general you could not assume that you were much safer in the

country than in London. There were no telescreens, of course, but there

was always the danger of concealed microphones by which your voice might

be picked up and recognized; besides, it was not easy to make a journey

by yourself without attracting attention. For distances of less than

100 kilometres it was not necessary to get your passport endorsed, but

sometimes there were patrols hanging about the railway stations, who

examined the papers of any Party member they found there and asked awkward

questions. However, no patrols had appeared, and on the walk from the

station he had made sure by cautious backward glances that he was not

being followed. The train was full of proles, in holiday mood because of

the summery weather. The wooden-seated carriage in which he travelled was

filled to overflowing by a single enormous family, ranging from a toothless

great-grandmother to a month-old baby, going out to spend an afternoon

with 'in-laws' in the country, and, as they freely explained to Winston,

to get hold of a little black-market butter.

The lane widened, and in a minute he came to the footpath she had told him

of, a mere cattle-track which plunged between the bushes. He had no watch,

but it could not be fifteen yet. The bluebells were so thick underfoot

that it was impossible not to tread on them. He knelt down and began

picking some partly to pass the time away, but also from a vague idea that

he would like to have a bunch of flowers to offer to the girl when they

met. He had got together a big bunch and was smelling their faint sickly

scent when a sound at his back froze him, the unmistakable crackle of a

foot on twigs. He went on picking bluebells. It was the best thing to do.

It might be the girl, or he might have been followed after all. To look

round was to show guilt. He picked another and another. A hand fell

lightly on his shoulder.

He looked up. It was the girl. She shook her head, evidently as a warning

that he must keep silent, then parted the bushes and quickly led the way

along the narrow track into the wood. Obviously she had been that way

before, for she dodged the boggy bits as though by habit. Winston followed,

still clasping his bunch of flowers. His first feeling was relief, but as

he watched the strong slender body moving in front of him, with the scarlet

sash that was just tight enough to bring out the curve of her hips, the

sense of his own inferiority was heavy upon him. Even now it seemed quite

likely that when she turned round and looked at him she would draw back

after all. The sweetness of the air and the greenness of the leaves daunted

him. Already on the walk from the station the May sunshine had made him

feel dirty and etiolated, a creature of indoors, with the sooty dust of

London in the pores of his skin. It occurred to him that till now she had

probably never seen him in broad daylight in the open. They came to the

fallen tree that she had spoken of. The girl hopped over and forced apart

the bushes, in which there did not seem to be an opening. When Winston

followed her, he found that they were in a natural clearing, a tiny grassy

knoll surrounded by tall saplings that shut it in completely. The girl

stopped and turned.

'Here we are,' she said.

He was facing her at several paces' distance. As yet he did not dare move

nearer to her.

'I didn't want to say anything in the lane,' she went on, 'in case there's

a mike hidden there. I don't suppose there is, but there could be. There's

always the chance of one of those swine recognizing your voice. We're all

right here.'

He still had not the courage to approach her. 'We're all right here?'

he repeated stupidly.

'Yes. Look at the trees.' They were small ashes, which at some time had

been cut down and had sprouted up again into a forest of poles, none of

them thicker than one's wrist. 'There's nothing big enough to hide a mike

in. Besides, I've been here before.'

They were only making conversation. He had managed to move closer to her

now. She stood before him very upright, with a smile on her face that

looked faintly ironical, as though she were wondering why he was so slow

to act. The bluebells had cascaded on to the ground. They seemed to have

fallen of their own accord. He took her hand.

'Would you believe,' he said, 'that till this moment I didn't know what

colour your eyes were?' They were brown, he noted, a rather light shade of

brown, with dark lashes. 'Now that you've seen what I'm really like,

can you still bear to look at me?'

'Yes, easily.'

'I'm thirty-nine years old. I've got a wife that I can't get rid of. I've

got varicose veins. I've got five false teeth.'

'I couldn't care less,' said the girl.

The next moment, it was hard to say by whose act, she was in his arms.

At the beginning he had no feeling except sheer incredulity. The youthful

body was strained against his own, the mass of dark hair was against his

face, and yes! actually she had turned her face up and he was kissing the

wide red mouth. She had clasped her arms about his neck, she was calling

him darling, precious one, loved one. He had pulled her down on to the

ground, she was utterly unresisting, he could do what he liked with her.

But the truth was that he had no physical sensation, except that of mere

contact. All he felt was incredulity and pride. He was glad that this was

happening, but he had no physical desire. It was too soon, her youth and

prettiness had frightened him, he was too much used to living without

women--he did not know the reason. The girl picked herself up and pulled a

bluebell out of her hair. She sat against him, putting her arm round his

waist.

'Never mind, dear. There's no hurry. We've got the whole afternoon. Isn't

this a splendid hide-out? I found it when I got lost once on a community

hike. If anyone was coming you could hear them a hundred metres away.'

'What is your name?' said Winston.

'Julia. I know yours. It's Winston--Winston Smith.'

'How did you find that out?'

'I expect I'm better at finding things out than you are, dear. Tell me,

what did you think of me before that day I gave you the note?'

He did not feel any temptation to tell lies to her. It was even a sort of

love-offering to start off by telling the worst.

'I hated the sight of you,' he said. 'I wanted to rape you and then murder

you afterwards. Two weeks ago I thought seriously of smashing your head in

with a cobblestone. If you really want to know, I imagined that you had

something to do with the Thought Police.'

The girl laughed delightedly, evidently taking this as a

tribute to the excellence of her disguise.

'Not the Thought Police! You didn't honestly think that?'

'Well, perhaps not exactly that. But from your general appearance--merely

because you're young and fresh and healthy, you understand--I thought that

probably----'

'You thought I was a good Party member. Pure in word and deed. Banners,

processions, slogans, games, community hikes all that stuff. And you

thought that if I had a quarter of a chance I'd denounce you as a

thought-criminal and get you killed off?'

'Yes, something of that kind. A great many young girls are like that,

you know.'

'It's this bloody thing that does it,' she said, ripping off the scarlet

sash of the Junior Anti-Sex League and flinging it on to a bough. Then,

as though touching her waist had reminded her of something, she felt in

the pocket of her overalls and produced a small slab of chocolate. She

broke it in half and gave one of the pieces to Winston. Even before he had

taken it he knew by the smell that it was very unusual chocolate. It was

dark and shiny, and was wrapped in silver paper. Chocolate normally was

dull-brown crumbly stuff that tasted, as nearly as one could describe it,

like the smoke of a rubbish fire. But at some time or another he had tasted

chocolate like the piece she had given him. The first whiff of its scent

had stirred up some memory which he could not pin down, but which was

powerful and troubling.

'Where did you get this stuff?' he said.

'Black market,' she said indifferently. 'Actually I am that sort of girl,

to look at. I'm good at games. I was a troop-leader in the Spies. I do

voluntary work three evenings a week for the Junior Anti-Sex League. Hours

and hours I've spent pasting their bloody rot all over London. I always

carry one end of a banner in the processions. I always look cheerful and

I never shirk anything. Always yell with the crowd, that's what I say.

It's the only way to be safe.'

The first fragment of chocolate had melted on Winston's tongue. The taste

was delightful. But there was still that memory moving round the edges of

his consciousness, something strongly felt but not reducible to definite

shape, like an object seen out of the corner of one's eye. He pushed it

away from him, aware only that it was the memory of some action which he

would have liked to undo but could not.

'You are very young,' he said. 'You are ten or fifteen years younger than

I am. What could you see to attract you in a man like me?'

'It was something in your face. I thought I'd take a chance. I'm good at

spotting people who don't belong. As soon as I saw you I knew you were

against THEM.'

THEM, it appeared, meant the Party, and above all the Inner Party, about

whom she talked with an open jeering hatred which made Winston feel uneasy,

although he knew that they were safe here if they could be safe anywhere.

A thing that astonished him about her was the coarseness of her language.

Party members were supposed not to swear, and Winston himself very seldom

did swear, aloud, at any rate. Julia, however, seemed unable to mention

the Party, and especially the Inner Party, without using the kind of words

that you saw chalked up in dripping alley-ways. He did not dislike it. It

was merely one symptom of her revolt against the Party and all its ways,

and somehow it seemed natural and healthy, like the sneeze of a horse that

smells bad hay. They had left the clearing and were wandering again

through the chequered shade, with their arms round each other's waists

whenever it was wide enough to walk two abreast. He noticed how much

softer her waist seemed to feel now that the sash was gone. They did not

speak above a whisper. Outside the clearing, Julia said, it was better to

go quietly. Presently they had reached the edge of the little wood. She

stopped him.

'Don't go out into the open. There might be someone watching. We're all

right if we keep behind the boughs.'

They were standing in the shade of hazel bushes. The sunlight, filtering

through innumerable leaves, was still hot on their faces. Winston looked

out into the field beyond, and underwent a curious, slow shock of

recognition. He knew it by sight. An old, close-bitten pasture, with a

footpath wandering across it and a molehill here and there. In the ragged

hedge on the opposite side the boughs of the elm trees swayed just

perceptibly in the breeze, and their leaves stirred faintly in dense

masses like women's hair. Surely somewhere nearby, but out of sight,

there must be a stream with green pools where dace were swimming?

'Isn't there a stream somewhere near here?' he whispered.

'That's right, there is a stream. It's at the edge of the next field,

actually. There are fish in it, great big ones. You can watch them lying

in the pools under the willow trees, waving their tails.'

'It's the Golden Country--almost,' he murmured.

'The Golden Country?'

'It's nothing, really. A landscape I've seen sometimes in a dream.'

'Look!' whispered Julia.

A thrush had alighted on a bough not five metres away, almost at the level

of their faces. Perhaps it had not seen them. It was in the sun, they in

the shade. It spread out its wings, fitted them carefully into place

again, ducked its head for a moment, as though making a sort of obeisance

to the sun, and then began to pour forth a torrent of song. In the

afternoon hush the volume of sound was startling. Winston and Julia clung

together, fascinated. The music went on and on, minute after minute, with

astonishing variations, never once repeating itself, almost as though the

bird were deliberately showing off its virtuosity. Sometimes it stopped

for a few seconds, spread out and resettled its wings, then swelled its

speckled breast and again burst into song. Winston watched it with a sort

of vague reverence. For whom, for what, was that bird singing? No mate,

no rival was watching it. What made it sit at the edge of the lonely wood

and pour its music into nothingness? He wondered whether after all there

was a microphone hidden somewhere near. He and Julia had spoken only in

low whispers, and it would not pick up what they had said, but it would

pick up the thrush. Perhaps at the other end of the instrument some small,

beetle-like man was listening intently--listening to that. But by degrees

the flood of music drove all speculations out of his mind. It was as

though it were a kind of liquid stuff that poured all over him and got

mixed up with the sunlight that filtered through the leaves. He stopped

thinking and merely felt. The girl's waist in the bend of his arm was soft

and warm. He pulled her round so that they were breast to breast; her body

seemed to melt into his. Wherever his hands moved it was all as yielding as

water. Their mouths clung together; it was quite different from the hard

kisses they had exchanged earlier. When they moved their faces apart again

both of them sighed deeply. The bird took fright and fled with a clatter

of wings.

Winston put his lips against her ear. 'NOW,' he whispered.

'Not here,' she whispered back. 'Come back to the hide-out. It's safer.'

Quickly, with an occasional crackle of twigs, they threaded their way back

to the clearing. When they were once inside the ring of saplings she turned

and faced him. They were both breathing fast, but the smile had reappeared

round the corners of her mouth. She stood looking at him for an instant,

then felt at the zipper of her overalls. And, yes! it was almost as in his

dream. Almost as swiftly as he had imagined it, she had torn her clothes

off, and when she flung them aside it was with that same magnificent

gesture by which a whole civilization seemed to be annihilated. Her body

gleamed white in the sun. But for a moment he did not look at her body;

his eyes were anchored by the freckled face with its faint, bold smile.

He knelt down before her and took her hands in his.

'Have you done this before?'

'Of course. Hundreds of times--well, scores of times, anyway.'

'With Party members?'

'Yes, always with Party members.'

'With members of the Inner Party?'

'Not with those swine, no. But there's plenty that WOULD if they got half

a chance. They're not so holy as they make out.'

His heart leapt. Scores of times she had done it: he wished it had been

hundreds--thousands. Anything that hinted at corruption always filled him

with a wild hope. Who knew, perhaps the Party was rotten under the surface,

its cult of strenuousness and self-denial simply a sham concealing

iniquity. If he could have infected the whole lot of them with leprosy or

syphilis, how gladly he would have done so! Anything to rot, to weaken, to

undermine! He pulled her down so that they were kneeling face to face.

'Listen. The more men you've had, the more I love you. Do you understand

that?'

'Yes, perfectly.'

'I hate purity, I hate goodness! I don't want any virtue to exist anywhere.

I want everyone to be corrupt to the bones.'

'Well then, I ought to suit you, dear. I'm corrupt to the bones.'

'You like doing this? I don't mean simply me: I mean the thing in itself?'

'I adore it.'

That was above all what he wanted to hear. Not merely the love of one

person but the animal instinct, the simple undifferentiated desire: that

was the force that would tear the Party to pieces. He pressed her down

upon the grass, among the fallen bluebells. This time there was no

difficulty. Presently the rising and falling of their breasts slowed to

normal speed, and in a sort of pleasant helplessness they fell apart. The

sun seemed to have grown hotter. They were both sleepy. He reached out for

the discarded overalls and pulled them partly over her. Almost immediately

they fell asleep and slept for about half an hour.

Winston woke first. He sat up and watched the freckled face, still

peacefully asleep, pillowed on the palm of her hand. Except for her mouth,

you could not call her beautiful. There was a line or two round the eyes,

if you looked closely. The short dark hair was extraordinarily thick and

soft. It occurred to him that he still did not know her surname or where

she lived.

The young, strong body, now helpless in sleep, awoke in him a pitying,

protecting feeling. But the mindless tenderness that he had felt under

the hazel tree, while the thrush was singing, had not quite come back.

He pulled the overalls aside and studied her smooth white flank. In the

old days, he thought, a man looked at a girl's body and saw that it was

desirable, and that was the end of the story. But you could not have pure

love or pure lust nowadays. No emotion was pure, because everything was

mixed up with fear and hatred. Their embrace had been a battle, the climax

a victory. It was a blow struck against the Party. It was a political act.

Chapter 3

'We can come here once again,' said Julia. 'It's generally safe to use any

hide-out twice. But not for another month or two, of course.'

As soon as she woke up her demeanour had changed. She became alert and

business-like, put her clothes on, knotted the scarlet sash about her

waist, and began arranging the details of the journey home. It seemed

natural to leave this to her. She obviously had a practical cunning which

Winston lacked, and she seemed also to have an exhaustive knowledge of the

countryside round London, stored away from innumerable community hikes.

The route she gave him was quite different from the one by which he had

come, and brought him out at a different railway station. 'Never go home

the same way as you went out,' she said, as though enunciating an important

general principle. She would leave first, and Winston was to wait half an

hour before following her.

She had named a place where they could meet after work, four evenings

hence. It was a street in one of the poorer quarters, where there was an

open market which was generally crowded and noisy. She would be hanging

about among the stalls, pretending to be in search of shoelaces or

sewing-thread. If she judged that the coast was clear she would blow

her nose when he approached; otherwise he was to walk past her without

recognition. But with luck, in the middle of the crowd, it would be

safe to talk for a quarter of an hour and arrange another meeting.

'And now I must go,' she said as soon as he had mastered his instructions.

'I'm due back at nineteen-thirty. I've got to put in two hours for the

Junior Anti-Sex League, handing out leaflets, or something. Isn't it

bloody? Give me a brush-down, would you? Have I got any twigs in my hair?

Are you sure? Then good-bye, my love, good-bye!'

She flung herself into his arms, kissed him almost violently, and a moment

later pushed her way through the saplings and disappeared into the wood

with very little noise. Even now he had not found out her surname or her

address. However, it made no difference, for it was inconceivable that

they could ever meet indoors or exchange any kind of written communication.

As it happened, they never went back to the clearing in the wood. During

the month of May there was only one further occasion on which they actually

succeeded in making love. That was in another hiding-place known to Julia,

the belfry of a ruinous church in an almost-deserted stretch of country

where an atomic bomb had fallen thirty years earlier. It was a good

hiding-place when once you got there, but the getting there was very

dangerous. For the rest they could meet only in the streets, in a different

place every evening and never for more than half an hour at a time. In the

street it was usually possible to talk, after a fashion. As they drifted

down the crowded pavements, not quite abreast and never looking at one

another, they carried on a curious, intermittent conversation which flicked

on and off like the beams of a lighthouse, suddenly nipped into silence

by the approach of a Party uniform or the proximity of a telescreen, then

taken up again minutes later in the middle of a sentence, then abruptly

cut short as they parted at the agreed spot, then continued almost without

introduction on the following day. Julia appeared to be quite used to this

kind of conversation, which she called 'talking by instalments'. She was

also surprisingly adept at speaking without moving her lips. Just once in

almost a month of nightly meetings they managed to exchange a kiss. They

were passing in silence down a side-street (Julia would never speak when

they were away from the main streets) when there was a deafening roar, the

earth heaved, and the air darkened, and Winston found himself lying on his

side, bruised and terrified. A rocket bomb must have dropped quite near at

hand. Suddenly he became aware of Julia's face a few centimetres from his

own, deathly white, as white as chalk. Even her lips were white. She was

dead! He clasped her against him and found that he was kissing a live

warm face. But there was some powdery stuff that got in the way of his

lips. Both of their faces were thickly coated with plaster.

There were evenings when they reached their rendezvous and then had to

walk past one another without a sign, because a patrol had just come round

the corner or a helicopter was hovering overhead. Even if it had been

less dangerous, it would still have been difficult to find time to meet.

Winston's working week was sixty hours, Julia's was even longer, and

their free days varied according to the pressure of work and did not

often coincide. Julia, in any case, seldom had an evening completely free.

She spent an astonishing amount of time in attending lectures and

demonstrations, distributing literature for the junior Anti-Sex League,

preparing banners for Hate Week, making collections for the savings

campaign, and such-like activities. It paid, she said, it was camouflage.

If you kept the small rules, you could break the big ones. She even induced

Winston to mortgage yet another of his evenings by enrolling himself for

the part-time munition work which was done voluntarily by zealous Party

members. So, one evening every week, Winston spent four hours of paralysing

boredom, screwing together small bits of metal which were probably parts

of bomb fuses, in a draughty, ill-lit workshop where the knocking of

hammers mingled drearily with the music of the telescreens.

When they met in the church tower the gaps in their fragmentary

conversation were filled up. It was a blazing afternoon. The air in the

little square chamber above the bells was hot and stagnant, and smelt

overpoweringly of pigeon dung. They sat talking for hours on the dusty,

twig-littered floor, one or other of them getting up from time to time to

cast a glance through the arrowslits and make sure that no one was coming.

Julia was twenty-six years old. She lived in a hostel with thirty other

girls ('Always in the stink of women! How I hate women!' she said

parenthetically), and she worked, as he had guessed, on the novel-writing

machines in the Fiction Department. She enjoyed her work, which consisted

chiefly in running and servicing a powerful but tricky electric motor.

She was 'not clever', but was fond of using her hands and felt at home

with machinery. She could describe the whole process of composing a novel,

from the general directive issued by the Planning Committee down to the

final touching-up by the Rewrite Squad. But she was not interested in the

finished product. She 'didn't much care for reading,' she said. Books were

just a commodity that had to be produced, like jam or bootlaces.

She had no memories of anything before the early sixties and the only

person she had ever known who talked frequently of the days before the

Revolution was a grandfather who had disappeared when she was eight. At

school she had been captain of the hockey team and had won the gymnastics

trophy two years running. She had been a troop-leader in the Spies and a

branch secretary in the Youth League before joining the Junior Anti-Sex

League. She had always borne an excellent character. She had even (an

infallible mark of good reputation) been picked out to work in Pornosec,

the sub-section of the Fiction Department which turned out cheap

pornography for distribution among the proles. It was nicknamed Muck House

by the people who worked in it, she remarked. There she had remained for

a year, helping to produce booklets in sealed packets with titles like

'Spanking Stories' or 'One Night in a Girls' School', to be bought

furtively by proletarian youths who were under the impression that they

were buying something illegal.

'What are these books like?' said Winston curiously.

'Oh, ghastly rubbish. They're boring, really. They only have six plots,

but they swap them round a bit. Of course I was only on the kaleidoscopes.

I was never in the Rewrite Squad. I'm not literary, dear--not even enough

for that.'

He learned with astonishment that all the workers in Pornosec, except the

heads of the departments, were girls. The theory was that men, whose sex

instincts were less controllable than those of women, were in greater

danger of being corrupted by the filth they handled.

'They don't even like having married women there,' she added. Girls are

always supposed to be so pure. Here's one who isn't, anyway.

She had had her first love-affair when she was sixteen, with a Party member

of sixty who later committed suicide to avoid arrest. 'And a good job too,'

said Julia, 'otherwise they'd have had my name out of him when he

confessed.' Since then there had been various others. Life as she saw it

was quite simple. You wanted a good time; 'they', meaning the Party,

wanted to stop you having it; you broke the rules as best you could. She

seemed to think it just as natural that 'they' should want to rob you of

your pleasures as that you should want to avoid being caught. She hated

the Party, and said so in the crudest words, but she made no general

criticism of it. Except where it touched upon her own life she had no

interest in Party doctrine. He noticed that she never used Newspeak words

except the ones that had passed into everyday use. She had never heard of

the Brotherhood, and refused to believe in its existence. Any kind of

organized revolt against the Party, which was bound to be a failure,

struck her as stupid. The clever thing was to break the rules and stay

alive all the same. He wondered vaguely how many others like her there

might be in the younger generation people who had grown up in the world of

the Revolution, knowing nothing else, accepting the Party as something

unalterable, like the sky, not rebelling against its authority but simply

evading it, as a rabbit dodges a dog.

They did not discuss the possibility of getting married. It was too remote

to be worth thinking about. No imaginable committee would ever sanction

such a marriage even if Katharine, Winston's wife, could somehow have been

got rid of. It was hopeless even as a daydream.

'What was she like, your wife?' said Julia.

'She was--do you know the Newspeak word GOODTHINKFUL? Meaning naturally

orthodox, incapable of thinking a bad thought?'

'No, I didn't know the word, but I know the kind of person, right enough.'

He began telling her the story of his married life, but curiously enough

she appeared to know the essential parts of it already. She described

to him, almost as though she had seen or felt it, the stiffening of

Katharine's body as soon as he touched her, the way in which she still

seemed to be pushing him from her with all her strength, even when her

arms were clasped tightly round him. With Julia he felt no difficulty in

talking about such things: Katharine, in any case, had long ceased to be

a painful memory and became merely a distasteful one.

'I could have stood it if it hadn't been for one thing,' he said. He told

her about the frigid little ceremony that Katharine had forced him to go

through on the same night every week. 'She hated it, but nothing would

make her stop doing it. She used to call it--but you'll never guess.'

'Our duty to the Party,' said Julia promptly.

'How did you know that?'

'I've been at school too, dear. Sex talks once a month for the

over-sixteens. And in the Youth Movement. They rub it into you for years.

I dare say it works in a lot of cases. But of course you can never tell;

people are such hypocrites.'

She began to enlarge upon the subject. With Julia, everything came back

to her own sexuality. As soon as this was touched upon in any way she was

capable of great acuteness. Unlike Winston, she had grasped the inner

meaning of the Party's sexual puritanism. It was not merely that the sex

instinct created a world of its own which was outside the Party's control

and which therefore had to be destroyed if possible. What was more

important was that sexual privation induced hysteria, which was desirable

because it could be transformed into war-fever and leader-worship. The way

she put it was:

'When you make love you're using up energy; and afterwards you feel happy

and don't give a damn for anything. They can't bear you to feel like that.

They want you to be bursting with energy all the time. All this marching

up and down and cheering and waving flags is simply sex gone sour. If

you're happy inside yourself, why should you get excited about Big Brother

and the Three-Year Plans and the Two Minutes Hate and all the rest of

their bloody rot?'

That was very true, he thought. There was a direct intimate connexion

between chastity and political orthodoxy. For how could the fear, the

hatred, and the lunatic credulity which the Party needed in its members be

kept at the right pitch, except by bottling down some powerful instinct

and using it as a driving force? The sex impulse was dangerous to the

Party, and the Party had turned it to account. They had played a similar

trick with the instinct of parenthood. The family could not actually be

abolished, and, indeed, people were encouraged to be fond of their

children, in almost the old-fashioned way. The children, on the other hand,

were systematically turned against their parents and taught to spy on them

and report their deviations. The family had become in effect an extension

of the Thought Police. It was a device by means of which everyone could be

surrounded night and day by informers who knew him intimately.

Abruptly his mind went back to Katharine. Katharine would unquestionably

have denounced him to the Thought Police if she had not happened to be too

stupid to detect the unorthodoxy of his opinions. But what really recalled

her to him at this moment was the stifling heat of the afternoon, which

had brought the sweat out on his forehead. He began telling Julia of

something that had happened, or rather had failed to happen, on another

sweltering summer afternoon, eleven years ago.

It was three or four months after they were married. They had lost their

way on a community hike somewhere in Kent. They had only lagged behind

the others for a couple of minutes, but they took a wrong turning, and

presently found themselves pulled up short by the edge of an old chalk

quarry. It was a sheer drop of ten or twenty metres, with boulders at the

bottom. There was nobody of whom they could ask the way. As soon as she

realized that they were lost Katharine became very uneasy. To be away

from the noisy mob of hikers even for a moment gave her a feeling of

wrong-doing. She wanted to hurry back by the way they had come and start

searching in the other direction. But at this moment Winston noticed some

tufts of loosestrife growing in the cracks of the cliff beneath them.

One tuft was of two colours, magenta and brick-red, apparently growing on

the same root. He had never seen anything of the kind before, and he called

to Katharine to come and look at it.

'Look, Katharine! Look at those flowers. That clump down near the bottom.

Do you see they're two different colours?'

She had already turned to go, but she did rather fretfully come back for

a moment. She even leaned out over the cliff face to see where he was

pointing. He was standing a little behind her, and he put his hand on

her waist to steady her. At this moment it suddenly occurred to him how

completely alone they were. There was not a human creature anywhere, not a

leaf stirring, not even a bird awake. In a place like this the danger that

there would be a hidden microphone was very small, and even if there was a

microphone it would only pick up sounds. It was the hottest sleepiest hour

of the afternoon. The sun blazed down upon them, the sweat tickled his

face. And the thought struck him...

'Why didn't you give her a good shove?' said Julia. 'I would have.'

'Yes, dear, you would have. I would, if I'd been the same person then as

I am now. Or perhaps I would--I'm not certain.'

'Are you sorry you didn't?'

'Yes. On the whole I'm sorry I didn't.'

They were sitting side by side on the dusty floor. He pulled her closer

against him. Her head rested on his shoulder, the pleasant smell of her

hair conquering the pigeon dung. She was very young, he thought, she

still expected something from life, she did not understand that to push

an inconvenient person over a cliff solves nothing.

'Actually it would have made no difference,' he said.

'Then why are you sorry you didn't do it?'

'Only because I prefer a positive to a negative. In this game that we're

playing, we can't win. Some kinds of failure are better than other kinds,

that's all.'

He felt her shoulders give a wriggle of dissent. She always contradicted

him when he said anything of this kind. She would not accept it as a law

of nature that the individual is always defeated. In a way she realized

that she herself was doomed, that sooner or later the Thought Police would

catch her and kill her, but with another part of her mind she believed

that it was somehow possible to construct a secret world in which you could

live as you chose. All you needed was luck and cunning and boldness. She

did not understand that there was no such thing as happiness, that the

only victory lay in the far future, long after you were dead, that from

the moment of declaring war on the Party it was better to think of yourself

as a corpse.

'We are the dead,' he said.

'We're not dead yet,' said Julia prosaically.

'Not physically. Six months, a year--five years, conceivably. I am afraid

of death. You are young, so presumably you're more afraid of it than I am.

Obviously we shall put it off as long as we can. But it makes very little

difference. So long as human beings stay human, death and life are the

same thing.'

'Oh, rubbish! Which would you sooner sleep with, me or a skeleton? Don't

you enjoy being alive? Don't you like feeling: This is me, this is my hand,

this is my leg, I'm real, I'm solid, I'm alive! Don't you like THIS?'

She twisted herself round and pressed her bosom against him. He could feel

her breasts, ripe yet firm, through her overalls. Her body seemed to be

pouring some of its youth and vigour into his.

'Yes, I like that,' he said.

'Then stop talking about dying. And now listen, dear, we've got to fix

up about the next time we meet. We may as well go back to the place in

the wood. We've given it a good long rest. But you must get there by a

different way this time. I've got it all planned out. You take the

train--but look, I'll draw it out for you.'

And in her practical way she scraped together a small square of dust,

and with a twig from a pigeon's nest began drawing a map on the floor.

Chapter 4

Winston looked round the shabby little room above Mr Charrington's shop.

Beside the window the enormous bed was made up, with ragged blankets and

a coverless bolster. The old-fashioned clock with the twelve-hour face was

ticking away on the mantelpiece. In the corner, on the gateleg table, the

glass paperweight which he had bought on his last visit gleamed softly out

of the half-darkness.

In the fender was a battered tin oilstove, a saucepan, and two cups,

provided by Mr Charrington. Winston lit the burner and set a pan of water

to boil. He had brought an envelope full of Victory Coffee and some

saccharine tablets. The clock's hands said seventeen-twenty: it was

nineteen-twenty really. She was coming at nineteen-thirty.

Folly, folly, his heart kept saying: conscious, gratuitous, suicidal folly.

Of all the crimes that a Party member could commit, this one was the least

possible to conceal. Actually the idea had first floated into his head in

the form of a vision, of the glass paperweight mirrored by the surface

of the gateleg table. As he had foreseen, Mr Charrington had made no

difficulty about letting the room. He was obviously glad of the few dollars

that it would bring him. Nor did he seem shocked or become offensively

knowing when it was made clear that Winston wanted the room for the purpose

of a love-affair. Instead he looked into the middle distance and spoke in

generalities, with so delicate an air as to give the impression that he

had become partly invisible. Privacy, he said, was a very valuable thing.

Everyone wanted a place where they could be alone occasionally. And when

they had such a place, it was only common courtesy in anyone else who knew

of it to keep his knowledge to himself. He even, seeming almost to fade

out of existence as he did so, added that there were two entries to the

house, one of them through the back yard, which gave on an alley.

Under the window somebody was singing. Winston peeped out, secure in the

protection of the muslin curtain. The June sun was still high in the sky,

and in the sun-filled court below, a monstrous woman, solid as a Norman

pillar, with brawny red forearms and a sacking apron strapped about her

middle, was stumping to and fro between a washtub and a clothes line,

pegging out a series of square white things which Winston recognized as

babies' diapers. Whenever her mouth was not corked with clothes pegs she

was singing in a powerful contralto:

It was only an 'opeless fancy.

It passed like an Ipril dye,

But a look an' a word an' the dreams they stirred!

They 'ave stolen my 'eart awye!

The tune had been haunting London for weeks past. It was one of countless

similar songs published for the benefit of the proles by a sub-section of

the Music Department. The words of these songs were composed without any

human intervention whatever on an instrument known as a versificator.

But the woman sang so tunefully as to turn the dreadful rubbish into an

almost pleasant sound. He could hear the woman singing and the scrape of

her shoes on the flagstones, and the cries of the children in the street,

and somewhere in the far distance a faint roar of traffic, and yet the

room seemed curiously silent, thanks to the absence of a telescreen.

Folly, folly, folly! he thought again. It was inconceivable that they could

frequent this place for more than a few weeks without being caught. But

the temptation of having a hiding-place that was truly their own, indoors

and near at hand, had been too much for both of them. For some time

after their visit to the church belfry it had been impossible to arrange

meetings. Working hours had been drastically increased in anticipation of

Hate Week. It was more than a month distant, but the enormous, complex

preparations that it entailed were throwing extra work on to everybody.

Finally both of them managed to secure a free afternoon on the same day.

They had agreed to go back to the clearing in the wood. On the evening

beforehand they met briefly in the street. As usual, Winston hardly looked

at Julia as they drifted towards one another in the crowd, but from the

short glance he gave her it seemed to him that she was paler than usual.

'It's all off,' she murmured as soon as she judged it safe to speak.

'Tomorrow, I mean.'

'What?'

'Tomorrow afternoon. I can't come.'

'Why not?'

'Oh, the usual reason. It's started early this time.'

For a moment he was violently angry. During the month that he had known

her the nature of his desire for her had changed. At the beginning there

had been little true sensuality in it. Their first love-making had been

simply an act of the will. But after the second time it was different. The

smell of her hair, the taste of her mouth, the feeling of her skin seemed

to have got inside him, or into the air all round him. She had become a

physical necessity, something that he not only wanted but felt that he

had a right to. When she said that she could not come, he had the feeling

that she was cheating him. But just at this moment the crowd pressed

them together and their hands accidentally met. She gave the tips of his

fingers a quick squeeze that seemed to invite not desire but affection. It

struck him that when one lived with a woman this particular disappointment

must be a normal, recurring event; and a deep tenderness, such as he had

not felt for her before, suddenly took hold of him. He wished that they

were a married couple of ten years' standing. He wished that he were

walking through the streets with her just as they were doing now but openly

and without fear, talking of trivialities and buying odds and ends for the

household. He wished above all that they had some place where they could

be alone together without feeling the obligation to make love every time

they met. It was not actually at that moment, but at some time on the

following day, that the idea of renting Mr Charrington's room had occurred

to him. When he suggested it to Julia she had agreed with unexpected

readiness. Both of them knew that it was lunacy. It was as though they were

intentionally stepping nearer to their graves. As he sat waiting on the

edge of the bed he thought again of the cellars of the Ministry of Love.

It was curious how that predestined horror moved in and out of one's

consciousness. There it lay, fixed in future times, preceding death as

surely as 99 precedes 100. One could not avoid it, but one could perhaps

postpone it: and yet instead, every now and again, by a conscious, wilful

act, one chose to shorten the interval before it happened.

At this moment there was a quick step on the stairs. Julia burst into the

room. She was carrying a tool-bag of coarse brown canvas, such as he had

sometimes seen her carrying to and fro at the Ministry. He started forward

to take her in his arms, but she disengaged herself rather hurriedly,

partly because she was still holding the tool-bag.

'Half a second,' she said. 'Just let me show you what I've brought. Did

you bring some of that filthy Victory Coffee? I thought you would. You

can chuck it away again, because we shan't be needing it. Look here.'

She fell on her knees, threw open the bag, and tumbled out some spanners

and a screwdriver that filled the top part of it. Underneath were a number

of neat paper packets. The first packet that she passed to Winston had a

strange and yet vaguely familiar feeling. It was filled with some kind of

heavy, sand-like stuff which yielded wherever you touched it.

'It isn't sugar?' he said.

'Real sugar. Not saccharine, sugar. And here's a loaf of bread--proper

white bread, not our bloody stuff--and a little pot of jam. And here's a

tin of milk--but look! This is the one I'm really proud of. I had to wrap

a bit of sacking round it, because----'

But she did not need to tell him why she had wrapped it up. The smell was

already filling the room, a rich hot smell which seemed like an emanation

from his early childhood, but which one did occasionally meet with even

now, blowing down a passage-way before a door slammed, or diffusing itself

mysteriously in a crowded street, sniffed for an instant and then lost

again.

'It's coffee,' he murmured, 'real coffee.'

'It's Inner Party coffee. There's a whole kilo here,' she said.

'How did you manage to get hold of all these things?'

'It's all Inner Party stuff. There's nothing those swine don't have,

nothing. But of course waiters and servants and people pinch things,

and--look, I got a little packet of tea as well.'

Winston had squatted down beside her. He tore open a corner of the packet.

'It's real tea. Not blackberry leaves.'

'There's been a lot of tea about lately. They've captured India, or

something,' she said vaguely. 'But listen, dear. I want you to turn your

back on me for three minutes. Go and sit on the other side of the bed.

Don't go too near the window. And don't turn round till I tell you.'

Winston gazed abstractedly through the muslin curtain. Down in the yard

the red-armed woman was still marching to and fro between the washtub and

the line. She took two more pegs out of her mouth and sang with deep

feeling:

They sye that time 'eals all things,

They sye you can always forget;

But the smiles an' the tears acrorss the years

They twist my 'eart-strings yet!

She knew the whole drivelling song by heart, it seemed. Her voice floated

upward with the sweet summer air, very tuneful, charged with a sort of

happy melancholy. One had the feeling that she would have been perfectly

content, if the June evening had been endless and the supply of clothes

inexhaustible, to remain there for a thousand years, pegging out diapers

and singing rubbish. It struck him as a curious fact that he had never

heard a member of the Party singing alone and spontaneously. It would even

have seemed slightly unorthodox, a dangerous eccentricity, like talking to

oneself. Perhaps it was only when people were somewhere near the starvation

level that they had anything to sing about.

'You can turn round now,' said Julia.

He turned round, and for a second almost failed to recognize her. What he

had actually expected was to see her naked. But she was not naked. The

transformation that had happened was much more surprising than that. She

had painted her face.

She must have slipped into some shop in the proletarian quarters and bought

herself a complete set of make-up materials. Her lips were deeply reddened,

her cheeks rouged, her nose powdered; there was even a touch of something

under the eyes to make them brighter. It was not very skilfully done, but

Winston's standards in such matters were not high. He had never before

seen or imagined a woman of the Party with cosmetics on her face. The

improvement in her appearance was startling. With just a few dabs of colour

in the right places she had become not only very much prettier, but, above

all, far more feminine. Her short hair and boyish overalls merely added

to the effect. As he took her in his arms a wave of synthetic violets

flooded his nostrils. He remembered the half-darkness of a basement

kitchen, and a woman's cavernous mouth. It was the very same scent that

she had used; but at the moment it did not seem to matter.

'Scent too!' he said.

'Yes, dear, scent too. And do you know what I'm going to do next? I'm

going to get hold of a real woman's frock from somewhere and wear it

instead of these bloody trousers. I'll wear silk stockings and high-heeled

shoes! In this room I'm going to be a woman, not a Party comrade.'

They flung their clothes off and climbed into the huge mahogany bed. It

was the first time that he had stripped himself naked in her presence.

Until now he had been too much ashamed of his pale and meagre body, with

the varicose veins standing out on his calves and the discoloured patch

over his ankle. There were no sheets, but the blanket they lay on was

threadbare and smooth, and the size and springiness of the bed astonished

both of them. 'It's sure to be full of bugs, but who cares?' said Julia.

One never saw a double bed nowadays, except in the homes of the proles.

Winston had occasionally slept in one in his boyhood: Julia had never been

in one before, so far as she could remember.

Presently they fell asleep for a little while. When Winston woke up the

hands of the clock had crept round to nearly nine. He did not stir, because

Julia was sleeping with her head in the crook of his arm. Most of her

make-up had transferred itself to his own face or the bolster, but a light

stain of rouge still brought out the beauty of her cheekbone. A yellow ray

from the sinking sun fell across the foot of the bed and lighted up the

fireplace, where the water in the pan was boiling fast. Down in the yard

the woman had stopped singing, but the faint shouts of children floated in

from the street. He wondered vaguely whether in the abolished past it had

been a normal experience to lie in bed like this, in the cool of a summer

evening, a man and a woman with no clothes on, making love when they chose,

talking of what they chose, not feeling any compulsion to get up, simply

lying there and listening to peaceful sounds outside. Surely there could

never have been a time when that seemed ordinary? Julia woke up, rubbed

her eyes, and raised herself on her elbow to look at the oilstove.

'Half that water's boiled away,' she said. 'I'll get up and make some

coffee in another moment. We've got an hour. What time do they cut the

lights off at your flats?'

'Twenty-three thirty.'

'It's twenty-three at the hostel. But you have to get in earlier than that,

because--Hi! Get out, you filthy brute!'

She suddenly twisted herself over in the bed, seized a shoe from the floor,

and sent it hurtling into the corner with a boyish jerk of her arm, exactly

as he had seen her fling the dictionary at Goldstein, that morning during

the Two Minutes Hate.

'What was it?' he said in surprise.

'A rat. I saw him stick his beastly nose out of the wainscoting. There's a

hole down there. I gave him a good fright, anyway.'

'Rats!' murmured Winston. 'In this room!'

'They're all over the place,' said Julia indifferently as she lay down

again. 'We've even got them in the kitchen at the hostel. Some parts of

London are swarming with them. Did you know they attack children? Yes,

they do. In some of these streets a woman daren't leave a baby alone for

two minutes. It's the great huge brown ones that do it. And the nasty

thing is that the brutes always----'

'DON'T GO ON!' said Winston, with his eyes tightly shut.

'Dearest! You've gone quite pale. What's the matter? Do they make you feel

sick?'

'Of all horrors in the world--a rat!'

She pressed herself against him and wound her limbs round him, as though

to reassure him with the warmth of her body. He did not reopen his eyes

immediately. For several moments he had had the feeling of being back in a

nightmare which had recurred from time to time throughout his life. It was

always very much the same. He was standing in front of a wall of darkness,

and on the other side of it there was something unendurable, something too

dreadful to be faced. In the dream his deepest feeling was always one of

self-deception, because he did in fact know what was behind the wall of

darkness. With a deadly effort, like wrenching a piece out of his own

brain, he could even have dragged the thing into the open. He always woke

up without discovering what it was: but somehow it was connected with what

Julia had been saying when he cut her short.

'I'm sorry,' he said, 'it's nothing. I don't like rats, that's all.'

'Don't worry, dear, we're not going to have the filthy brutes in here.

I'll stuff the hole with a bit of sacking before we go. And next time we

come here I'll bring some plaster and bung it up properly.'

Already the black instant of panic was half-forgotten. Feeling slightly

ashamed of himself, he sat up against the bedhead. Julia got out of bed,

pulled on her overalls, and made the coffee. The smell that rose from the

saucepan was so powerful and exciting that they shut the window lest

anybody outside should notice it and become inquisitive. What was even

better than the taste of the coffee was the silky texture given to it by

the sugar, a thing Winston had almost forgotten after years of saccharine.

With one hand in her pocket and a piece of bread and jam in the other,

Julia wandered about the room, glancing indifferently at the bookcase,

pointing out the best way of repairing the gateleg table, plumping herself

down in the ragged arm-chair to see if it was comfortable, and examining

the absurd twelve-hour clock with a sort of tolerant amusement. She brought

the glass paperweight over to the bed to have a look at it in a better

light. He took it out of her hand, fascinated, as always, by the soft,

rainwatery appearance of the glass.

'What is it, do you think?' said Julia.

'I don't think it's anything--I mean, I don't think it was ever put to any

use. That's what I like about it. It's a little chunk of history that

they've forgotten to alter. It's a message from a hundred years ago, if

one knew how to read it.'

'And that picture over there'--she nodded at the engraving on the opposite

wall--'would that be a hundred years old?'

'More. Two hundred, I dare say. One can't tell. It's impossible to discover

the age of anything nowadays.'

She went over to look at it. 'Here's where that brute stuck his nose out,'

she said, kicking the wainscoting immediately below the picture. 'What is

this place? I've seen it before somewhere.'

'It's a church, or at least it used to be. St Clement Danes its name was.'

The fragment of rhyme that Mr Charrington had taught him came back into

his head, and he added half-nostalgically: "Oranges and lemons, say the

bells of St Clement's!"

To his astonishment she capped the line:

'You owe me three farthings, say the bells of St Martin's,

When will you pay me? say the bells of Old Bailey----'

'I can't remember how it goes on after that. But anyway I remember it ends

up, "Here comes a candle to light you to bed, here comes a chopper to chop

off your head!"'

It was like the two halves of a countersign. But there must be another

line after 'the bells of Old Bailey'. Perhaps it could be dug out of

Mr Charrington's memory, if he were suitably prompted.

'Who taught you that?' he said.

'My grandfather. He used to say it to me when I was a little girl. He was

vaporized when I was eight--at any rate, he disappeared. I wonder what a

lemon was,' she added inconsequently. 'I've seen oranges. They're a kind

of round yellow fruit with a thick skin.'

'I can remember lemons,' said Winston. 'They were quite common in the

fifties. They were so sour that it set your teeth on edge even to smell

them.'

'I bet that picture's got bugs behind it,' said Julia. 'I'll take it down

and give it a good clean some day. I suppose it's almost time we were

leaving. I must start washing this paint off. What a bore! I'll get the

lipstick off your face afterwards.'

Winston did not get up for a few minutes more. The room was darkening. He

turned over towards the light and lay gazing into the glass paperweight.

The inexhaustibly interesting thing was not the fragment of coral but the

interior of the glass itself. There was such a depth of it, and yet it was

almost as transparent as air. It was as though the surface of the glass

had been the arch of the sky, enclosing a tiny world with its atmosphere

complete. He had the feeling that he could get inside it, and that in

fact he was inside it, along with the mahogany bed and the gateleg table,

and the clock and the steel engraving and the paperweight itself. The

paperweight was the room he was in, and the coral was Julia's life and his

own, fixed in a sort of eternity at the heart of the crystal.

Chapter 5

Syme had vanished. A morning came, and he was missing from work: a few

thoughtless people commented on his absence. On the next day nobody

mentioned him. On the third day Winston went into the vestibule of the

Records Department to look at the notice-board. One of the notices carried

a printed list of the members of the Chess Committee, of whom Syme had

been one. It looked almost exactly as it had looked before--nothing had

been crossed out--but it was one name shorter. It was enough. Syme had

ceased to exist: he had never existed.

The weather was baking hot. In the labyrinthine Ministry the windowless,

air-conditioned rooms kept their normal temperature, but outside the

pavements scorched one's feet and the stench of the Tubes at the rush hours

was a horror. The preparations for Hate Week were in full swing, and the

staffs of all the Ministries were working overtime. Processions, meetings,

military parades, lectures, waxworks, displays, film shows, telescreen

programmes all had to be organized; stands had to be erected, effigies

built, slogans coined, songs written, rumours circulated, photographs

faked. Julia's unit in the Fiction Department had been taken off the

production of novels and was rushing out a series of atrocity pamphlets.

Winston, in addition to his regular work, spent long periods every day in

going through back files of 'The Times' and altering and embellishing news

items which were to be quoted in speeches. Late at night, when crowds of

rowdy proles roamed the streets, the town had a curiously febrile air. The

rocket bombs crashed oftener than ever, and sometimes in the far distance

there were enormous explosions which no one could explain and about which

there were wild rumours.

The new tune which was to be the theme-song of Hate Week (the Hate Song,

it was called) had already been composed and was being endlessly plugged

on the telescreens. It had a savage, barking rhythm which could not exactly

be called music, but resembled the beating of a drum. Roared out by

hundreds of voices to the tramp of marching feet, it was terrifying. The

proles had taken a fancy to it, and in the midnight streets it competed

with the still-popular 'It was only a hopeless fancy'. The Parsons children

played it at all hours of the night and day, unbearably, on a comb and a

piece of toilet paper. Winston's evenings were fuller than ever. Squads of

volunteers, organized by Parsons, were preparing the street for Hate Week,

stitching banners, painting posters, erecting flagstaffs on the roofs, and

perilously slinging wires across the street for the reception of streamers.

Parsons boasted that Victory Mansions alone would display four hundred

metres of bunting. He was in his native element and as happy as a lark.

The heat and the manual work had even given him a pretext for reverting

to shorts and an open shirt in the evenings. He was everywhere at once,

pushing, pulling, sawing, hammering, improvising, jollying everyone along

with comradely exhortations and giving out from every fold of his body what

seemed an inexhaustible supply of acrid-smelling sweat.

A new poster had suddenly appeared all over London. It had no caption,

and represented simply the monstrous figure of a Eurasian soldier, three

or four metres high, striding forward with expressionless Mongolian face

and enormous boots, a submachine gun pointed from his hip. From whatever

angle you looked at the poster, the muzzle of the gun, magnified by the

foreshortening, seemed to be pointed straight at you. The thing had been

plastered on every blank space on every wall, even outnumbering the

portraits of Big Brother. The proles, normally apathetic about the war,

were being lashed into one of their periodical frenzies of patriotism.

As though to harmonize with the general mood, the rocket bombs had been

killing larger numbers of people than usual. One fell on a crowded film

theatre in Stepney, burying several hundred victims among the ruins. The

whole population of the neighbourhood turned out for a long, trailing

funeral which went on for hours and was in effect an indignation meeting.

Another bomb fell on a piece of waste ground which was used as a playground

and several dozen children were blown to pieces. There were further angry

demonstrations, Goldstein was burned in effigy, hundreds of copies of the

poster of the Eurasian soldier were torn down and added to the flames, and

a number of shops were looted in the turmoil; then a rumour flew round

that spies were directing the rocket bombs by means of wireless waves, and

an old couple who were suspected of being of foreign extraction had their

house set on fire and perished of suffocation.

In the room over Mr Charrington's shop, when they could get there, Julia

and Winston lay side by side on a stripped bed under the open window,

naked for the sake of coolness. The rat had never come back, but the bugs

had multiplied hideously in the heat. It did not seem to matter. Dirty or

clean, the room was paradise. As soon as they arrived they would sprinkle

everything with pepper bought on the black market, tear off their clothes,

and make love with sweating bodies, then fall asleep and wake to find that

the bugs had rallied and were massing for the counter-attack.

Four, five, six--seven times they met during the month of June. Winston

had dropped his habit of drinking gin at all hours. He seemed to have lost

the need for it. He had grown fatter, his varicose ulcer had subsided,

leaving only a brown stain on the skin above his ankle, his fits of

coughing in the early morning had stopped. The process of life had ceased

to be intolerable, he had no longer any impulse to make faces at the

telescreen or shout curses at the top of his voice. Now that they had a

secure hiding-place, almost a home, it did not even seem a hardship that

they could only meet infrequently and for a couple of hours at a time.

What mattered was that the room over the junk-shop should exist. To know

that it was there, inviolate, was almost the same as being in it. The room

was a world, a pocket of the past where extinct animals could walk.

Mr Charrington, thought Winston, was another extinct animal. He usually

stopped to talk with Mr Charrington for a few minutes on his way upstairs.

The old man seemed seldom or never to go out of doors, and on the other

hand to have almost no customers. He led a ghostlike existence between the

tiny, dark shop, and an even tinier back kitchen where he prepared his

meals and which contained, among other things, an unbelievably ancient

gramophone with an enormous horn. He seemed glad of the opportunity to

talk. Wandering about among his worthless stock, with his long nose and

thick spectacles and his bowed shoulders in the velvet jacket, he had

always vaguely the air of being a collector rather than a tradesman.

With a sort of faded enthusiasm he would finger this scrap of rubbish or

that--a china bottle-stopper, the painted lid of a broken snuffbox, a

pinchbeck locket containing a strand of some long-dead baby's hair--never

asking that Winston should buy it, merely that he should admire it. To

talk to him was like listening to the tinkling of a worn-out musical-box.

He had dragged out from the corners of his memory some more fragments of

forgotten rhymes. There was one about four and twenty blackbirds, and

another about a cow with a crumpled horn, and another about the death

of poor Cock Robin. 'It just occurred to me you might be interested,' he

would say with a deprecating little laugh whenever he produced a new

fragment. But he could never recall more than a few lines of any one

rhyme.

Both of them knew--in a way, it was never out of their minds that what

was now happening could not last long. There were times when the fact of

impending death seemed as palpable as the bed they lay on, and they would

cling together with a sort of despairing sensuality, like a damned soul

grasping at his last morsel of pleasure when the clock is within five

minutes of striking. But there were also times when they had the illusion

not only of safety but of permanence. So long as they were actually in

this room, they both felt, no harm could come to them. Getting there was

difficult and dangerous, but the room itself was sanctuary. It was as when

Winston had gazed into the heart of the paperweight, with the feeling that

it would be possible to get inside that glassy world, and that once inside

it time could be arrested. Often they gave themselves up to daydreams of

escape. Their luck would hold indefinitely, and they would carry on their

intrigue, just like this, for the remainder of their natural lives. Or

Katharine would die, and by subtle manoeuvrings Winston and Julia would

succeed in getting married. Or they would commit suicide together. Or

they would disappear, alter themselves out of recognition, learn to speak

with proletarian accents, get jobs in a factory and live out their lives

undetected in a back-street. It was all nonsense, as they both knew. In

reality there was no escape. Even the one plan that was practicable,

suicide, they had no intention of carrying out. To hang on from day to day

and from week to week, spinning out a present that had no future, seemed

an unconquerable instinct, just as one's lungs will always draw the next

breath so long as there is air available.

Sometimes, too, they talked of engaging in active rebellion against the

Party, but with no notion of how to take the first step. Even if the

fabulous Brotherhood was a reality, there still remained the difficulty

of finding one's way into it. He told her of the strange intimacy that

existed, or seemed to exist, between himself and O'Brien, and of the

impulse he sometimes felt, simply to walk into O'Brien's presence, announce

that he was the enemy of the Party, and demand his help. Curiously enough,

this did not strike her as an impossibly rash thing to do. She was used to

judging people by their faces, and it seemed natural to her that Winston

should believe O'Brien to be trustworthy on the strength of a single flash

of the eyes. Moreover she took it for granted that everyone, or nearly

everyone, secretly hated the Party and would break the rules if he thought

it safe to do so. But she refused to believe that widespread, organized

opposition existed or could exist. The tales about Goldstein and his

underground army, she said, were simply a lot of rubbish which the Party

had invented for its own purposes and which you had to pretend to believe

in. Times beyond number, at Party rallies and spontaneous demonstrations,

she had shouted at the top of her voice for the execution of people whose

names she had never heard and in whose supposed crimes she had not the

faintest belief. When public trials were happening she had taken her place

in the detachments from the Youth League who surrounded the courts from

morning to night, chanting at intervals 'Death to the traitors!' During

the Two Minutes Hate she always excelled all others in shouting insults

at Goldstein. Yet she had only the dimmest idea of who Goldstein was and

what doctrines he was supposed to represent. She had grown up since the

Revolution and was too young to remember the ideological battles of the

fifties and sixties. Such a thing as an independent political movement was

outside her imagination: and in any case the Party was invincible. It

would always exist, and it would always be the same. You could only rebel

against it by secret disobedience or, at most, by isolated acts of

violence such as killing somebody or blowing something up.

In some ways she was far more acute than Winston, and far less susceptible

to Party propaganda. Once when he happened in some connexion to mention

the war against Eurasia, she startled him by saying casually that in her

opinion the war was not happening. The rocket bombs which fell daily on

London were probably fired by the Government of Oceania itself, 'just to

keep people frightened'. This was an idea that had literally never occurred

to him. She also stirred a sort of envy in him by telling him that during

the Two Minutes Hate her great difficulty was to avoid bursting out

laughing. But she only questioned the teachings of the Party when they

in some way touched upon her own life. Often she was ready to accept

the official mythology, simply because the difference between truth and

falsehood did not seem important to her. She believed, for instance, having

learnt it at school, that the Party had invented aeroplanes. (In his own

schooldays, Winston remembered, in the late fifties, it was only the

helicopter that the Party claimed to have invented; a dozen years later,

when Julia was at school, it was already claiming the aeroplane; one

generation more, and it would be claiming the steam engine.) And when he

told her that aeroplanes had been in existence before he was born and long

before the Revolution, the fact struck her as totally uninteresting. After

all, what did it matter who had invented aeroplanes? It was rather more

of a shock to him when he discovered from some chance remark that she did

not remember that Oceania, four years ago, had been at war with Eastasia

and at peace with Eurasia. It was true that she regarded the whole war as

a sham: but apparently she had not even noticed that the name of the enemy

had changed. 'I thought we'd always been at war with Eurasia,' she said

vaguely. It frightened him a little. The invention of aeroplanes dated

from long before her birth, but the switchover in the war had happened

only four years ago, well after she was grown up. He argued with her about

it for perhaps a quarter of an hour. In the end he succeeded in forcing

her memory back until she did dimly recall that at one time Eastasia and

not Eurasia had been the enemy. But the issue still struck her as

unimportant. 'Who cares?' she said impatiently. 'It's always one bloody

war after another, and one knows the news is all lies anyway.'

Sometimes he talked to her of the Records Department and the impudent

forgeries that he committed there. Such things did not appear to horrify

her. She did not feel the abyss opening beneath her feet at the thought

of lies becoming truths. He told her the story of Jones, Aaronson, and

Rutherford and the momentous slip of paper which he had once held between

his fingers. It did not make much impression on her. At first, indeed, she

failed to grasp the point of the story.

'Were they friends of yours?' she said.

'No, I never knew them. They were Inner Party members. Besides, they were

far older men than I was. They belonged to the old days, before the

Revolution. I barely knew them by sight.'

'Then what was there to worry about? People are being killed off all the

time, aren't they?'

He tried to make her understand. 'This was an exceptional case. It wasn't

just a question of somebody being killed. Do you realize that the past,

starting from yesterday, has been actually abolished? If it survives

anywhere, it's in a few solid objects with no words attached to them, like

that lump of glass there. Already we know almost literally nothing about

the Revolution and the years before the Revolution. Every record has been

destroyed or falsified, every book has been rewritten, every picture has

been repainted, every statue and street and building has been renamed,

every date has been altered. And that process is continuing day by day and

minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless

present in which the Party is always right. I know, of course, that the

past is falsified, but it would never be possible for me to prove it, even

when I did the falsification myself. After the thing is done, no evidence

ever remains. The only evidence is inside my own mind, and I don't know

with any certainty that any other human being shares my memories. Just in

that one instance, in my whole life, I did possess actual concrete evidence

after the event--years after it.'

'And what good was that?'

'It was no good, because I threw it away a few minutes later. But if the

same thing happened today, I should keep it.'

'Well, I wouldn't!' said Julia. 'I'm quite ready to take risks, but only

for something worth while, not for bits of old newspaper. What could you

have done with it even if you had kept it?'

'Not much, perhaps. But it was evidence. It might have planted a few doubts

here and there, supposing that I'd dared to show it to anybody. I don't

imagine that we can alter anything in our own lifetime. But one can imagine

little knots of resistance springing up here and there--small groups of

people banding themselves together, and gradually growing, and even leaving

a few records behind, so that the next generations can carry on where we

leave off.'

'I'm not interested in the next generation, dear. I'm interested in US.'

'You're only a rebel from the waist downwards,' he told her.

She thought this brilliantly witty and flung her arms round him in delight.

In the ramifications of party doctrine she had not the faintest interest.

Whenever he began to talk of the principles of Ingsoc, doublethink, the

mutability of the past, and the denial of objective reality, and to use

Newspeak words, she became bored and confused and said that she never paid

any attention to that kind of thing. One knew that it was all rubbish, so

why let oneself be worried by it? She knew when to cheer and when to boo,

and that was all one needed. If he persisted in talking of such subjects,

she had a disconcerting habit of falling asleep. She was one of those

people who can go to sleep at any hour and in any position. Talking to her,

he realized how easy it was to present an appearance of orthodoxy while

having no grasp whatever of what orthodoxy meant. In a way, the world-view

of the Party imposed itself most successfully on people incapable of

understanding it. They could be made to accept the most flagrant violations

of reality, because they never fully grasped the enormity of what was

demanded of them, and were not sufficiently interested in public events to

notice what was happening. By lack of understanding they remained sane.

They simply swallowed everything, and what they swallowed did them no harm,

because it left no residue behind, just as a grain of corn will pass

undigested through the body of a bird.

Chapter 6

It had happened at last. The expected message had come. All his life, it

seemed to him, he had been waiting for this to happen.

He was walking down the long corridor at the Ministry and he was almost

at the spot where Julia had slipped the note into his hand when he became

aware that someone larger than himself was walking just behind him. The

person, whoever it was, gave a small cough, evidently as a prelude to

speaking. Winston stopped abruptly and turned. It was O'Brien.

At last they were face to face, and it seemed that his only impulse was

to run away. His heart bounded violently. He would have been incapable of

speaking. O'Brien, however, had continued forward in the same movement,

laying a friendly hand for a moment on Winston's arm, so that the two of

them were walking side by side. He began speaking with the peculiar grave

courtesy that differentiated him from the majority of Inner Party members.

'I had been hoping for an opportunity of talking to you,' he said. 'I was

reading one of your Newspeak articles in 'The Times' the other day. You

take a scholarly interest in Newspeak, I believe?'

Winston had recovered part of his self-possession. 'Hardly scholarly,' he

said. 'I'm only an amateur. It's not my subject. I have never had anything

to do with the actual construction of the language.'

'But you write it very elegantly,' said O'Brien. 'That is not only my own

opinion. I was talking recently to a friend of yours who is certainly an

expert. His name has slipped my memory for the moment.'

Again Winston's heart stirred painfully. It was inconceivable that this

was anything other than a reference to Syme. But Syme was not only dead,

he was abolished, an unperson. Any identifiable reference to him would have

been mortally dangerous. O'Brien's remark must obviously have been intended

as a signal, a codeword. By sharing a small act of thoughtcrime he had

turned the two of them into accomplices. They had continued to stroll

slowly down the corridor, but now O'Brien halted. With the curious,

disarming friendliness that he always managed to put in to the gesture he

resettled his spectacles on his nose. Then he went on:

'What I had really intended to say was that in your article I noticed you

had used two words which have become obsolete. But they have only become

so very recently. Have you seen the tenth edition of the Newspeak

Dictionary?'

'No,' said Winston. 'I didn't think it had been issued yet. We are still

using the ninth in the Records Department.'

'The tenth edition is not due to appear for some months, I believe. But a

few advance copies have been circulated. I have one myself. It might

interest you to look at it, perhaps?'

'Very much so,' said Winston, immediately seeing where this tended.

'Some of the new developments are most ingenious. The reduction in the

number of verbs--that is the point that will appeal to you, I think. Let

me see, shall I send a messenger to you with the dictionary? But I am

afraid I invariably forget anything of that kind. Perhaps you could pick

it up at my flat at some time that suited you? Wait. Let me give you my

address.'

They were standing in front of a telescreen. Somewhat absent-mindedly

O'Brien felt two of his pockets and then produced a small leather-covered

notebook and a gold ink-pencil. Immediately beneath the telescreen, in

such a position that anyone who was watching at the other end of the

instrument could read what he was writing, he scribbled an address, tore

out the page and handed it to Winston.

'I am usually at home in the evenings,' he said. 'If not, my servant will

give you the dictionary.'

He was gone, leaving Winston holding the scrap of paper, which this time

there was no need to conceal. Nevertheless he carefully memorized what was

written on it, and some hours later dropped it into the memory hole along

with a mass of other papers.

They had been talking to one another for a couple of minutes at the most.

There was only one meaning that the episode could possibly have. It had

been contrived as a way of letting Winston know O'Brien's address. This

was necessary, because except by direct enquiry it was never possible to

discover where anyone lived. There were no directories of any kind. 'If

you ever want to see me, this is where I can be found,' was what O'Brien

had been saying to him. Perhaps there would even be a message concealed

somewhere in the dictionary. But at any rate, one thing was certain. The

conspiracy that he had dreamed of did exist, and he had reached the outer

edges of it.

He knew that sooner or later he would obey O'Brien's summons. Perhaps

tomorrow, perhaps after a long delay--he was not certain. What was

happening was only the working-out of a process that had started years

ago. The first step had been a secret, involuntary thought, the second

had been the opening of the diary. He had moved from thoughts to words,

and now from words to actions. The last step was something that would

happen in the Ministry of Love. He had accepted it. The end was contained

in the beginning. But it was frightening: or, more exactly, it was like

a foretaste of death, like being a little less alive. Even while he was

speaking to O'Brien, when the meaning of the words had sunk in, a chilly

shuddering feeling had taken possession of his body. He had the sensation

of stepping into the dampness of a grave, and it was not much better

because he had always known that the grave was there and waiting for him.

Chapter 7

Winston had woken up with his eyes full of tears. Julia rolled sleepily

against him, murmuring something that might have been 'What's the matter?'

'I dreamt--' he began, and stopped short. It was too complex to be put

into words. There was the dream itself, and there was a memory connected

with it that had swum into his mind in the few seconds after waking.

He lay back with his eyes shut, still sodden in the atmosphere of the

dream. It was a vast, luminous dream in which his whole life seemed to

stretch out before him like a landscape on a summer evening after rain.

It had all occurred inside the glass paperweight, but the surface of the

glass was the dome of the sky, and inside the dome everything was flooded

with clear soft light in which one could see into interminable distances.

The dream had also been comprehended by--indeed, in some sense it had

consisted in--a gesture of the arm made by his mother, and made again

thirty years later by the Jewish woman he had seen on the news film,

trying to shelter the small boy from the bullets, before the helicopter

blew them both to pieces.

'Do you know,' he said, 'that until this moment I believed I had murdered

my mother?'

'Why did you murder her?' said Julia, almost asleep.

'I didn't murder her. Not physically.'

In the dream he had remembered his last glimpse of his mother, and within

a few moments of waking the cluster of small events surrounding it had all

come back. It was a memory that he must have deliberately pushed out of

his consciousness over many years. He was not certain of the date, but he

could not have been less than ten years old, possibly twelve, when it had

happened.

His father had disappeared some time earlier, how much earlier he could

not remember. He remembered better the rackety, uneasy circumstances of

the time: the periodical panics about air-raids and the sheltering in Tube

stations, the piles of rubble everywhere, the unintelligible proclamations

posted at street corners, the gangs of youths in shirts all the same

colour, the enormous queues outside the bakeries, the intermittent

machine-gun fire in the distance--above all, the fact that there was

never enough to eat. He remembered long afternoons spent with other boys

in scrounging round dustbins and rubbish heaps, picking out the ribs of

cabbage leaves, potato peelings, sometimes even scraps of stale breadcrust

from which they carefully scraped away the cinders; and also in waiting

for the passing of trucks which travelled over a certain route and were

known to carry cattle feed, and which, when they jolted over the bad

patches in the road, sometimes spilt a few fragments of oil-cake.

When his father disappeared, his mother did not show any surprise or any

violent grief, but a sudden change came over her. She seemed to have

become completely spiritless. It was evident even to Winston that she was

waiting for something that she knew must happen. She did everything that

was needed--cooked, washed, mended, made the bed, swept the floor, dusted

the mantelpiece--always very slowly and with a curious lack of superfluous

motion, like an artist's lay-figure moving of its own accord. Her large

shapely body seemed to relapse naturally into stillness. For hours at a

time she would sit almost immobile on the bed, nursing his young sister,

a tiny, ailing, very silent child of two or three, with a face made simian

by thinness. Very occasionally she would take Winston in her arms and

press him against her for a long time without saying anything. He was

aware, in spite of his youthfulness and selfishness, that this was somehow

connected with the never-mentioned thing that was about to happen.

He remembered the room where they lived, a dark, close-smelling room that

seemed half filled by a bed with a white counterpane. There was a gas ring

in the fender, and a shelf where food was kept, and on the landing outside

there was a brown earthenware sink, common to several rooms. He remembered

his mother's statuesque body bending over the gas ring to stir at something

in a saucepan. Above all he remembered his continuous hunger, and the

fierce sordid battles at mealtimes. He would ask his mother naggingly,

over and over again, why there was not more food, he would shout and storm

at her (he even remembered the tones of his voice, which was beginning to

break prematurely and sometimes boomed in a peculiar way), or he would

attempt a snivelling note of pathos in his efforts to get more than his

share. His mother was quite ready to give him more than his share. She

took it for granted that he, 'the boy', should have the biggest portion;

but however much she gave him he invariably demanded more. At every meal

she would beseech him not to be selfish and to remember that his little

sister was sick and also needed food, but it was no use. He would cry out

with rage when she stopped ladling, he would try to wrench the saucepan

and spoon out of her hands, he would grab bits from his sister's plate.

He knew that he was starving the other two, but he could not help it; he

even felt that he had a right to do it. The clamorous hunger in his belly

seemed to justify him. Between meals, if his mother did not stand guard,

he was constantly pilfering at the wretched store of food on the shelf.

One day a chocolate ration was issued. There had been no such issue for

weeks or months past. He remembered quite clearly that precious little

morsel of chocolate. It was a two-ounce slab (they still talked about

ounces in those days) between the three of them. It was obvious that it

ought to be divided into three equal parts. Suddenly, as though he were

listening to somebody else, Winston heard himself demanding in a loud

booming voice that he should be given the whole piece. His mother told him

not to be greedy. There was a long, nagging argument that went round and

round, with shouts, whines, tears, remonstrances, bargainings. His tiny

sister, clinging to her mother with both hands, exactly like a baby monkey,

sat looking over her shoulder at him with large, mournful eyes. In the

end his mother broke off three-quarters of the chocolate and gave it to

Winston, giving the other quarter to his sister. The little girl took hold

of it and looked at it dully, perhaps not knowing what it was. Winston

stood watching her for a moment. Then with a sudden swift spring he had

snatched the piece of chocolate out of his sister's hand and was fleeing

for the door.

'Winston, Winston!' his mother called after him. 'Come back! Give your

sister back her chocolate!'

He stopped, but did not come back. His mother's anxious eyes were fixed on

his face. Even now he was thinking about the thing, he did not know what

it was that was on the point of happening. His sister, conscious of having

been robbed of something, had set up a feeble wail. His mother drew her

arm round the child and pressed its face against her breast. Something in

the gesture told him that his sister was dying. He turned and fled down

the stairs, with the chocolate growing sticky in his hand.

He never saw his mother again. After he had devoured the chocolate he felt

somewhat ashamed of himself and hung about in the streets for several

hours, until hunger drove him home. When he came back his mother had

disappeared. This was already becoming normal at that time. Nothing was

gone from the room except his mother and his sister. They had not taken

any clothes, not even his mother's overcoat. To this day he did not know

with any certainty that his mother was dead. It was perfectly possible

that she had merely been sent to a forced-labour camp. As for his sister,

she might have been removed, like Winston himself, to one of the colonies

for homeless children (Reclamation Centres, they were called) which had

grown up as a result of the civil war, or she might have been sent to the

labour camp along with his mother, or simply left somewhere or other

to die.

The dream was still vivid in his mind, especially the enveloping protecting

gesture of the arm in which its whole meaning seemed to be contained. His

mind went back to another dream of two months ago. Exactly as his mother

had sat on the dingy white-quilted bed, with the child clinging to her, so

she had sat in the sunken ship, far underneath him, and drowning deeper

every minute, but still looking up at him through the darkening water.

He told Julia the story of his mother's disappearance. Without opening her

eyes she rolled over and settled herself into a more comfortable position.

'I expect you were a beastly little swine in those days,' she said

indistinctly. 'All children are swine.'

'Yes. But the real point of the story----'

From her breathing it was evident that she was going off to sleep again.

He would have liked to continue talking about his mother. He did not

suppose, from what he could remember of her, that she had been an unusual

woman, still less an intelligent one; and yet she had possessed a kind of

nobility, a kind of purity, simply because the standards that she obeyed

were private ones. Her feelings were her own, and could not be altered

from outside. It would not have occurred to her that an action which is

ineffectual thereby becomes meaningless. If you loved someone, you loved

him, and when you had nothing else to give, you still gave him love. When

the last of the chocolate was gone, his mother had clasped the child in

her arms. It was no use, it changed nothing, it did not produce more

chocolate, it did not avert the child's death or her own; but it seemed

natural to her to do it. The refugee woman in the boat had also covered

the little boy with her arm, which was no more use against the bullets

than a sheet of paper. The terrible thing that the Party had done was to

persuade you that mere impulses, mere feelings, were of no account, while

at the same time robbing you of all power over the material world. When

once you were in the grip of the Party, what you felt or did not feel,

what you did or refrained from doing, made literally no difference.

Whatever happened you vanished, and neither you nor your actions were ever

heard of again. You were lifted clean out of the stream of history. And

yet to the people of only two generations ago this would not have seemed

all-important, because they were not attempting to alter history. They

were governed by private loyalties which they did not question. What

mattered were individual relationships, and a completely helpless gesture,

an embrace, a tear, a word spoken to a dying man, could have value in

itself. The proles, it suddenly occurred to him, had remained in this

condition. They were not loyal to a party or a country or an idea, they

were loyal to one another. For the first time in his life he did not

despise the proles or think of them merely as an inert force which would

one day spring to life and regenerate the world. The proles had stayed

human. They had not become hardened inside. They had held on to the

primitive emotions which he himself had to re-learn by conscious effort.

And in thinking this he remembered, without apparent relevance, how a few

weeks ago he had seen a severed hand lying on the pavement and had kicked

it into the gutter as though it had been a cabbage-stalk.

'The proles are human beings,' he said aloud. 'We are not human.'

'Why not?' said Julia, who had woken up again.

He thought for a little while. 'Has it ever occurred to you,' he said,

'that the best thing for us to do would be simply to walk out of here

before it's too late, and never see each other again?'

'Yes, dear, it has occurred to me, several times. But I'm not going to do

it, all the same.'

'We've been lucky,' he said 'but it can't last much longer. You're young.

You look normal and innocent. If you keep clear of people like me, you

might stay alive for another fifty years.'

'No. I've thought it all out. What you do, I'm going to do. And don't be

too downhearted. I'm rather good at staying alive.'

'We may be together for another six months--a year--there's no knowing.

At the end we're certain to be apart. Do you realize how utterly alone we

shall be? When once they get hold of us there will be nothing, literally

nothing, that either of us can do for the other. If I confess, they'll

shoot you, and if I refuse to confess, they'll shoot you just the same.

Nothing that I can do or say, or stop myself from saying, will put off

your death for as much as five minutes. Neither of us will even know

whether the other is alive or dead. We shall be utterly without power of

any kind. The one thing that matters is that we shouldn't betray one

another, although even that can't make the slightest difference.'

'If you mean confessing,' she said, 'we shall do that, right enough.

Everybody always confesses. You can't help it. They torture you.'

'I don't mean confessing. Confession is not betrayal. What you say or do

doesn't matter: only feelings matter. If they could make me stop loving

you--that would be the real betrayal.'

She thought it over. 'They can't do that,' she said finally. 'It's the one

thing they can't do. They can make you say anything--ANYTHING--but they

can't make you believe it. They can't get inside you.'

'No,' he said a little more hopefully, 'no; that's quite true. They can't

get inside you. If you can FEEL that staying human is worth while, even

when it can't have any result whatever, you've beaten them.'

He thought of the telescreen with its never-sleeping ear. They could spy

upon you night and day, but if you kept your head you could still outwit

them. With all their cleverness they had never mastered the secret of

finding out what another human being was thinking. Perhaps that was less

true when you were actually in their hands. One did not know what happened

inside the Ministry of Love, but it was possible to guess: tortures, drugs,

delicate instruments that registered your nervous reactions, gradual

wearing-down by sleeplessness and solitude and persistent questioning.

Facts, at any rate, could not be kept hidden. They could be tracked down

by enquiry, they could be squeezed out of you by torture. But if the object

was not to stay alive but to stay human, what difference did it ultimately

make? They could not alter your feelings: for that matter you could not

alter them yourself, even if you wanted to. They could lay bare in the

utmost detail everything that you had done or said or thought; but the

inner heart, whose workings were mysterious even to yourself, remained

impregnable.

Chapter 8

They had done it, they had done it at last!

The room they were standing in was long-shaped and softly lit. The

telescreen was dimmed to a low murmur; the richness of the dark-blue carpet

gave one the impression of treading on velvet. At the far end of the room

O'Brien was sitting at a table under a green-shaded lamp, with a mass of

papers on either side of him. He had not bothered to look up when the

servant showed Julia and Winston in.

Winston's heart was thumping so hard that he doubted whether he would be

able to speak. They had done it, they had done it at last, was all he

could think. It had been a rash act to come here at all, and sheer folly

to arrive together; though it was true that they had come by different

routes and only met on O'Brien's doorstep. But merely to walk into such a

place needed an effort of the nerve. It was only on very rare occasions

that one saw inside the dwelling-places of the Inner Party, or even

penetrated into the quarter of the town where they lived. The whole

atmosphere of the huge block of flats, the richness and spaciousness of

everything, the unfamiliar smells of good food and good tobacco, the

silent and incredibly rapid lifts sliding up and down, the white-jacketed

servants hurrying to and fro--everything was intimidating. Although he had

a good pretext for coming here, he was haunted at every step by the fear

that a black-uniformed guard would suddenly appear from round the corner,

demand his papers, and order him to get out. O'Brien's servant, however,

had admitted the two of them without demur. He was a small, dark-haired

man in a white jacket, with a diamond-shaped, completely expressionless

face which might have been that of a Chinese. The passage down which he

led them was softly carpeted, with cream-papered walls and white

wainscoting, all exquisitely clean. That too was intimidating. Winston

could not remember ever to have seen a passageway whose walls were not

grimy from the contact of human bodies.

O'Brien had a slip of paper between his fingers and seemed to be studying

it intently. His heavy face, bent down so that one could see the line of

the nose, looked both formidable and intelligent. For perhaps twenty

seconds he sat without stirring. Then he pulled the speakwrite towards

him and rapped out a message in the hybrid jargon of the Ministries:

'Items one comma five comma seven approved fullwise stop suggestion

contained item six doubleplus ridiculous verging crimethink cancel stop

unproceed constructionwise antegetting plusfull estimates machinery

overheads stop end message.'

He rose deliberately from his chair and came towards them across the

soundless carpet. A little of the official atmosphere seemed to have fallen

away from him with the Newspeak words, but his expression was grimmer than

usual, as though he were not pleased at being disturbed. The terror that

Winston already felt was suddenly shot through by a streak of ordinary

embarrassment. It seemed to him quite possible that he had simply made a

stupid mistake. For what evidence had he in reality that O'Brien was any

kind of political conspirator? Nothing but a flash of the eyes and a single

equivocal remark: beyond that, only his own secret imaginings, founded on

a dream. He could not even fall back on the pretence that he had come to

borrow the dictionary, because in that case Julia's presence was impossible

to explain. As O'Brien passed the telescreen a thought seemed to strike

him. He stopped, turned aside and pressed a switch on the wall. There was

a sharp snap. The voice had stopped.

Julia uttered a tiny sound, a sort of squeak of surprise. Even in the midst

of his panic, Winston was too much taken aback to be able to hold his

tongue.

'You can turn it off!' he said.

'Yes,' said O'Brien, 'we can turn it off. We have that privilege.'

He was opposite them now. His solid form towered over the pair of them,

and the expression on his face was still indecipherable. He was waiting,

somewhat sternly, for Winston to speak, but about what? Even now it was

quite conceivable that he was simply a busy man wondering irritably why he

had been interrupted. Nobody spoke. After the stopping of the telescreen

the room seemed deadly silent. The seconds marched past, enormous. With

difficulty Winston continued to keep his eyes fixed on O'Brien's. Then

suddenly the grim face broke down into what might have been the beginnings

of a smile. With his characteristic gesture O'Brien resettled his

spectacles on his nose.

'Shall I say it, or will you?' he said.

'I will say it,' said Winston promptly. 'That thing is really turned off?'

'Yes, everything is turned off. We are alone.'

'We have come here because----'

He paused, realizing for the first time the vagueness of

his own motives. Since he did not in fact know what kind of

help he expected from O'Brien, it was not easy to say why he

had come here. He went on, conscious that what he was saying

must sound both feeble and pretentious:

'We believe that there is some kind of conspiracy, some kind of secret

organization working against the Party, and that you are involved in it.

We want to join it and work for it. We are enemies of the Party. We

disbelieve in the principles of Ingsoc. We are thought-criminals. We are

also adulterers. I tell you this because we want to put ourselves at your

mercy. If you want us to incriminate ourselves in any other way, we are

ready.'

He stopped and glanced over his shoulder, with the feeling that the door

had opened. Sure enough, the little yellow-faced servant had come in

without knocking. Winston saw that he was carrying a tray with a decanter

and glasses.

'Martin is one of us,' said O'Brien impassively. 'Bring the drinks over

here, Martin. Put them on the round table. Have we enough chairs? Then

we may as well sit down and talk in comfort. Bring a chair for yourself,

Martin. This is business. You can stop being a servant for the next ten

minutes.'

The little man sat down, quite at his ease, and yet still with a

servant-like air, the air of a valet enjoying a privilege. Winston

regarded him out of the corner of his eye. It struck him that the man's

whole life was playing a part, and that he felt it to be dangerous to

drop his assumed personality even for a moment. O'Brien took the decanter

by the neck and filled up the glasses with a dark-red liquid. It aroused

in Winston dim memories of something seen long ago on a wall or a

hoarding--a vast bottle composed of electric lights which seemed to move

up and down and pour its contents into a glass. Seen from the top the

stuff looked almost black, but in the decanter it gleamed like a ruby.

It had a sour-sweet smell. He saw Julia pick up her glass and sniff at

it with frank curiosity.

'It is called wine,' said O'Brien with a faint smile. 'You will have read

about it in books, no doubt. Not much of it gets to the Outer Party, I am

afraid.' His face grew solemn again, and he raised his glass: 'I think it

is fitting that we should begin by drinking a health. To our Leader: To

Emmanuel Goldstein.'

Winston took up his glass with a certain eagerness. Wine was a thing he

had read and dreamed about. Like the glass paperweight or Mr Charrington's

half-remembered rhymes, it belonged to the vanished, romantic past, the

olden time as he liked to call it in his secret thoughts. For some reason

he had always thought of wine as having an intensely sweet taste, like

that of blackberry jam and an immediate intoxicating effect. Actually,

when he came to swallow it, the stuff was distinctly disappointing. The

truth was that after years of gin-drinking he could barely taste it. He

set down the empty glass.

'Then there is such a person as Goldstein?' he said.

'Yes, there is such a person, and he is alive. Where, I do not know.'

'And the conspiracy--the organization? Is it real? It is not simply an

invention of the Thought Police?'

'No, it is real. The Brotherhood, we call it. You will never learn much

more about the Brotherhood than that it exists and that you belong to it.

I will come back to that presently.' He looked at his wrist-watch. 'It is

unwise even for members of the Inner Party to turn off the telescreen for

more than half an hour. You ought not to have come here together, and

you will have to leave separately. You, comrade'--he bowed his head to

Julia--'will leave first. We have about twenty minutes at our disposal.

You will understand that I must start by asking you certain questions.

In general terms, what are you prepared to do?'

'Anything that we are capable of,' said Winston.

O'Brien had turned himself a little in his chair so that he was facing

Winston. He almost ignored Julia, seeming to take it for granted that

Winston could speak for her. For a moment the lids flitted down over his

eyes. He began asking his questions in a low, expressionless voice, as

though this were a routine, a sort of catechism, most of whose answers

were known to him already.

'You are prepared to give your lives?'

'Yes.'

'You are prepared to commit murder?'

'Yes.'

'To commit acts of sabotage which may cause the death of hundreds of

innocent people?'

'Yes.'

'To betray your country to foreign powers?'

'Yes.'

'You are prepared to cheat, to forge, to blackmail, to corrupt the minds

of children, to distribute habit-forming drugs, to encourage prostitution,

to disseminate venereal diseases--to do anything which is likely to cause

demoralization and weaken the power of the Party?'

'Yes.'

'If, for example, it would somehow serve our interests to throw sulphuric

acid in a child's face--are you prepared to do that?'

'Yes.'

'You are prepared to lose your identity and live out the rest of your life

as a waiter or a dock-worker?'

'Yes.'

'You are prepared to commit suicide, if and when we order you to do so?'

'Yes.'

'You are prepared, the two of you, to separate and never see one another

again?'

'No!' broke in Julia.

It appeared to Winston that a long time passed before he answered. For a

moment he seemed even to have been deprived of the power of speech. His

tongue worked soundlessly, forming the opening syllables first of one word,

then of the other, over and over again. Until he had said it, he did not

know which word he was going to say. 'No,' he said finally.

'You did well to tell me,' said O'Brien. 'It is necessary for us to know

everything.'

He turned himself toward Julia and added in a voice with somewhat more

expression in it:

'Do you understand that even if he survives, it may be as a different

person? We may be obliged to give him a new identity. His face, his

movements, the shape of his hands, the colour of his hair--even his voice

would be different. And you yourself might have become a different person.

Our surgeons can alter people beyond recognition. Sometimes it is

necessary. Sometimes we even amputate a limb.'

Winston could not help snatching another sidelong glance at Martin's

Mongolian face. There were no scars that he could see. Julia had turned a

shade paler, so that her freckles were showing, but she faced O'Brien

boldly. She murmured something that seemed to be assent.

'Good. Then that is settled.'

There was a silver box of cigarettes on the table. With a rather

absent-minded air O'Brien pushed them towards the others, took one himself,

then stood up and began to pace slowly to and fro, as though he could think

better standing. They were very good cigarettes, very thick and

well-packed, with an unfamiliar silkiness in the paper. O'Brien looked at

his wrist-watch again.

'You had better go back to your Pantry, Martin,' he said. 'I shall switch

on in a quarter of an hour. Take a good look at these comrades' faces

before you go. You will be seeing them again. I may not.'

Exactly as they had done at the front door, the little man's dark eyes

flickered over their faces. There was not a trace of friendliness in his

manner. He was memorizing their appearance, but he felt no interest in

them, or appeared to feel none. It occurred to Winston that a synthetic

face was perhaps incapable of changing its expression. Without speaking

or giving any kind of salutation, Martin went out, closing the door

silently behind him. O'Brien was strolling up and down, one hand in the

pocket of his black overalls, the other holding his cigarette.

'You understand,' he said, 'that you will be fighting in the dark. You

will always be in the dark. You will receive orders and you will obey them,

without knowing why. Later I shall send you a book from which you will

learn the true nature of the society we live in, and the strategy by which

we shall destroy it. When you have read the book, you will be full members

of the Brotherhood. But between the general aims that we are fighting for

and the immediate tasks of the moment, you will never know anything. I

tell you that the Brotherhood exists, but I cannot tell you whether it

numbers a hundred members, or ten million. From your personal knowledge

you will never be able to say that it numbers even as many as a dozen. You

will have three or four contacts, who will be renewed from time to time as

they disappear. As this was your first contact, it will be preserved. When

you receive orders, they will come from me. If we find it necessary to

communicate with you, it will be through Martin. When you are finally

caught, you will confess. That is unavoidable. But you will have very

little to confess, other than your own actions. You will not be able to

betray more than a handful of unimportant people. Probably you will not

even betray me. By that time I may be dead, or I shall have become a

different person, with a different face.'

He continued to move to and fro over the soft carpet. In spite of the

bulkiness of his body there was a remarkable grace in his movements. It

came out even in the gesture with which he thrust a hand into his pocket,

or manipulated a cigarette. More even than of strength, he gave an

impression of confidence and of an understanding tinged by irony. However

much in earnest he might be, he had nothing of the single-mindedness that

belongs to a fanatic. When he spoke of murder, suicide, venereal disease,

amputated limbs, and altered faces, it was with a faint air of persiflage.

'This is unavoidable,' his voice seemed to say; 'this is what we have got

to do, unflinchingly. But this is not what we shall be doing when life is

worth living again.' A wave of admiration, almost of worship, flowed out

from Winston towards O'Brien. For the moment he had forgotten the shadowy

figure of Goldstein. When you looked at O'Brien's powerful shoulders and

his blunt-featured face, so ugly and yet so civilized, it was impossible

to believe that he could be defeated. There was no stratagem that he was

not equal to, no danger that he could not foresee. Even Julia seemed to

be impressed. She had let her cigarette go out and was listening intently.

O'Brien went on:

'You will have heard rumours of the existence of the Brotherhood. No doubt

you have formed your own picture of it. You have imagined, probably, a

huge underworld of conspirators, meeting secretly in cellars, scribbling

messages on walls, recognizing one another by codewords or by special

movements of the hand. Nothing of the kind exists. The members of the

Brotherhood have no way of recognizing one another, and it is impossible

for any one member to be aware of the identity of more than a few others.

Goldstein himself, if he fell into the hands of the Thought Police, could

not give them a complete list of members, or any information that would

lead them to a complete list. No such list exists. The Brotherhood cannot

be wiped out because it is not an organization in the ordinary sense.

Nothing holds it together except an idea which is indestructible. You

will never have anything to sustain you, except the idea. You will get no

comradeship and no encouragement. When finally you are caught, you will

get no help. We never help our members. At most, when it is absolutely

necessary that someone should be silenced, we are occasionally able to

smuggle a razor blade into a prisoner's cell. You will have to get used

to living without results and without hope. You will work for a while,

you will be caught, you will confess, and then you will die. Those are

the only results that you will ever see. There is no possibility that any

perceptible change will happen within our own lifetime. We are the dead.

Our only true life is in the future. We shall take part in it as handfuls

of dust and splinters of bone. But how far away that future may be, there

is no knowing. It might be a thousand years. At present nothing is possible

except to extend the area of sanity little by little. We cannot act

collectively. We can only spread our knowledge outwards from individual to

individual, generation after generation. In the face of the Thought Police

there is no other way.'

He halted and looked for the third time at his wrist-watch.

'It is almost time for you to leave, comrade,' he said to Julia. 'Wait.

The decanter is still half full.'

He filled the glasses and raised his own glass by the stem.

'What shall it be this time?' he said, still with the same faint

suggestion of irony. 'To the confusion of the Thought Police? To the

death of Big Brother? To humanity? To the future?'

'To the past,' said Winston.

'The past is more important,' agreed O'Brien gravely.

They emptied their glasses, and a moment later Julia stood up to go.

O'Brien took a small box from the top of a cabinet and handed her a flat

white tablet which he told her to place on her tongue. It was important,

he said, not to go out smelling of wine: the lift attendants were very

observant. As soon as the door had shut behind her he appeared to forget

her existence. He took another pace or two up and down, then stopped.

'There are details to be settled,' he said. 'I assume that you have a

hiding-place of some kind?'

Winston explained about the room over Mr Charrington's shop.

'That will do for the moment. Later we will arrange something else for you.

It is important to change one's hiding-place frequently. Meanwhile I shall

send you a copy of THE BOOK'--even O'Brien, Winston noticed, seemed to

pronounce the words as though they were in italics--'Goldstein's book, you

understand, as soon as possible. It may be some days before I can get hold

of one. There are not many in existence, as you can imagine. The Thought

Police hunt them down and destroy them almost as fast as we can produce

them. It makes very little difference. The book is indestructible. If

the last copy were gone, we could reproduce it almost word for word. Do

you carry a brief-case to work with you?' he added.

'As a rule, yes.'

'What is it like?'

'Black, very shabby. With two straps.'

'Black, two straps, very shabby--good. One day in the fairly near

future--I cannot give a date--one of the messages among your morning's

work will contain a misprinted word, and you will have to ask for a

repeat. On the following day you will go to work without your brief-case.

At some time during the day, in the street, a man will touch you on the

arm and say "I think you have dropped your brief-case." The one he gives

you will contain a copy of Goldstein's book. You will return it within

fourteen days.'

They were silent for a moment.

'There are a couple of minutes before you need go,' said O'Brien. 'We

shall meet again--if we do meet again----'

Winston looked up at him. 'In the place where there is no darkness?'

he said hesitantly.

O'Brien nodded without appearance of surprise. 'In the place where there

is no darkness,' he said, as though he had recognized the allusion. 'And

in the meantime, is there anything that you wish to say before you leave?

Any message? Any question?.'

Winston thought. There did not seem to be any further question that he

wanted to ask: still less did he feel any impulse to utter high-sounding

generalities. Instead of anything directly connected with O'Brien or the

Brotherhood, there came into his mind a sort of composite picture of the

dark bedroom where his mother had spent her last days, and the little room

over Mr Charrington's shop, and the glass paperweight, and the steel

engraving in its rosewood frame. Almost at random he said:

'Did you ever happen to hear an old rhyme that begins "Oranges and lemons,

say the bells of St Clement's"?'

Again O'Brien nodded. With a sort of grave courtesy he completed the

stanza:

'Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St Clement's,

You owe me three farthings, say the bells of St Martin's,

When will you pay me? say the bells of Old Bailey,

When I grow rich, say the bells of Shoreditch.'

'You knew the last line!' said Winston.

'Yes, I knew the last line. And now, I am afraid, it is time for you to go.

But wait. You had better let me give you one of these tablets.'

As Winston stood up O'Brien held out a hand. His powerful grip crushed

the bones of Winston's palm. At the door Winston looked back, but O'Brien

seemed already to be in process of putting him out of mind. He was waiting

with his hand on the switch that controlled the telescreen. Beyond him

Winston could see the writing-table with its green-shaded lamp and the

speakwrite and the wire baskets deep-laden with papers. The incident was

closed. Within thirty seconds, it occurred to him, O'Brien would be back

at his interrupted and important work on behalf of the Party.

Chapter 9

Winston was gelatinous with fatigue. Gelatinous was the right word. It had

come into his head spontaneously. His body seemed to have not only the

weakness of a jelly, but its translucency. He felt that if he held up his

hand he would be able to see the light through it. All the blood and

lymph had been drained out of him by an enormous debauch of work, leaving

only a frail structure of nerves, bones, and skin. All sensations seemed

to be magnified. His overalls fretted his shoulders, the pavement tickled

his feet, even the opening and closing of a hand was an effort that made

his joints creak.

He had worked more than ninety hours in five days. So had everyone else in

the Ministry. Now it was all over, and he had literally nothing to do, no

Party work of any description, until tomorrow morning. He could spend six

hours in the hiding-place and another nine in his own bed. Slowly, in

mild afternoon sunshine, he walked up a dingy street in the direction

of Mr Charrington's shop, keeping one eye open for the patrols, but

irrationally convinced that this afternoon there was no danger of anyone

interfering with him. The heavy brief-case that he was carrying bumped

against his knee at each step, sending a tingling sensation up and down

the skin of his leg. Inside it was the book, which he had now had in his

possession for six days and had not yet opened, nor even looked at.

On the sixth day of Hate Week, after the processions, the speeches, the

shouting, the singing, the banners, the posters, the films, the waxworks,

the rolling of drums and squealing of trumpets, the tramp of marching feet,

the grinding of the caterpillars of tanks, the roar of massed planes,

the booming of guns--after six days of this, when the great orgasm was

quivering to its climax and the general hatred of Eurasia had boiled up

into such delirium that if the crowd could have got their hands on the

2,000 Eurasian war-criminals who were to be publicly hanged on the last

day of the proceedings, they would unquestionably have torn them to

pieces--at just this moment it had been announced that Oceania was not

after all at war with Eurasia. Oceania was at war with Eastasia. Eurasia

was an ally.

There was, of course, no admission that any change had taken place. Merely

it became known, with extreme suddenness and everywhere at once, that

Eastasia and not Eurasia was the enemy. Winston was taking part in a

demonstration in one of the central London squares at the moment when it

happened. It was night, and the white faces and the scarlet banners were

luridly floodlit. The square was packed with several thousand people,

including a block of about a thousand schoolchildren in the uniform of the

Spies. On a scarlet-draped platform an orator of the Inner Party, a small

lean man with disproportionately long arms and a large bald skull over

which a few lank locks straggled, was haranguing the crowd. A little

Rumpelstiltskin figure, contorted with hatred, he gripped the neck of the

microphone with one hand while the other, enormous at the end of a bony

arm, clawed the air menacingly above his head. His voice, made metallic by

the amplifiers, boomed forth an endless catalogue of atrocities, massacres,

deportations, lootings, rapings, torture of prisoners, bombing of

civilians, lying propaganda, unjust aggressions, broken treaties. It was

almost impossible to listen to him without being first convinced and then

maddened. At every few moments the fury of the crowd boiled over and the

voice of the speaker was drowned by a wild beast-like roaring that rose

uncontrollably from thousands of throats. The most savage yells of all

came from the schoolchildren. The speech had been proceeding for perhaps

twenty minutes when a messenger hurried on to the platform and a scrap of

paper was slipped into the speaker's hand. He unrolled and read it without

pausing in his speech. Nothing altered in his voice or manner, or in the

content of what he was saying, but suddenly the names were different.

Without words said, a wave of understanding rippled through the crowd.

Oceania was at war with Eastasia! The next moment there was a tremendous

commotion. The banners and posters with which the square was decorated

were all wrong! Quite half of them had the wrong faces on them. It was

sabotage! The agents of Goldstein had been at work! There was a riotous

interlude while posters were ripped from the walls, banners torn to shreds

and trampled underfoot. The Spies performed prodigies of activity in

clambering over the rooftops and cutting the streamers that fluttered from

the chimneys. But within two or three minutes it was all over. The orator,

still gripping the neck of the microphone, his shoulders hunched forward,

his free hand clawing at the air, had gone straight on with his speech.

One minute more, and the feral roars of rage were again bursting from the

crowd. The Hate continued exactly as before, except that the target had

been changed.

The thing that impressed Winston in looking back was that the speaker had

switched from one line to the other actually in midsentence, not only

without a pause, but without even breaking the syntax. But at the moment

he had other things to preoccupy him. It was during the moment of disorder

while the posters were being torn down that a man whose face he did not

see had tapped him on the shoulder and said, 'Excuse me, I think you've

dropped your brief-case.' He took the brief-case abstractedly, without

speaking. He knew that it would be days before he had an opportunity to

look inside it. The instant that the demonstration was over he went

straight to the Ministry of Truth, though the time was now nearly

twenty-three hours. The entire staff of the Ministry had done likewise.

The orders already issuing from the telescreen, recalling them to their

posts, were hardly necessary.

Oceania was at war with Eastasia: Oceania had always been at war with

Eastasia. A large part of the political literature of five years was now

completely obsolete. Reports and records of all kinds, newspapers, books,

pamphlets, films, sound-tracks, photographs--all had to be rectified at

lightning speed. Although no directive was ever issued, it was known that

the chiefs of the Department intended that within one week no reference

to the war with Eurasia, or the alliance with Eastasia, should remain in

existence anywhere. The work was overwhelming, all the more so because

the processes that it involved could not be called by their true

names. Everyone in the Records Department worked eighteen hours in the

twenty-four, with two three-hour snatches of sleep. Mattresses were brought

up from the cellars and pitched all over the corridors: meals consisted of

sandwiches and Victory Coffee wheeled round on trolleys by attendants from

the canteen. Each time that Winston broke off for one of his spells of

sleep he tried to leave his desk clear of work, and each time that he

crawled back sticky-eyed and aching, it was to find that another shower

of paper cylinders had covered the desk like a snowdrift, half-burying the

speakwrite and overflowing on to the floor, so that the first job was

always to stack them into a neat enough pile to give him room to work.

What was worst of all was that the work was by no means purely mechanical.

Often it was enough merely to substitute one name for another, but any

detailed report of events demanded care and imagination. Even the

geographical knowledge that one needed in transferring the war from one

part of the world to another was considerable.

By the third day his eyes ached unbearably and his spectacles needed wiping

every few minutes. It was like struggling with some crushing physical task,

something which one had the right to refuse and which one was nevertheless

neurotically anxious to accomplish. In so far as he had time to remember

it, he was not troubled by the fact that every word he murmured into the

speakwrite, every stroke of his ink-pencil, was a deliberate lie. He was

as anxious as anyone else in the Department that the forgery should be

perfect. On the morning of the sixth day the dribble of cylinders slowed

down. For as much as half an hour nothing came out of the tube; then one

more cylinder, then nothing. Everywhere at about the same time the work

was easing off. A deep and as it were secret sigh went through the

Department. A mighty deed, which could never be mentioned, had been

achieved. It was now impossible for any human being to prove by documentary

evidence that the war with Eurasia had ever happened. At twelve hundred it

was unexpectedly announced that all workers in the Ministry were free till

tomorrow morning. Winston, still carrying the brief-case containing the

book, which had remained between his feet while he worked and under his

body while he slept, went home, shaved himself, and almost fell asleep in

his bath, although the water was barely more than tepid.

With a sort of voluptuous creaking in his joints he climbed the stair above

Mr Charrington's shop. He was tired, but not sleepy any longer. He opened

the window, lit the dirty little oilstove and put on a pan of water for

coffee. Julia would arrive presently: meanwhile there was the book. He

sat down in the sluttish armchair and undid the straps of the brief-case.

A heavy black volume, amateurishly bound, with no name or title on the

cover. The print also looked slightly irregular. The pages were worn at

the edges, and fell apart, easily, as though the book had passed through

many hands. The inscription on the title-page ran:

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF

OLIGARCHICAL COLLECTIVISM

by

Emmanuel Goldstein

Winston began reading:

Chapter I

Ignorance is Strength

Throughout recorded time, and probably since the end of the Neolithic Age,

there have been three kinds of people in the world, the High, the Middle,

and the Low. They have been subdivided in many ways, they have borne

countless different names, and their relative numbers, as well as their

attitude towards one another, have varied from age to age: but the

essential structure of society has never altered. Even after enormous

upheavals and seemingly irrevocable changes, the same pattern has always

reasserted itself, just as a gyroscope will always return to equilibrium,

however far it is pushed one way or the other.

The aims of these groups are entirely irreconcilable...

Winston stopped reading, chiefly in order to appreciate the fact that he

was reading, in comfort and safety. He was alone: no telescreen, no ear at

the keyhole, no nervous impulse to glance over his shoulder or cover the

page with his hand. The sweet summer air played against his cheek. From

somewhere far away there floated the faint shouts of children: in the room

itself there was no sound except the insect voice of the clock. He settled

deeper into the arm-chair and put his feet up on the fender. It was bliss,

it was eternity. Suddenly, as one sometimes does with a book of which one

knows that one will ultimately read and re-read every word, he opened it

at a different place and found himself at Chapter III. He went on reading:

Chapter III

War is Peace

The splitting up of the world into three great super-states was an event

which could be and indeed was foreseen before the middle of the twentieth

century. With the absorption of Europe by Russia and of the British Empire

by the United States, two of the three existing powers, Eurasia and

Oceania, were already effectively in being. The third, Eastasia, only

emerged as a distinct unit after another decade of confused fighting. The

frontiers between the three super-states are in some places arbitrary, and

in others they fluctuate according to the fortunes of war, but in general

they follow geographical lines. Eurasia comprises the whole of the northern

part of the European and Asiatic land-mass, from Portugal to the Bering

Strait. Oceania comprises the Americas, the Atlantic islands including the

British Isles, Australasia, and the southern portion of Africa. Eastasia,

smaller than the others and with a less definite western frontier,

comprises China and the countries to the south of it, the Japanese islands

and a large but fluctuating portion of Manchuria, Mongolia, and Tibet.

In one combination or another, these three super-states are permanently at

war, and have been so for the past twenty-five years. War, however, is no

longer the desperate, annihilating struggle that it was in the early

decades of the twentieth century. It is a warfare of limited aims between

combatants who are unable to destroy one another, have no material cause

for fighting and are not divided by any genuine ideological difference.

This is not to say that either the conduct of war, or the prevailing

attitude towards it, has become less bloodthirsty or more chivalrous.

On the contrary, war hysteria is continuous and universal in all countries,

and such acts as raping, looting, the slaughter of children, the reduction

of whole populations to slavery, and reprisals against prisoners which

extend even to boiling and burying alive, are looked upon as normal,

and, when they are committed by one's own side and not by the enemy,

meritorious. But in a physical sense war involves very small numbers of

people, mostly highly-trained specialists, and causes comparatively few

casualties. The fighting, when there is any, takes place on the vague

frontiers whose whereabouts the average man can only guess at, or round

the Floating Fortresses which guard strategic spots on the sea lanes. In

the centres of civilization war means no more than a continuous shortage

of consumption goods, and the occasional crash of a rocket bomb which may

cause a few scores of deaths. War has in fact changed its character. More

exactly, the reasons for which war is waged have changed in their order of

importance. Motives which were already present to some small extent in the

great wars of the early twentieth century have now become dominant and

are consciously recognized and acted upon.

To understand the nature of the present war--for in spite of the regrouping

which occurs every few years, it is always the same war--one must realize

in the first place that it is impossible for it to be decisive. None of

the three super-states could be definitively conquered even by the other

two in combination. They are too evenly matched, and their natural defences

are too formidable. Eurasia is protected by its vast land spaces, Oceania

by the width of the Atlantic and the Pacific, Eastasia by the fecundity

and industriousness of its inhabitants. Secondly, there is no longer, in

a material sense, anything to fight about. With the establishment of

self-contained economies, in which production and consumption are geared

to one another, the scramble for markets which was a main cause of

previous wars has come to an end, while the competition for raw materials

is no longer a matter of life and death. In any case each of the three

super-states is so vast that it can obtain almost all the materials that

it needs within its own boundaries. In so far as the war has a direct

economic purpose, it is a war for labour power. Between the frontiers of

the super-states, and not permanently in the possession of any of them,

there lies a rough quadrilateral with its corners at Tangier, Brazzaville,

Darwin, and Hong Kong, containing within it about a fifth of the population

of the earth. It is for the possession of these thickly-populated regions,

and of the northern ice-cap, that the three powers are constantly

struggling. In practice no one power ever controls the whole of the

disputed area. Portions of it are constantly changing hands, and it is the

chance of seizing this or that fragment by a sudden stroke of treachery

that dictates the endless changes of alignment.

All of the disputed territories contain valuable minerals, and some of

them yield important vegetable products such as rubber which in colder

climates it is necessary to synthesize by comparatively expensive methods.

But above all they contain a bottomless reserve of cheap labour. Whichever

power controls equatorial Africa, or the countries of the Middle East, or

Southern India, or the Indonesian Archipelago, disposes also of the bodies

of scores or hundreds of millions of ill-paid and hard-working coolies.

The inhabitants of these areas, reduced more or less openly to the status

of slaves, pass continually from conqueror to conqueror, and are expended

like so much coal or oil in the race to turn out more armaments, to capture

more territory, to control more labour power, to turn out more armaments,

to capture more territory, and so on indefinitely. It should be noted that

the fighting never really moves beyond the edges of the disputed areas.

The frontiers of Eurasia flow back and forth between the basin of the Congo

and the northern shore of the Mediterranean; the islands of the Indian

Ocean and the Pacific are constantly being captured and recaptured by

Oceania or by Eastasia; in Mongolia the dividing line between Eurasia and

Eastasia is never stable; round the Pole all three powers lay claim to

enormous territories which in fact are largely uninhabited and unexplored:

but the balance of power always remains roughly even, and the territory

which forms the heartland of each super-state always remains inviolate.

Moreover, the labour of the exploited peoples round the Equator is not

really necessary to the world's economy. They add nothing to the wealth of

the world, since whatever they produce is used for purposes of war, and

the object of waging a war is always to be in a better position in which

to wage another war. By their labour the slave populations allow the tempo

of continuous warfare to be speeded up. But if they did not exist, the

structure of world society, and the process by which it maintains itself,

would not be essentially different.

The primary aim of modern warfare (in accordance with the principles of

DOUBLETHINK, this aim is simultaneously recognized and not recognized by

the directing brains of the Inner Party) is to use up the products of the

machine without raising the general standard of living. Ever since the end

of the nineteenth century, the problem of what to do with the surplus of

consumption goods has been latent in industrial society. At present, when

few human beings even have enough to eat, this problem is obviously not

urgent, and it might not have become so, even if no artificial processes

of destruction had been at work. The world of today is a bare, hungry,

dilapidated place compared with the world that existed before 1914, and

still more so if compared with the imaginary future to which the people of

that period looked forward. In the early twentieth century, the vision of

a future society unbelievably rich, leisured, orderly, and efficient--a

glittering antiseptic world of glass and steel and snow-white concrete--was

part of the consciousness of nearly every literate person. Science and

technology were developing at a prodigious speed, and it seemed natural to

assume that they would go on developing. This failed to happen, partly

because of the impoverishment caused by a long series of wars and

revolutions, partly because scientific and technical progress depended on

the empirical habit of thought, which could not survive in a strictly

regimented society. As a whole the world is more primitive today than it

was fifty years ago. Certain backward areas have advanced, and various

devices, always in some way connected with warfare and police espionage,

have been developed, but experiment and invention have largely stopped,

and the ravages of the atomic war of the nineteen-fifties have never been

fully repaired. Nevertheless the dangers inherent in the machine are still

there. From the moment when the machine first made its appearance it

was clear to all thinking people that the need for human drudgery, and

therefore to a great extent for human inequality, had disappeared. If the

machine were used deliberately for that end, hunger, overwork, dirt,

illiteracy, and disease could be eliminated within a few generations.

And in fact, without being used for any such purpose, but by a sort of

automatic process--by producing wealth which it was sometimes impossible

not to distribute--the machine did raise the living standards of the

average human being very greatly over a period of about fifty years at

the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.

But it was also clear that an all-round increase in wealth threatened the

destruction--indeed, in some sense was the destruction--of a hierarchical

society. In a world in which everyone worked short hours, had enough to

eat, lived in a house with a bathroom and a refrigerator, and possessed

a motor-car or even an aeroplane, the most obvious and perhaps the most

important form of inequality would already have disappeared. If it once

became general, wealth would confer no distinction. It was possible, no

doubt, to imagine a society in which WEALTH, in the sense of personal

possessions and luxuries, should be evenly distributed, while POWER

remained in the hands of a small privileged caste. But in practice such

a society could not long remain stable. For if leisure and security were

enjoyed by all alike, the great mass of human beings who are normally

stupefied by poverty would become literate and would learn to think for

themselves; and when once they had done this, they would sooner or later

realize that the privileged minority had no function, and they would sweep

it away. In the long run, a hierarchical society was only possible on a

basis of poverty and ignorance. To return to the agricultural past, as

some thinkers about the beginning of the twentieth century dreamed of

doing, was not a practicable solution. It conflicted with the tendency

towards mechanization which had become quasi-instinctive throughout almost

the whole world, and moreover, any country which remained industrially

backward was helpless in a military sense and was bound to be dominated,

directly or indirectly, by its more advanced rivals.

Nor was it a satisfactory solution to keep the masses in poverty by

restricting the output of goods. This happened to a great extent during

the final phase of capitalism, roughly between 1920 and 1940. The economy

of many countries was allowed to stagnate, land went out of cultivation,

capital equipment was not added to, great blocks of the population were

prevented from working and kept half alive by State charity. But this,

too, entailed military weakness, and since the privations it inflicted

were obviously unnecessary, it made opposition inevitable. The problem was

how to keep the wheels of industry turning without increasing the real

wealth of the world. Goods must be produced, but they must not be

distributed. And in practice the only way of achieving this was by

continuous warfare.

The essential act of war is destruction, not necessarily of human lives,

but of the products of human labour. War is a way of shattering to pieces,

or pouring into the stratosphere, or sinking in the depths of the sea,

materials which might otherwise be used to make the masses too comfortable,

and hence, in the long run, too intelligent. Even when weapons of war are

not actually destroyed, their manufacture is still a convenient way of

expending labour power without producing anything that can be consumed.

A Floating Fortress, for example, has locked up in it the labour that

would build several hundred cargo-ships. Ultimately it is scrapped as

obsolete, never having brought any material benefit to anybody, and with

further enormous labours another Floating Fortress is built. In principle

the war effort is always so planned as to eat up any surplus that might

exist after meeting the bare needs of the population. In practice the needs

of the population are always underestimated, with the result that there is

a chronic shortage of half the necessities of life; but this is looked on

as an advantage. It is deliberate policy to keep even the favoured groups

somewhere near the brink of hardship, because a general state of scarcity

increases the importance of small privileges and thus magnifies the

distinction between one group and another. By the standards of the early

twentieth century, even a member of the Inner Party lives an austere,

laborious kind of life. Nevertheless, the few luxuries that he does enjoy

his large, well-appointed flat, the better texture of his clothes, the

better quality of his food and drink and tobacco, his two or three

servants, his private motor-car or helicopter--set him in a different world

from a member of the Outer Party, and the members of the Outer Party have

a similar advantage in comparison with the submerged masses whom we call

'the proles'. The social atmosphere is that of a besieged city, where the

possession of a lump of horseflesh makes the difference between wealth and

poverty. And at the same time the consciousness of being at war, and

therefore in danger, makes the handing-over of all power to a small caste

seem the natural, unavoidable condition of survival.

War, it will be seen, accomplishes the necessary destruction, but

accomplishes it in a psychologically acceptable way. In principle it would

be quite simple to waste the surplus labour of the world by building

temples and pyramids, by digging holes and filling them up again, or even

by producing vast quantities of goods and then setting fire to them. But

this would provide only the economic and not the emotional basis for a

hierarchical society. What is concerned here is not the morale of masses,

whose attitude is unimportant so long as they are kept steadily at work,

but the morale of the Party itself. Even the humblest Party member is

expected to be competent, industrious, and even intelligent within narrow

limits, but it is also necessary that he should be a credulous and ignorant

fanatic whose prevailing moods are fear, hatred, adulation, and orgiastic

triumph. In other words it is necessary that he should have the mentality

appropriate to a state of war. It does not matter whether the war is

actually happening, and, since no decisive victory is possible, it does

not matter whether the war is going well or badly. All that is needed is

that a state of war should exist. The splitting of the intelligence which

the Party requires of its members, and which is more easily achieved in an

atmosphere of war, is now almost universal, but the higher up the ranks

one goes, the more marked it becomes. It is precisely in the Inner Party

that war hysteria and hatred of the enemy are strongest. In his capacity

as an administrator, it is often necessary for a member of the Inner Party

to know that this or that item of war news is untruthful, and he may often

be aware that the entire war is spurious and is either not happening or

is being waged for purposes quite other than the declared ones: but such

knowledge is easily neutralized by the technique of DOUBLETHINK. Meanwhile

no Inner Party member wavers for an instant in his mystical belief that

the war is real, and that it is bound to end victoriously, with Oceania

the undisputed master of the entire world.

All members of the Inner Party believe in this coming conquest as an

article of faith. It is to be achieved either by gradually acquiring more

and more territory and so building up an overwhelming preponderance of

power, or by the discovery of some new and unanswerable weapon. The search

for new weapons continues unceasingly, and is one of the very few remaining

activities in which the inventive or speculative type of mind can find any

outlet. In Oceania at the present day, Science, in the old sense, has

almost ceased to exist. In Newspeak there is no word for 'Science'. The

empirical method of thought, on which all the scientific achievements of

the past were founded, is opposed to the most fundamental principles of

Ingsoc. And even technological progress only happens when its products can

in some way be used for the diminution of human liberty. In all the useful

arts the world is either standing still or going backwards. The fields are

cultivated with horse-ploughs while books are written by machinery. But

in matters of vital importance--meaning, in effect, war and police

espionage--the empirical approach is still encouraged, or at least

tolerated. The two aims of the Party are to conquer the whole surface of

the earth and to extinguish once and for all the possibility of independent

thought. There are therefore two great problems which the Party is

concerned to solve. One is how to discover, against his will, what another

human being is thinking, and the other is how to kill several hundred

million people in a few seconds without giving warning beforehand. In

so far as scientific research still continues, this is its subject matter.

The scientist of today is either a mixture of psychologist and inquisitor,

studying with real ordinary minuteness the meaning of facial expressions,

gestures, and tones of voice, and testing the truth-producing effects of

drugs, shock therapy, hypnosis, and physical torture; or he is chemist,

physicist, or biologist concerned only with such branches of his special

subject as are relevant to the taking of life. In the vast laboratories

of the Ministry of Peace, and in the experimental stations hidden in the

Brazilian forests, or in the Australian desert, or on lost islands of

the Antarctic, the teams of experts are indefatigably at work. Some are

concerned simply with planning the logistics of future wars; others devise

larger and larger rocket bombs, more and more powerful explosives, and more

and more impenetrable armour-plating; others search for new and deadlier

gases, or for soluble poisons capable of being produced in such quantities

as to destroy the vegetation of whole continents, or for breeds of disease

germs immunized against all possible antibodies; others strive to produce

a vehicle that shall bore its way under the soil like a submarine under

the water, or an aeroplane as independent of its base as a sailing-ship;

others explore even remoter possibilities such as focusing the sun's rays

through lenses suspended thousands of kilometres away in space, or

producing artificial earthquakes and tidal waves by tapping the heat at

the earth's centre.

But none of these projects ever comes anywhere near realization, and none

of the three super-states ever gains a significant lead on the others.

What is more remarkable is that all three powers already possess, in the

atomic bomb, a weapon far more powerful than any that their present

researches are likely to discover. Although the Party, according to its

habit, claims the invention for itself, atomic bombs first appeared as

early as the nineteen-forties, and were first used on a large scale about

ten years later. At that time some hundreds of bombs were dropped on

industrial centres, chiefly in European Russia, Western Europe, and

North America. The effect was to convince the ruling groups of all

countries that a few more atomic bombs would mean the end of organized

society, and hence of their own power. Thereafter, although no formal

agreement was ever made or hinted at, no more bombs were dropped. All three

powers merely continue to produce atomic bombs and store them up against

the decisive opportunity which they all believe will come sooner or later.

And meanwhile the art of war has remained almost stationary for thirty or

forty years. Helicopters are more used than they were formerly, bombing

planes have been largely superseded by self-propelled projectiles, and the

fragile movable battleship has given way to the almost unsinkable Floating

Fortress; but otherwise there has been little development. The tank, the

submarine, the torpedo, the machine gun, even the rifle and the hand

grenade are still in use. And in spite of the endless slaughters reported

in the Press and on the telescreens, the desperate battles of earlier wars,

in which hundreds of thousands or even millions of men were often killed

in a few weeks, have never been repeated.

None of the three super-states ever attempts any manoeuvre which involves

the risk of serious defeat. When any large operation is undertaken, it is

usually a surprise attack against an ally. The strategy that all three

powers are following, or pretend to themselves that they are following,

is the same. The plan is, by a combination of fighting, bargaining, and

well-timed strokes of treachery, to acquire a ring of bases completely

encircling one or other of the rival states, and then to sign a pact of

friendship with that rival and remain on peaceful terms for so many years

as to lull suspicion to sleep. During this time rockets loaded with atomic

bombs can be assembled at all the strategic spots; finally they will all

be fired simultaneously, with effects so devastating as to make retaliation

impossible. It will then be time to sign a pact of friendship with the

remaining world-power, in preparation for another attack. This scheme, it

is hardly necessary to say, is a mere daydream, impossible of realization.

Moreover, no fighting ever occurs except in the disputed areas round the

Equator and the Pole: no invasion of enemy territory is ever undertaken.

This explains the fact that in some places the frontiers between the

super-states are arbitrary. Eurasia, for example, could easily conquer the

British Isles, which are geographically part of Europe, or on the other

hand it would be possible for Oceania to push its frontiers to the Rhine

or even to the Vistula. But this would violate the principle, followed on

all sides though never formulated, of cultural integrity. If Oceania were

to conquer the areas that used once to be known as France and Germany, it

would be necessary either to exterminate the inhabitants, a task of great

physical difficulty, or to assimilate a population of about a hundred

million people, who, so far as technical development goes, are roughly on

the Oceanic level. The problem is the same for all three super-states.

It is absolutely necessary to their structure that there should be no

contact with foreigners, except, to a limited extent, with war prisoners

and coloured slaves. Even the official ally of the moment is always

regarded with the darkest suspicion. War prisoners apart, the average

citizen of Oceania never sets eyes on a citizen of either Eurasia or

Eastasia, and he is forbidden the knowledge of foreign languages. If he

were allowed contact with foreigners he would discover that they are

creatures similar to himself and that most of what he has been told about

them is lies. The sealed world in which he lives would be broken, and the

fear, hatred, and self-righteousness on which his morale depends might

evaporate. It is therefore realized on all sides that however often Persia,

or Egypt, or Java, or Ceylon may change hands, the main frontiers must

never be crossed by anything except bombs.

Under this lies a fact never mentioned aloud, but tacitly understood and

acted upon: namely, that the conditions of life in all three super-states

are very much the same. In Oceania the prevailing philosophy is called

Ingsoc, in Eurasia it is called Neo-Bolshevism, and in Eastasia it is

called by a Chinese name usually translated as Death-Worship, but perhaps

better rendered as Obliteration of the Self. The citizen of Oceania is not

allowed to know anything of the tenets of the other two philosophies, but

he is taught to execrate them as barbarous outrages upon morality and

common sense. Actually the three philosophies are barely distinguishable,

and the social systems which they support are not distinguishable at all.

Everywhere there is the same pyramidal structure, the same worship of

semi-divine leader, the same economy existing by and for continuous

warfare. It follows that the three super-states not only cannot conquer

one another, but would gain no advantage by doing so. On the contrary,

so long as they remain in conflict they prop one another up, like three

sheaves of corn. And, as usual, the ruling groups of all three powers are

simultaneously aware and unaware of what they are doing. Their lives are

dedicated to world conquest, but they also know that it is necessary that

the war should continue everlastingly and without victory. Meanwhile the

fact that there IS no danger of conquest makes possible the denial of

reality which is the special feature of Ingsoc and its rival systems of

thought. Here it is necessary to repeat what has been said earlier, that

by becoming continuous war has fundamentally changed its character.

In past ages, a war, almost by definition, was something that sooner or

later came to an end, usually in unmistakable victory or defeat. In the

past, also, war was one of the main instruments by which human societies

were kept in touch with physical reality. All rulers in all ages have tried

to impose a false view of the world upon their followers, but they could

not afford to encourage any illusion that tended to impair military

efficiency. So long as defeat meant the loss of independence, or some other

result generally held to be undesirable, the precautions against defeat

had to be serious. Physical facts could not be ignored. In philosophy, or

religion, or ethics, or politics, two and two might make five, but when

one was designing a gun or an aeroplane they had to make four. Inefficient

nations were always conquered sooner or later, and the struggle for

efficiency was inimical to illusions. Moreover, to be efficient it was

necessary to be able to learn from the past, which meant having a fairly

accurate idea of what had happened in the past. Newspapers and history

books were, of course, always coloured and biased, but falsification of

the kind that is practised today would have been impossible. War was a

sure safeguard of sanity, and so far as the ruling classes were concerned

it was probably the most important of all safeguards. While wars could be

won or lost, no ruling class could be completely irresponsible.

But when war becomes literally continuous, it also ceases to be dangerous.

When war is continuous there is no such thing as military necessity.

Technical progress can cease and the most palpable facts can be denied or

disregarded. As we have seen, researches that could be called scientific

are still carried out for the purposes of war, but they are essentially a

kind of daydreaming, and their failure to show results is not important.

Efficiency, even military efficiency, is no longer needed. Nothing is

efficient in Oceania except the Thought Police. Since each of the three

super-states is unconquerable, each is in effect a separate universe within

which almost any perversion of thought can be safely practised. Reality

only exerts its pressure through the needs of everyday life--the need to

eat and drink, to get shelter and clothing, to avoid swallowing poison or

stepping out of top-storey windows, and the like. Between life and death,

and between physical pleasure and physical pain, there is still a

distinction, but that is all. Cut off from contact with the outer world,

and with the past, the citizen of Oceania is like a man in interstellar

space, who has no way of knowing which direction is up and which is down.

The rulers of such a state are absolute, as the Pharaohs or the Caesars

could not be. They are obliged to prevent their followers from starving

to death in numbers large enough to be inconvenient, and they are obliged

to remain at the same low level of military technique as their rivals; but

once that minimum is achieved, they can twist reality into whatever shape

they choose.

The war, therefore, if we judge it by the standards of previous wars, is

merely an imposture. It is like the battles between certain ruminant

animals whose horns are set at such an angle that they are incapable of

hurting one another. But though it is unreal it is not meaningless. It

eats up the surplus of consumable goods, and it helps to preserve the

special mental atmosphere that a hierarchical society needs. War, it will

be seen, is now a purely internal affair. In the past, the ruling groups

of all countries, although they might recognize their common interest and

therefore limit the destructiveness of war, did fight against one another,

and the victor always plundered the vanquished. In our own day they are

not fighting against one another at all. The war is waged by each ruling

group against its own subjects, and the object of the war is not to make

or prevent conquests of territory, but to keep the structure of society

intact. The very word 'war', therefore, has become misleading. It would

probably be accurate to say that by becoming continuous war has ceased to

exist. The peculiar pressure that it exerted on human beings between the

Neolithic Age and the early twentieth century has disappeared and been

replaced by something quite different. The effect would be much the same

if the three super-states, instead of fighting one another, should agree

to live in perpetual peace, each inviolate within its own boundaries. For

in that case each would still be a self-contained universe, freed for ever

from the sobering influence of external danger. A peace that was truly

permanent would be the same as a permanent war. This--although the vast

majority of Party members understand it only in a shallower sense--is the

inner meaning of the Party slogan: WAR IS PEACE.

Winston stopped reading for a moment. Somewhere in remote distance a

rocket bomb thundered. The blissful feeling of being alone with the

forbidden book, in a room with no telescreen, had not worn off. Solitude

and safety were physical sensations, mixed up somehow with the tiredness

of his body, the softness of the chair, the touch of the faint breeze from

the window that played upon his cheek. The book fascinated him, or more

exactly it reassured him. In a sense it told him nothing that was new, but

that was part of the attraction. It said what he would have said, if it

had been possible for him to set his scattered thoughts in order. It was

the product of a mind similar to his own, but enormously more powerful,

more systematic, less fear-ridden. The best books, he perceived, are those

that tell you what you know already. He had just turned back to Chapter I

when he heard Julia's footstep on the stair and started out of his chair

to meet her. She dumped her brown tool-bag on the floor and flung herself

into his arms. It was more than a week since they had seen one another.

'I've got THE BOOK,' he said as they disentangled themselves.

'Oh, you've got it? Good,' she said without much interest, and almost

immediately knelt down beside the oil stove to make the coffee.

They did not return to the subject until they had been in bed for half an

hour. The evening was just cool enough to make it worth while to pull up

the counterpane. From below came the familiar sound of singing and the

scrape of boots on the flagstones. The brawny red-armed woman whom Winston

had seen there on his first visit was almost a fixture in the yard. There

seemed to be no hour of daylight when she was not marching to and fro

between the washtub and the line, alternately gagging herself with clothes

pegs and breaking forth into lusty song. Julia had settled down on her

side and seemed to be already on the point of falling asleep. He reached

out for the book, which was lying on the floor, and sat up against the

bedhead.

'We must read it,' he said. 'You too. All members of the Brotherhood have

to read it.'

'You read it,' she said with her eyes shut. 'Read it aloud. That's the

best way. Then you can explain it to me as you go.'

The clock's hands said six, meaning eighteen. They had three or four hours

ahead of them. He propped the book against his knees and began reading:

Chapter I

Ignorance is Strength

Throughout recorded time, and probably since the end of the Neolithic Age,

there have been three kinds of people in the world, the High, the Middle,

and the Low. They have been subdivided in many ways, they have borne

countless different names, and their relative numbers, as well as their

attitude towards one another, have varied from age to age: but the

essential structure of society has never altered. Even after enormous

upheavals and seemingly irrevocable changes, the same pattern has always

reasserted itself, just as a gyroscope will always return to equilibrium,

however far it is pushed one way or the other

'Julia, are you awake?' said Winston.

'Yes, my love, I'm listening. Go on. It's marvellous.'

He continued reading:

The aims of these three groups are entirely irreconcilable. The aim of

the High is to remain where they are. The aim of the Middle is to change

places with the High. The aim of the Low, when they have an aim--for it

is an abiding characteristic of the Low that they are too much crushed

by drudgery to be more than intermittently conscious of anything outside

their daily lives--is to abolish all distinctions and create a society in

which all men shall be equal. Thus throughout history a struggle which is

the same in its main outlines recurs over and over again. For long periods

the High seem to be securely in power, but sooner or later there always

comes a moment when they lose either their belief in themselves or their

capacity to govern efficiently, or both. They are then overthrown by the

Middle, who enlist the Low on their side by pretending to them that they

are fighting for liberty and justice. As soon as they have reached their

objective, the Middle thrust the Low back into their old position of

servitude, and themselves become the High. Presently a new Middle group

splits off from one of the other groups, or from both of them, and the

struggle begins over again. Of the three groups, only the Low are never

even temporarily successful in achieving their aims. It would be an

exaggeration to say that throughout history there has been no progress of

a material kind. Even today, in a period of decline, the average human

being is physically better off than he was a few centuries ago. But no

advance in wealth, no softening of manners, no reform or revolution has

ever brought human equality a millimetre nearer. From the point of view of

the Low, no historic change has ever meant much more than a change in the

name of their masters.

By the late nineteenth century the recurrence of this pattern had become

obvious to many observers. There then rose schools of thinkers who

interpreted history as a cyclical process and claimed to show that

inequality was the unalterable law of human life. This doctrine, of course,

had always had its adherents, but in the manner in which it was now put

forward there was a significant change. In the past the need for a

hierarchical form of society had been the doctrine specifically of the

High. It had been preached by kings and aristocrats and by the priests,

lawyers, and the like who were parasitical upon them, and it had generally

been softened by promises of compensation in an imaginary world beyond the

grave. The Middle, so long as it was struggling for power, had always made

use of such terms as freedom, justice, and fraternity. Now, however, the

concept of human brotherhood began to be assailed by people who were not

yet in positions of command, but merely hoped to be so before long. In the

past the Middle had made revolutions under the banner of equality, and

then had established a fresh tyranny as soon as the old one was overthrown.

The new Middle groups in effect proclaimed their tyranny beforehand.

Socialism, a theory which appeared in the early nineteenth century and was

the last link in a chain of thought stretching back to the slave rebellions

of antiquity, was still deeply infected by the Utopianism of past ages.

But in each variant of Socialism that appeared from about 1900 onwards the

aim of establishing liberty and equality was more and more openly

abandoned. The new movements which appeared in the middle years of the

century, Ingsoc in Oceania, Neo-Bolshevism in Eurasia, Death-Worship, as

it is commonly called, in Eastasia, had the conscious aim of perpetuating

UNfreedom and INequality. These new movements, of course, grew out of the

old ones and tended to keep their names and pay lip-service to their

ideology. But the purpose of all of them was to arrest progress and freeze

history at a chosen moment. The familiar pendulum swing was to happen once

more, and then stop. As usual, the High were to be turned out by the

Middle, who would then become the High; but this time, by conscious

strategy, the High would be able to maintain their position permanently.

The new doctrines arose partly because of the accumulation of historical

knowledge, and the growth of the historical sense, which had hardly existed

before the nineteenth century. The cyclical movement of history was now

intelligible, or appeared to be so; and if it was intelligible, then it

was alterable. But the principal, underlying cause was that, as early

as the beginning of the twentieth century, human equality had become

technically possible. It was still true that men were not equal in their

native talents and that functions had to be specialized in ways that

favoured some individuals against others; but there was no longer any real

need for class distinctions or for large differences of wealth. In earlier

ages, class distinctions had been not only inevitable but desirable.

Inequality was the price of civilization. With the development of machine

production, however, the case was altered. Even if it was still necessary

for human beings to do different kinds of work, it was no longer necessary

for them to live at different social or economic levels. Therefore, from

the point of view of the new groups who were on the point of seizing power,

human equality was no longer an ideal to be striven after, but a danger to

be averted. In more primitive ages, when a just and peaceful society was

in fact not possible, it had been fairly easy to believe it. The idea of

an earthly paradise in which men should live together in a state of

brotherhood, without laws and without brute labour, had haunted the human

imagination for thousands of years. And this vision had had a certain hold

even on the groups who actually profited by each historical change. The

heirs of the French, English, and American revolutions had partly believed

in their own phrases about the rights of man, freedom of speech, equality

before the law, and the like, and have even allowed their conduct to be

influenced by them to some extent. But by the fourth decade of the

twentieth century all the main currents of political thought were

authoritarian. The earthly paradise had been discredited at exactly the

moment when it became realizable. Every new political theory, by whatever

name it called itself, led back to hierarchy and regimentation. And in the

general hardening of outlook that set in round about 1930, practices which

had been long abandoned, in some cases for hundreds of years--imprisonment

without trial, the use of war prisoners as slaves, public executions,

torture to extract confessions, the use of hostages, and the deportation

of whole populations--not only became common again, but were tolerated

and even defended by people who considered themselves enlightened and

progressive.

It was only after a decade of national wars, civil wars, revolutions, and

counter-revolutions in all parts of the world that Ingsoc and its rivals

emerged as fully worked-out political theories. But they had been

foreshadowed by the various systems, generally called totalitarian, which

had appeared earlier in the century, and the main outlines of the world

which would emerge from the prevailing chaos had long been obvious. What

kind of people would control this world had been equally obvious. The new

aristocracy was made up for the most part of bureaucrats, scientists,

technicians, trade-union organizers, publicity experts, sociologists,

teachers, journalists, and professional politicians. These people, whose

origins lay in the salaried middle class and the upper grades of the

working class, had been shaped and brought together by the barren world of

monopoly industry and centralized government. As compared with their

opposite numbers in past ages, they were less avaricious, less tempted by

luxury, hungrier for pure power, and, above all, more conscious of what

they were doing and more intent on crushing opposition. This last

difference was cardinal. By comparison with that existing today, all the

tyrannies of the past were half-hearted and inefficient. The ruling groups

were always infected to some extent by liberal ideas, and were content to

leave loose ends everywhere, to regard only the overt act and to be

uninterested in what their subjects were thinking. Even the Catholic Church

of the Middle Ages was tolerant by modern standards. Part of the reason

for this was that in the past no government had the power to keep its

citizens under constant surveillance. The invention of print, however,

made it easier to manipulate public opinion, and the film and the radio

carried the process further. With the development of television, and

the technical advance which made it possible to receive and transmit

simultaneously on the same instrument, private life came to an end. Every

citizen, or at least every citizen important enough to be worth watching,

could be kept for twenty-four hours a day under the eyes of the police

and in the sound of official propaganda, with all other channels of

communication closed. The possibility of enforcing not only complete

obedience to the will of the State, but complete uniformity of opinion

on all subjects, now existed for the first time.

After the revolutionary period of the fifties and sixties, society

regrouped itself, as always, into High, Middle, and Low. But the new High

group, unlike all its forerunners, did not act upon instinct but knew what

was needed to safeguard its position. It had long been realized that the

only secure basis for oligarchy is collectivism. Wealth and privilege

are most easily defended when they are possessed jointly. The so-called

'abolition of private property' which took place in the middle years of

the century meant, in effect, the concentration of property in far fewer

hands than before: but with this difference, that the new owners were a

group instead of a mass of individuals. Individually, no member of the

Party owns anything, except petty personal belongings. Collectively, the

Party owns everything in Oceania, because it controls everything, and

disposes of the products as it thinks fit. In the years following the

Revolution it was able to step into this commanding position almost

unopposed, because the whole process was represented as an act of

collectivization. It had always been assumed that if the capitalist class

were expropriated, Socialism must follow: and unquestionably the

capitalists had been expropriated. Factories, mines, land, houses,

transport--everything had been taken away from them: and since these

things were no longer private property, it followed that they must be

public property. Ingsoc, which grew out of the earlier Socialist movement

and inherited its phraseology, has in fact carried out the main item in

the Socialist programme; with the result, foreseen and intended beforehand,

that economic inequality has been made permanent.

But the problems of perpetuating a hierarchical society go deeper than

this. There are only four ways in which a ruling group can fall from power.

Either it is conquered from without, or it governs so inefficiently that

the masses are stirred to revolt, or it allows a strong and discontented

Middle group to come into being, or it loses its own self-confidence and

willingness to govern. These causes do not operate singly, and as a rule

all four of them are present in some degree. A ruling class which could

guard against all of them would remain in power permanently. Ultimately

the determining factor is the mental attitude of the ruling class itself.

After the middle of the present century, the first danger had in reality

disappeared. Each of the three powers which now divide the world is in

fact unconquerable, and could only become conquerable through slow

demographic changes which a government with wide powers can easily avert.

The second danger, also, is only a theoretical one. The masses never

revolt of their own accord, and they never revolt merely because they are

oppressed. Indeed, so long as they are not permitted to have standards of

comparison, they never even become aware that they are oppressed. The

recurrent economic crises of past times were totally unnecessary and are

not now permitted to happen, but other and equally large dislocations

can and do happen without having political results, because there is no

way in which discontent can become articulate. As for the problem of

over-production, which has been latent in our society since the development

of machine technique, it is solved by the device of continuous warfare

(see Chapter III), which is also useful in keying up public morale to the

necessary pitch. From the point of view of our present rulers, therefore,

the only genuine dangers are the splitting-off of a new group of able,

under-employed, power-hungry people, and the growth of liberalism and

scepticism in their own ranks. The problem, that is to say, is educational.

It is a problem of continuously moulding the consciousness both of the

directing group and of the larger executive group that lies immediately

below it. The consciousness of the masses needs only to be influenced in

a negative way.

Given this background, one could infer, if one did not know it already,

the general structure of Oceanic society. At the apex of the pyramid comes

Big Brother. Big Brother is infallible and all-powerful. Every success,

every achievement, every victory, every scientific discovery, all

knowledge, all wisdom, all happiness, all virtue, are held to issue

directly from his leadership and inspiration. Nobody has ever seen Big

Brother. He is a face on the hoardings, a voice on the telescreen. We

may be reasonably sure that he will never die, and there is already

considerable uncertainty as to when he was born. Big Brother is the guise

in which the Party chooses to exhibit itself to the world. His function is

to act as a focusing point for love, fear, and reverence, emotions which

are more easily felt towards an individual than towards an organization.

Below Big Brother comes the Inner Party. Its numbers limited to six

millions, or something less than 2 per cent of the population of Oceania.

Below the Inner Party comes the Outer Party, which, if the Inner Party is

described as the brain of the State, may be justly likened to the hands.

Below that come the dumb masses whom we habitually refer to as 'the

proles', numbering perhaps 85 per cent of the population. In the terms

of our earlier classification, the proles are the Low: for the slave

population of the equatorial lands who pass constantly from conqueror

to conqueror, are not a permanent or necessary part of the structure.

In principle, membership of these three groups is not hereditary. The

child of Inner Party parents is in theory not born into the Inner Party.

Admission to either branch of the Party is by examination, taken at the

age of sixteen. Nor is there any racial discrimination, or any marked

domination of one province by another. Jews, Negroes, South Americans of

pure Indian blood are to be found in the highest ranks of the Party, and

the administrators of any area are always drawn from the inhabitants of

that area. In no part of Oceania do the inhabitants have the feeling that

they are a colonial population ruled from a distant capital. Oceania has

no capital, and its titular head is a person whose whereabouts nobody

knows. Except that English is its chief LINGUA FRANCA and Newspeak its

official language, it is not centralized in any way. Its rulers are not

held together by blood-ties but by adherence to a common doctrine. It is

true that our society is stratified, and very rigidly stratified, on what

at first sight appear to be hereditary lines. There is far less to-and-fro

movement between the different groups than happened under capitalism or

even in the pre-industrial age. Between the two branches of the Party

there is a certain amount of interchange, but only so much as will ensure

that weaklings are excluded from the Inner Party and that ambitious

members of the Outer Party are made harmless by allowing them to rise.

Proletarians, in practice, are not allowed to graduate into the Party. The

most gifted among them, who might possibly become nuclei of discontent,

are simply marked down by the Thought Police and eliminated. But this

state of affairs is not necessarily permanent, nor is it a matter of

principle. The Party is not a class in the old sense of the word. It does

not aim at transmitting power to its own children, as such; and if there

were no other way of keeping the ablest people at the top, it would be

perfectly prepared to recruit an entire new generation from the ranks of

the proletariat. In the crucial years, the fact that the Party was not a

hereditary body did a great deal to neutralize opposition. The older kind

of Socialist, who had been trained to fight against something called

'class privilege' assumed that what is not hereditary cannot be permanent.

He did not see that the continuity of an oligarchy need not be physical,

nor did he pause to reflect that hereditary aristocracies have always been

shortlived, whereas adoptive organizations such as the Catholic Church

have sometimes lasted for hundreds or thousands of years. The essence of

oligarchical rule is not father-to-son inheritance, but the persistence of

a certain world-view and a certain way of life, imposed by the dead upon

the living. A ruling group is a ruling group so long as it can nominate

its successors. The Party is not concerned with perpetuating its blood but

with perpetuating itself. WHO wields power is not important, provided that

the hierarchical structure remains always the same.

All the beliefs, habits, tastes, emotions, mental attitudes that

characterize our time are really designed to sustain the mystique of

the Party and prevent the true nature of present-day society from being

perceived. Physical rebellion, or any preliminary move towards rebellion,

is at present not possible. From the proletarians nothing is to be feared.

Left to themselves, they will continue from generation to generation and

from century to century, working, breeding, and dying, not only without

any impulse to rebel, but without the power of grasping that the world

could be other than it is. They could only become dangerous if the advance

of industrial technique made it necessary to educate them more highly;

but, since military and commercial rivalry are no longer important, the

level of popular education is actually declining. What opinions the masses

hold, or do not hold, is looked on as a matter of indifference. They can

be granted intellectual liberty because they have no intellect. In a Party

member, on the other hand, not even the smallest deviation of opinion on

the most unimportant subject can be tolerated.

A Party member lives from birth to death under the eye of the Thought

Police. Even when he is alone he can never be sure that he is alone.

Wherever he may be, asleep or awake, working or resting, in his bath or in

bed, he can be inspected without warning and without knowing that he is

being inspected. Nothing that he does is indifferent. His friendships, his

relaxations, his behaviour towards his wife and children, the expression

of his face when he is alone, the words he mutters in sleep, even the

characteristic movements of his body, are all jealously scrutinized. Not

only any actual misdemeanour, but any eccentricity, however small, any

change of habits, any nervous mannerism that could possibly be the symptom

of an inner struggle, is certain to be detected. He has no freedom of

choice in any direction whatever. On the other hand his actions are not

regulated by law or by any clearly formulated code of behaviour. In Oceania

there is no law. Thoughts and actions which, when detected, mean certain

death are not formally forbidden, and the endless purges, arrests,

tortures, imprisonments, and vaporizations are not inflicted as punishment

for crimes which have actually been committed, but are merely the

wiping-out of persons who might perhaps commit a crime at some time in the

future. A Party member is required to have not only the right opinions,

but the right instincts. Many of the beliefs and attitudes demanded of him

are never plainly stated, and could not be stated without laying bare the

contradictions inherent in Ingsoc. If he is a person naturally orthodox

(in Newspeak a GOODTHINKER), he will in all circumstances know, without

taking thought, what is the true belief or the desirable emotion. But in

any case an elaborate mental training, undergone in childhood and grouping

itself round the Newspeak words CRIMESTOP, BLACKWHITE, and DOUBLETHINK,

makes him unwilling and unable to think too deeply on any subject whatever.

A Party member is expected to have no private emotions and no respites

from enthusiasm. He is supposed to live in a continuous frenzy of hatred

of foreign enemies and internal traitors, triumph over victories, and

self-abasement before the power and wisdom of the Party. The discontents

produced by his bare, unsatisfying life are deliberately turned outwards

and dissipated by such devices as the Two Minutes Hate, and the

speculations which might possibly induce a sceptical or rebellious attitude

are killed in advance by his early acquired inner discipline. The first

and simplest stage in the discipline, which can be taught even to young

children, is called, in Newspeak, CRIMESTOP. CRIMESTOP means the faculty

of stopping short, as though by instinct, at the threshold of any dangerous

thought. It includes the power of not grasping analogies, of failing to

perceive logical errors, of misunderstanding the simplest arguments if

they are inimical to Ingsoc, and of being bored or repelled by any train

of thought which is capable of leading in a heretical direction. CRIMESTOP,

in short, means protective stupidity. But stupidity is not enough. On the

contrary, orthodoxy in the full sense demands a control over one's own

mental processes as complete as that of a contortionist over his body.

Oceanic society rests ultimately on the belief that Big Brother is

omnipotent and that the Party is infallible. But since in reality Big

Brother is not omnipotent and the party is not infallible, there is need

for an unwearying, moment-to-moment flexibility in the treatment of facts.

The keyword here is BLACKWHITE. Like so many Newspeak words, this word has

two mutually contradictory meanings. Applied to an opponent, it means the

habit of impudently claiming that black is white, in contradiction of the

plain facts. Applied to a Party member, it means a loyal willingness to

say that black is white when Party discipline demands this. But it means

also the ability to BELIEVE that black is white, and more, to KNOW that

black is white, and to forget that one has ever believed the contrary.

This demands a continuous alteration of the past, made possible by the

system of thought which really embraces all the rest, and which is known

in Newspeak as DOUBLETHINK.

The alteration of the past is necessary for two reasons, one of which is

subsidiary and, so to speak, precautionary. The subsidiary reason is that

the Party member, like the proletarian, tolerates present-day conditions

partly because he has no standards of comparison. He must be cut off from

the past, just as he must be cut off from foreign countries, because it is

necessary for him to believe that he is better off than his ancestors and

that the average level of material comfort is constantly rising. But by

far the more important reason for the readjustment of the past is the

need to safeguard the infallibility of the Party. It is not merely that

speeches, statistics, and records of every kind must be constantly brought

up to date in order to show that the predictions of the Party were in

all cases right. It is also that no change in doctrine or in political

alignment can ever be admitted. For to change one's mind, or even one's

policy, is a confession of weakness. If, for example, Eurasia or Eastasia

(whichever it may be) is the enemy today, then that country must always

have been the enemy. And if the facts say otherwise then the facts must

be altered. Thus history is continuously rewritten. This day-to-day

falsification of the past, carried out by the Ministry of Truth, is as

necessary to the stability of the regime as the work of repression and

espionage carried out by the Ministry of Love.

The mutability of the past is the central tenet of Ingsoc. Past events,

it is argued, have no objective existence, but survive only in written

records and in human memories. The past is whatever the records and the

memories agree upon. And since the Party is in full control of all records

and in equally full control of the minds of its members, it follows that

the past is whatever the Party chooses to make it. It also follows that

though the past is alterable, it never has been altered in any specific

instance. For when it has been recreated in whatever shape is needed at

the moment, then this new version IS the past, and no different past can

ever have existed. This holds good even when, as often happens, the same

event has to be altered out of recognition several times in the course of

a year. At all times the Party is in possession of absolute truth, and

clearly the absolute can never have been different from what it is now.

It will be seen that the control of the past depends above all on the

training of memory. To make sure that all written records agree with

the orthodoxy of the moment is merely a mechanical act. But it is also

necessary to REMEMBER that events happened in the desired manner. And if

it is necessary to rearrange one's memories or to tamper with written

records, then it is necessary to FORGET that one has done so. The trick of

doing this can be learned like any other mental technique. It is learned

by the majority of Party members, and certainly by all who are intelligent

as well as orthodox. In Oldspeak it is called, quite frankly, 'reality

control'. In Newspeak it is called DOUBLETHINK, though DOUBLETHINK

comprises much else as well.

DOUBLETHINK means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's

mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them. The Party intellectual

knows in which direction his memories must be altered; he therefore knows

that he is playing tricks with reality; but by the exercise of DOUBLETHINK

he also satisfies himself that reality is not violated. The process has to

be conscious, or it would not be carried out with sufficient precision,

but it also has to be unconscious, or it would bring with it a feeling of

falsity and hence of guilt. DOUBLETHINK lies at the very heart of Ingsoc,

since the essential act of the Party is to use conscious deception while

retaining the firmness of purpose that goes with complete honesty. To tell

deliberate lies while genuinely believing in them, to forget any fact that

has become inconvenient, and then, when it becomes necessary again, to

draw it back from oblivion for just so long as it is needed, to deny the

existence of objective reality and all the while to take account of the

reality which one denies--all this is indispensably necessary. Even in

using the word DOUBLETHINK it is necessary to exercise DOUBLETHINK. For

by using the word one admits that one is tampering with reality; by a

fresh act of DOUBLETHINK one erases this knowledge; and so on indefinitely,

with the lie always one leap ahead of the truth. Ultimately it is by means

of DOUBLETHINK that the Party has been able--and may, for all we know,

continue to be able for thousands of years--to arrest the course of

history.

All past oligarchies have fallen from power either because they ossified

or because they grew soft. Either they became stupid and arrogant, failed

to adjust themselves to changing circumstances, and were overthrown; or

they became liberal and cowardly, made concessions when they should have

used force, and once again were overthrown. They fell, that is to say,

either through consciousness or through unconsciousness. It is the

achievement of the Party to have produced a system of thought in which

both conditions can exist simultaneously. And upon no other intellectual

basis could the dominion of the Party be made permanent. If one is to rule,

and to continue ruling, one must be able to dislocate the sense of reality.

For the secret of rulership is to combine a belief in one's own

infallibility with the Power to learn from past mistakes.

It need hardly be said that the subtlest practitioners of DOUBLETHINK are

those who invented DOUBLETHINK and know that it is a vast system of mental

cheating. In our society, those who have the best knowledge of what is

happening are also those who are furthest from seeing the world as it is.

In general, the greater the understanding, the greater the delusion; the

more intelligent, the less sane. One clear illustration of this is the

fact that war hysteria increases in intensity as one rises in the social

scale. Those whose attitude towards the war is most nearly rational are

the subject peoples of the disputed territories. To these people the war

is simply a continuous calamity which sweeps to and fro over their bodies

like a tidal wave. Which side is winning is a matter of complete

indifference to them. They are aware that a change of overlordship means

simply that they will be doing the same work as before for new masters who

treat them in the same manner as the old ones. The slightly more favoured

workers whom we call 'the proles' are only intermittently conscious of the

war. When it is necessary they can be prodded into frenzies of fear and

hatred, but when left to themselves they are capable of forgetting for

long periods that the war is happening. It is in the ranks of the Party,

and above all of the Inner Party, that the true war enthusiasm is found.

World-conquest is believed in most firmly by those who know it to be

impossible. This peculiar linking-together of opposites--knowledge with

ignorance, cynicism with fanaticism--is one of the chief distinguishing

marks of Oceanic society. The official ideology abounds with contradictions

even when there is no practical reason for them. Thus, the Party rejects

and vilifies every principle for which the Socialist movement originally

stood, and it chooses to do this in the name of Socialism. It preaches

a contempt for the working class unexampled for centuries past, and it

dresses its members in a uniform which was at one time peculiar to manual

workers and was adopted for that reason. It systematically undermines the

solidarity of the family, and it calls its leader by a name which is a

direct appeal to the sentiment of family loyalty. Even the names of the

four Ministries by which we are governed exhibit a sort of impudence in

their deliberate reversal of the facts. The Ministry of Peace concerns

itself with war, the Ministry of Truth with lies, the Ministry of Love

with torture and the Ministry of Plenty with starvation. These

contradictions are not accidental, nor do they result from ordinary

hypocrisy; they are deliberate exercises in DOUBLETHINK. For it is only

by reconciling contradictions that power can be retained indefinitely.

In no other way could the ancient cycle be broken. If human equality is

to be for ever averted--if the High, as we have called them, are to keep

their places permanently--then the prevailing mental condition must be

controlled insanity.

But there is one question which until this moment we have almost ignored.

It is; WHY should human equality be averted? Supposing that the mechanics

of the process have been rightly described, what is the motive for this

huge, accurately planned effort to freeze history at a particular moment

of time?

Here we reach the central secret. As we have seen. the mystique of the

Party, and above all of the Inner Party, depends upon DOUBLETHINK But

deeper than this lies the original motive, the never-questioned instinct

that first led to the seizure of power and brought DOUBLETHINK, the

Thought Police, continuous warfare, and all the other necessary

paraphernalia into existence afterwards. This motive really consists...

Winston became aware of silence, as one becomes aware of a new sound. It

seemed to him that Julia had been very still for some time past. She was

lying on her side, naked from the waist upwards, with her cheek pillowed

on her hand and one dark lock tumbling across her eyes. Her breast rose

and fell slowly and regularly.

'Julia.'

No answer.

'Julia, are you awake?'

No answer. She was asleep. He shut the book, put it carefully on the floor,

lay down, and pulled the coverlet over both of them.

He had still, he reflected, not learned the ultimate secret. He understood

HOW; he did not understand WHY. Chapter I, like Chapter III, had not

actually told him anything that he did not know, it had merely systematized

the knowledge that he possessed already. But after reading it he knew

better than before that he was not mad. Being in a minority, even a

minority of one, did not make you mad. There was truth and there was

untruth, and if you clung to the truth even against the whole world, you

were not mad. A yellow beam from the sinking sun slanted in through the

window and fell across the pillow. He shut his eyes. The sun on his face

and the girl's smooth body touching his own gave him a strong, sleepy,

confident feeling. He was safe, everything was all right. He fell asleep

murmuring 'Sanity is not statistical,' with the feeling that this remark

contained in it a profound wisdom.

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When he woke it was with the sensation of having slept for a long time,

but a glance at the old-fashioned clock told him that it was only

twenty-thirty. He lay dozing for a while; then the usual deep-lunged

singing struck up from the yard below:

'It was only an 'opeless fancy,

It passed like an Ipril dye,

But a look an' a word an' the dreams they stirred

They 'ave stolen my 'eart awye!'

The drivelling song seemed to have kept its popularity. You still heard it

all over the place. It had outlived the Hate Song. Julia woke at the

sound, stretched herself luxuriously, and got out of bed.

'I'm hungry,' she said. 'Let's make some more coffee. Damn! The stove's

gone out and the water's cold.' She picked the stove up and shook it.

'There's no oil in it.'

'We can get some from old Charrington, I expect.'

'The funny thing is I made sure it was full. I'm going to put my clothes

on,' she added. 'It seems to have got colder.'

Winston also got up and dressed himself. The indefatigable voice sang on:

'They sye that time 'eals all things,

They sye you can always forget;

But the smiles an' the tears acrorss the years

They twist my 'eart-strings yet!'

As he fastened the belt of his overalls he strolled across to the window.

The sun must have gone down behind the houses; it was not shining into the

yard any longer. The flagstones were wet as though they had just been

washed, and he had the feeling that the sky had been washed too, so fresh

and pale was the blue between the chimney-pots. Tirelessly the woman

marched to and fro, corking and uncorking herself, singing and falling

silent, and pegging out more diapers, and more and yet more. He wondered

whether she took in washing for a living or was merely the slave of twenty

or thirty grandchildren. Julia had come across to his side; together they

gazed down with a sort of fascination at the sturdy figure below. As he

looked at the woman in her characteristic attitude, her thick arms reaching

up for the line, her powerful mare-like buttocks protruded, it struck him

for the first time that she was beautiful. It had never before occurred to

him that the body of a woman of fifty, blown up to monstrous dimensions by

childbearing, then hardened, roughened by work till it was coarse in the

grain like an over-ripe turnip, could be beautiful. But it was so, and

after all, he thought, why not? The solid, contourless body, like a block

of granite, and the rasping red skin, bore the same relation to the body

of a girl as the rose-hip to the rose. Why should the fruit be held

inferior to the flower?

'She's beautiful,' he murmured.

'She's a metre across the hips, easily,' said Julia.

'That is her style of beauty,' said Winston.

He held Julia's supple waist easily encircled by his arm. From the hip to

the knee her flank was against his. Out of their bodies no child would

ever come. That was the one thing they could never do. Only by word of

mouth, from mind to mind, could they pass on the secret. The woman down

there had no mind, she had only strong arms, a warm heart, and a fertile

belly. He wondered how many children she had given birth to. It might

easily be fifteen. She had had her momentary flowering, a year, perhaps,

of wild-rose beauty and then she had suddenly swollen like a fertilized

fruit and grown hard and red and coarse, and then her life had been

laundering, scrubbing, darning, cooking, sweeping, polishing, mending,

scrubbing, laundering, first for children, then for grandchildren, over

thirty unbroken years. At the end of it she was still singing. The mystical

reverence that he felt for her was somehow mixed up with the aspect of

the pale, cloudless sky, stretching away behind the chimney-pots into

interminable distance. It was curious to think that the sky was the same

for everybody, in Eurasia or Eastasia as well as here. And the people

under the sky were also very much the same--everywhere, all over the world,

hundreds of thousands of millions of people just like this, people ignorant

of one another's existence, held apart by walls of hatred and lies, and

yet almost exactly the same--people who had never learned to think but who

were storing up in their hearts and bellies and muscles the power that

would one day overturn the world. If there was hope, it lay in the proles!

Without having read to the end of THE BOOK, he knew that that must be

Goldstein's final message. The future belonged to the proles. And could he

be sure that when their time came the world they constructed would not be

just as alien to him, Winston Smith, as the world of the Party? Yes,

because at the least it would be a world of sanity. Where there is

equality there can be sanity. Sooner or later it would happen, strength

would change into consciousness. The proles were immortal, you could not

doubt it when you looked at that valiant figure in the yard. In the end

their awakening would come. And until that happened, though it might be a

thousand years, they would stay alive against all the odds, like birds,

passing on from body to body the vitality which the Party did not share

and could not kill.

'Do you remember,' he said, 'the thrush that sang to us, that first day,

at the edge of the wood?'

'He wasn't singing to us,' said Julia. 'He was singing to please himself.

Not even that. He was just singing.'

The birds sang, the proles sang. the Party did not sing. All round the

world, in London and New York, in Africa and Brazil, and in the mysterious,

forbidden lands beyond the frontiers, in the streets of Paris and Berlin,

in the villages of the endless Russian plain, in the bazaars of China and

Japan--everywhere stood the same solid unconquerable figure, made monstrous

by work and childbearing, toiling from birth to death and still singing.

Out of those mighty loins a race of conscious beings must one day come.

You were the dead, theirs was the future. But you could share in that

future if you kept alive the mind as they kept alive the body, and passed

on the secret doctrine that two plus two make four.

'We are the dead,' he said.

'We are the dead,' echoed Julia dutifully.

'You are the dead,' said an iron voice behind them.

They sprang apart. Winston's entrails seemed to have turned into ice. He

could see the white all round the irises of Julia's eyes. Her face had

turned a milky yellow. The smear of rouge that was still on each cheekbone

stood out sharply, almost as though unconnected with the skin beneath.

'You are the dead,' repeated the iron voice.

'It was behind the picture,' breathed Julia.

'It was behind the picture,' said the voice. 'Remain exactly where you

are. Make no movement until you are ordered.'

It was starting, it was starting at last! They could do nothing except

stand gazing into one another's eyes. To run for life, to get out of the

house before it was too late--no such thought occurred to them. Unthinkable

to disobey the iron voice from the wall. There was a snap as though a catch

had been turned back, and a crash of breaking glass. The picture had fallen

to the floor uncovering the telescreen behind it.

'Now they can see us,' said Julia.

'Now we can see you,' said the voice. 'Stand out in the middle of the

room. Stand back to back. Clasp your hands behind your heads. Do not touch

one another.'

They were not touching, but it seemed to him that he could feel Julia's

body shaking. Or perhaps it was merely the shaking of his own. He could

just stop his teeth from chattering, but his knees were beyond his control.

There was a sound of trampling boots below, inside the house and outside.

The yard seemed to be full of men. Something was being dragged across the

stones. The woman's singing had stopped abruptly. There was a long, rolling

clang, as though the washtub had been flung across the yard, and then a

confusion of angry shouts which ended in a yell of pain.

'The house is surrounded,' said Winston.

'The house is surrounded,' said the voice.

He heard Julia snap her teeth together. 'I suppose we may as well say

good-bye,' she said.

'You may as well say good-bye,' said the voice. And then another quite

different voice, a thin, cultivated voice which Winston had the impression

of having heard before, struck in; 'And by the way, while we are on the

subject, "Here comes a candle to light you to bed, here comes a chopper to

chop off your head"!'

Something crashed on to the bed behind Winston's back. The head of a ladder

had been thrust through the window and had burst in the frame. Someone was

climbing through the window. There was a stampede of boots up the stairs.

The room was full of solid men in black uniforms, with iron-shod boots on

their feet and truncheons in their hands.

Winston was not trembling any longer. Even his eyes he barely moved. One

thing alone mattered; to keep still, to keep still and not give them an

excuse to hit you! A man with a smooth prize-fighter's jowl in which the

mouth was only a slit paused opposite him balancing his truncheon

meditatively between thumb and forefinger. Winston met his eyes. The

feeling of nakedness, with one's hands behind one's head and one's face

and body all exposed, was almost unbearable. The man protruded the tip

of a white tongue, licked the place where his lips should have been, and

then passed on. There was another crash. Someone had picked up the glass

paperweight from the table and smashed it to pieces on the hearth-stone.

The fragment of coral, a tiny crinkle of pink like a sugar rosebud from

a cake, rolled across the mat. How small, thought Winston, how small it

always was! There was a gasp and a thump behind him, and he received a

violent kick on the ankle which nearly flung him off his balance. One of

the men had smashed his fist into Julia's solar plexus, doubling her up

like a pocket ruler. She was thrashing about on the floor, fighting for

breath. Winston dared not turn his head even by a millimetre, but sometimes

her livid, gasping face came within the angle of his vision. Even in his

terror it was as though he could feel the pain in his own body, the deadly

pain which nevertheless was less urgent than the struggle to get back her

breath. He knew what it was like; the terrible, agonizing pain which was

there all the while but could not be suffered yet, because before all else

it was necessary to be able to breathe. Then two of the men hoisted her

up by knees and shoulders, and carried her out of the room like a sack.

Winston had a glimpse of her face, upside down, yellow and contorted, with

the eyes shut, and still with a smear of rouge on either cheek; and that

was the last he saw of her.

He stood dead still. No one had hit him yet. Thoughts which came of their

own accord but seemed totally uninteresting began to flit through his

mind. He wondered whether they had got Mr Charrington. He wondered what

they had done to the woman in the yard. He noticed that he badly wanted

to urinate, and felt a faint surprise, because he had done so only two or

three hours ago. He noticed that the clock on the mantelpiece said nine,

meaning twenty-one. But the light seemed too strong. Would not the light

be fading at twenty-one hours on an August evening? He wondered whether

after all he and Julia had mistaken the time--had slept the clock round

and thought it was twenty-thirty when really it was nought eight-thirty

on the following morning. But he did not pursue the thought further.

It was not interesting.

There was another, lighter step in the passage. Mr Charrington came into

the room. The demeanour of the black-uniformed men suddenly became more

subdued. Something had also changed in Mr Charrington's appearance. His

eye fell on the fragments of the glass paperweight.

'Pick up those pieces,' he said sharply.

A man stooped to obey. The cockney accent had disappeared; Winston suddenly

realized whose voice it was that he had heard a few moments ago on the

telescreen. Mr Charrington was still wearing his old velvet jacket, but

his hair, which had been almost white, had turned black. Also he was not

wearing his spectacles. He gave Winston a single sharp glance, as though

verifying his identity, and then paid no more attention to him. He was

still recognizable, but he was not the same person any longer. His body

had straightened, and seemed to have grown bigger. His face had undergone

only tiny changes that had nevertheless worked a complete transformation.

The black eyebrows were less bushy, the wrinkles were gone, the whole

lines of the face seemed to have altered; even the nose seemed shorter. It

was the alert, cold face of a man of about five-and-thirty. It occurred to

Winston that for the first time in his life he was looking, with knowledge,

at a member of the Thought Police.

PART THREE

Chapter 1

He did not know where he was. Presumably he was in the Ministry of Love,

but there was no way of making certain. He was in a high-ceilinged

windowless cell with walls of glittering white porcelain. Concealed lamps

flooded it with cold light, and there was a low, steady humming sound

which he supposed had something to do with the air supply. A bench, or

shelf, just wide enough to sit on ran round the wall, broken only by the

door and, at the end opposite the door, a lavatory pan with no wooden

seat. There were four telescreens, one in each wall.

There was a dull aching in his belly. It had been there ever since they

had bundled him into the closed van and driven him away. But he was also

hungry, with a gnawing, unwholesome kind of hunger. It might be twenty-four

hours since he had eaten, it might be thirty-six. He still did not know,

probably never would know, whether it had been morning or evening when

they arrested him. Since he was arrested he had not been fed.

He sat as still as he could on the narrow bench, with his hands crossed

on his knee. He had already learned to sit still. If you made unexpected

movements they yelled at you from the telescreen. But the craving for food

was growing upon him. What he longed for above all was a piece of bread.

He had an idea that there were a few breadcrumbs in the pocket of his

overalls. It was even possible--he thought this because from time to time

something seemed to tickle his leg--that there might be a sizeable bit of

crust there. In the end the temptation to find out overcame his fear; he

slipped a hand into his pocket.

'Smith!' yelled a voice from the telescreen. '6079 Smith W.! Hands out of

pockets in the cells!'

He sat still again, his hands crossed on his knee. Before being brought

here he had been taken to another place which must have been an ordinary

prison or a temporary lock-up used by the patrols. He did not know how

long he had been there; some hours at any rate; with no clocks and no

daylight it was hard to gauge the time. It was a noisy, evil-smelling

place. They had put him into a cell similar to the one he was now in,

but filthily dirty and at all times crowded by ten or fifteen people. The

majority of them were common criminals, but there were a few political

prisoners among them. He had sat silent against the wall, jostled by dirty

bodies, too preoccupied by fear and the pain in his belly to take much

interest in his surroundings, but still noticing the astonishing difference

in demeanour between the Party prisoners and the others. The Party

prisoners were always silent and terrified, but the ordinary criminals

seemed to care nothing for anybody. They yelled insults at the guards,

fought back fiercely when their belongings were impounded, wrote obscene

words on the floor, ate smuggled food which they produced from mysterious

hiding-places in their clothes, and even shouted down the telescreen when

it tried to restore order. On the other hand some of them seemed to be on

good terms with the guards, called them by nicknames, and tried to wheedle

cigarettes through the spyhole in the door. The guards, too, treated the

common criminals with a certain forbearance, even when they had to handle

them roughly. There was much talk about the forced-labour camps to which

most of the prisoners expected to be sent. It was 'all right' in the

camps, he gathered, so long as you had good contacts and knew the ropes.

There was bribery, favouritism, and racketeering of every kind, there was

homosexuality and prostitution, there was even illicit alcohol distilled

from potatoes. The positions of trust were given only to the common

criminals, especially the gangsters and the murderers, who formed a sort

of aristocracy. All the dirty jobs were done by the politicals.

There was a constant come-and-go of prisoners of every description:

drug-peddlers, thieves, bandits, black-marketeers, drunks, prostitutes.

Some of the drunks were so violent that the other prisoners had to combine

to suppress them. An enormous wreck of a woman, aged about sixty, with

great tumbling breasts and thick coils of white hair which had come down

in her struggles, was carried in, kicking and shouting, by four guards,

who had hold of her one at each corner. They wrenched off the boots with

which she had been trying to kick them, and dumped her down across

Winston's lap, almost breaking his thigh-bones. The woman hoisted herself

upright and followed them out with a yell of 'F---- bastards!' Then,

noticing that she was sitting on something uneven, she slid off Winston's

knees on to the bench.

'Beg pardon, dearie,' she said. 'I wouldn't 'a sat on you, only the buggers

put me there. They dono 'ow to treat a lady, do they?' She paused, patted

her breast, and belched. 'Pardon,' she said, 'I ain't meself, quite.'

She leant forward and vomited copiously on the floor.

'Thass better,' she said, leaning back with closed eyes. 'Never keep it

down, thass what I say. Get it up while it's fresh on your stomach, like.'

She revived, turned to have another look at Winston and seemed immediately

to take a fancy to him. She put a vast arm round his shoulder and drew him

towards her, breathing beer and vomit into his face.

'Wass your name, dearie?' she said.

'Smith,' said Winston.

'Smith?' said the woman. 'Thass funny. My name's Smith too. Why,' she

added sentimentally, 'I might be your mother!'

She might, thought Winston, be his mother. She was about the right age and

physique, and it was probable that people changed somewhat after twenty

years in a forced-labour camp.

No one else had spoken to him. To a surprising extent the ordinary

criminals ignored the Party prisoners. 'The polITS,' they called them,

with a sort of uninterested contempt. The Party prisoners seemed terrified

of speaking to anybody, and above all of speaking to one another. Only

once, when two Party members, both women, were pressed close together on

the bench, he overheard amid the din of voices a few hurriedly-whispered

words; and in particular a reference to something called 'room one-oh-one',

which he did not understand.

It might be two or three hours ago that they had brought him here. The

dull pain in his belly never went away, but sometimes it grew better and

sometimes worse, and his thoughts expanded or contracted accordingly. When

it grew worse he thought only of the pain itself, and of his desire for

food. When it grew better, panic took hold of him. There were moments

when he foresaw the things that would happen to him with such actuality

that his heart galloped and his breath stopped. He felt the smash of

truncheons on his elbows and iron-shod boots on his shins; he saw himself

grovelling on the floor, screaming for mercy through broken teeth. He

hardly thought of Julia. He could not fix his mind on her. He loved her

and would not betray her; but that was only a fact, known as he knew the

rules of arithmetic. He felt no love for her, and he hardly even wondered

what was happening to her. He thought oftener of O'Brien, with a flickering

hope. O'Brien might know that he had been arrested. The Brotherhood, he

had said, never tried to save its members. But there was the razor blade;

they would send the razor blade if they could. There would be perhaps five

seconds before the guard could rush into the cell. The blade would bite

into him with a sort of burning coldness, and even the fingers that held

it would be cut to the bone. Everything came back to his sick body, which

shrank trembling from the smallest pain. He was not certain that he would

use the razor blade even if he got the chance. It was more natural to exist

from moment to moment, accepting another ten minutes' life even with the

certainty that there was torture at the end of it.

Sometimes he tried to calculate the number of porcelain bricks in the

walls of the cell. It should have been easy, but he always lost count at

some point or another. More often he wondered where he was, and what time

of day it was. At one moment he felt certain that it was broad daylight

outside, and at the next equally certain that it was pitch darkness. In

this place, he knew instinctively, the lights would never be turned out.

It was the place with no darkness: he saw now why O'Brien had seemed to

recognize the allusion. In the Ministry of Love there were no windows. His

cell might be at the heart of the building or against its outer wall; it

might be ten floors below ground, or thirty above it. He moved himself

mentally from place to place, and tried to determine by the feeling of his

body whether he was perched high in the air or buried deep underground.

There was a sound of marching boots outside. The steel door opened with

a clang. A young officer, a trim black-uniformed figure who seemed to

glitter all over with polished leather, and whose pale, straight-featured

face was like a wax mask, stepped smartly through the doorway. He motioned

to the guards outside to bring in the prisoner they were leading. The

poet Ampleforth shambled into the cell. The door clanged shut again.

Ampleforth made one or two uncertain movements from side to side, as

though having some idea that there was another door to go out of, and then

began to wander up and down the cell. He had not yet noticed Winston's

presence. His troubled eyes were gazing at the wall about a metre above

the level of Winston's head. He was shoeless; large, dirty toes were

sticking out of the holes in his socks. He was also several days away

from a shave. A scrubby beard covered his face to the cheekbones, giving

him an air of ruffianism that went oddly with his large weak frame and

nervous movements.

Winston roused himself a little from his lethargy. He must speak

to Ampleforth, and risk the yell from the telescreen. It was even

conceivable that Ampleforth was the bearer of the razor blade.

'Ampleforth,' he said.

There was no yell from the telescreen. Ampleforth paused, mildly startled.

His eyes focused themselves slowly on Winston.

'Ah, Smith!' he said. 'You too!'

'What are you in for?'

'To tell you the truth--' He sat down awkwardly on the bench opposite

Winston. 'There is only one offence, is there not?' he said.

'And have you committed it?'

'Apparently I have.'

He put a hand to his forehead and pressed his temples for a moment, as

though trying to remember something.

'These things happen,' he began vaguely. 'I have been able to recall one

instance--a possible instance. It was an indiscretion, undoubtedly. We

were producing a definitive edition of the poems of Kipling. I allowed the

word "God" to remain at the end of a line. I could not help it!' he added

almost indignantly, raising his face to look at Winston. 'It was impossible

to change the line. The rhyme was "rod". Do you realize that there are only

twelve rhymes to "rod" in the entire language? For days I had racked my

brains. There WAS no other rhyme.'

The expression on his face changed. The annoyance passed out of it and for

a moment he looked almost pleased. A sort of intellectual warmth, the joy

of the pedant who has found out some useless fact, shone through the dirt

and scrubby hair.

'Has it ever occurred to you,' he said, 'that the whole history of English

poetry has been determined by the fact that the English language lacks

rhymes?'

No, that particular thought had never occurred to Winston. Nor, in the

circumstances, did it strike him as very important or interesting.

'Do you know what time of day it is?' he said.

Ampleforth looked startled again. 'I had hardly thought about it. They

arrested me--it could be two days ago--perhaps three.' His eyes flitted

round the walls, as though he half expected to find a window somewhere.

'There is no difference between night and day in this place. I do not see

how one can calculate the time.'

They talked desultorily for some minutes, then, without apparent reason,

a yell from the telescreen bade them be silent. Winston sat quietly, his

hands crossed. Ampleforth, too large to sit in comfort on the narrow

bench, fidgeted from side to side, clasping his lank hands first round one

knee, then round the other. The telescreen barked at him to keep still.

Time passed. Twenty minutes, an hour--it was difficult to judge. Once more

there was a sound of boots outside. Winston's entrails contracted. Soon,

very soon, perhaps in five minutes, perhaps now, the tramp of boots would

mean that his own turn had come.

The door opened. The cold-faced young officer stepped into the cell. With

a brief movement of the hand he indicated Ampleforth.

'Room 101,' he said.

Ampleforth marched clumsily out between the guards, his face vaguely

perturbed, but uncomprehending.

What seemed like a long time passed. The pain in Winston's belly had

revived. His mind sagged round and round on the same trick, like a ball

falling again and again into the same series of slots. He had only six

thoughts. The pain in his belly; a piece of bread; the blood and the

screaming; O'Brien; Julia; the razor blade. There was another spasm in his

entrails, the heavy boots were approaching. As the door opened, the wave

of air that it created brought in a powerful smell of cold sweat. Parsons

walked into the cell. He was wearing khaki shorts and a sports-shirt.

This time Winston was startled into self-forgetfulness.

'YOU here!' he said.

Parsons gave Winston a glance in which there was neither interest nor

surprise, but only misery. He began walking jerkily up and down, evidently

unable to keep still. Each time he straightened his pudgy knees it was

apparent that they were trembling. His eyes had a wide-open, staring look,

as though he could not prevent himself from gazing at something in the

middle distance.

'What are you in for?' said Winston.

'Thoughtcrime!' said Parsons, almost blubbering. The tone of his voice

implied at once a complete admission of his guilt and a sort of incredulous

horror that such a word could be applied to himself. He paused opposite

Winston and began eagerly appealing to him: 'You don't think they'll shoot

me, do you, old chap? They don't shoot you if you haven't actually done

anything--only thoughts, which you can't help? I know they give you a fair

hearing. Oh, I trust them for that! They'll know my record, won't they?

YOU know what kind of chap I was. Not a bad chap in my way. Not brainy, of

course, but keen. I tried to do my best for the Party, didn't I? I'll get

off with five years, don't you think? Or even ten years? A chap like me

could make himself pretty useful in a labour-camp. They wouldn't shoot me

for going off the rails just once?'

'Are you guilty?' said Winston.

'Of course I'm guilty!' cried Parsons with a servile glance at the

telescreen. 'You don't think the Party would arrest an innocent man,

do you?' His frog-like face grew calmer, and even took on a slightly

sanctimonious expression. 'Thoughtcrime is a dreadful thing, old man,'

he said sententiously. 'It's insidious. It can get hold of you without

your even knowing it. Do you know how it got hold of me? In my sleep! Yes,

that's a fact. There I was, working away, trying to do my bit--never knew

I had any bad stuff in my mind at all. And then I started talking in my

sleep. Do you know what they heard me saying?'

He sank his voice, like someone who is obliged for medical reasons to

utter an obscenity.

'"Down with Big Brother!" Yes, I said that! Said it over and over again,

it seems. Between you and me, old man, I'm glad they got me before it went

any further. Do you know what I'm going to say to them when I go up before

the tribunal? "Thank you," I'm going to say, "thank you for saving me

before it was too late."'

'Who denounced you?' said Winston.

'It was my little daughter,' said Parsons with a sort of doleful pride.

'She listened at the keyhole. Heard what I was saying, and nipped off to

the patrols the very next day. Pretty smart for a nipper of seven, eh?

I don't bear her any grudge for it. In fact I'm proud of her. It shows I

brought her up in the right spirit, anyway.'

He made a few more jerky movements up and down, several times, casting a

longing glance at the lavatory pan. Then he suddenly ripped down his

shorts.

'Excuse me, old man,' he said. 'I can't help it. It's the waiting.'

He plumped his large posterior into the lavatory pan. Winston covered his

face with his hands.

'Smith!' yelled the voice from the telescreen. '6079 Smith W.! Uncover your

face. No faces covered in the cells.'

Winston uncovered his face. Parsons used the lavatory, loudly and

abundantly. It then turned out that the plug was defective and the cell

stank abominably for hours afterwards.

Parsons was removed. More prisoners came and went, mysteriously. One, a

woman, was consigned to 'Room 101', and, Winston noticed, seemed to shrivel

and turn a different colour when she heard the words. A time came when, if

it had been morning when he was brought here, it would be afternoon; or if

it had been afternoon, then it would be midnight. There were six prisoners

in the cell, men and women. All sat very still. Opposite Winston there sat

a man with a chinless, toothy face exactly like that of some large,

harmless rodent. His fat, mottled cheeks were so pouched at the bottom

that it was difficult not to believe that he had little stores of food

tucked away there. His pale-grey eyes flitted timorously from face to face

and turned quickly away again when he caught anyone's eye.

The door opened, and another prisoner was brought in whose appearance sent

a momentary chill through Winston. He was a commonplace, mean-looking man

who might have been an engineer or technician of some kind. But what was

startling was the emaciation of his face. It was like a skull. Because of

its thinness the mouth and eyes looked disproportionately large, and the

eyes seemed filled with a murderous, unappeasable hatred of somebody or

something.

The man sat down on the bench at a little distance from Winston. Winston

did not look at him again, but the tormented, skull-like face was as

vivid in his mind as though it had been straight in front of his eyes.

Suddenly he realized what was the matter. The man was dying of starvation.

The same thought seemed to occur almost simultaneously to everyone in the

cell. There was a very faint stirring all the way round the bench. The

eyes of the chinless man kept flitting towards the skull-faced man, then

turning guiltily away, then being dragged back by an irresistible

attraction. Presently he began to fidget on his seat. At last he stood up,

waddled clumsily across the cell, dug down into the pocket of his overalls,

and, with an abashed air, held out a grimy piece of bread to the

skull-faced man.

There was a furious, deafening roar from the telescreen. The chinless man

jumped in his tracks. The skull-faced man had quickly thrust his hands

behind his back, as though demonstrating to all the world that he refused

the gift.

'Bumstead!' roared the voice. '2713 Bumstead J.! Let fall that piece of

bread!'

The chinless man dropped the piece of bread on the floor.

'Remain standing where you are,' said the voice. 'Face the door. Make no

movement.'

The chinless man obeyed. His large pouchy cheeks were quivering

uncontrollably. The door clanged open. As the young officer entered and

stepped aside, there emerged from behind him a short stumpy guard with

enormous arms and shoulders. He took his stand opposite the chinless man,

and then, at a signal from the officer, let free a frightful blow, with

all the weight of his body behind it, full in the chinless man's mouth.

The force of it seemed almost to knock him clear of the floor. His body

was flung across the cell and fetched up against the base of the lavatory

seat. For a moment he lay as though stunned, with dark blood oozing from

his mouth and nose. A very faint whimpering or squeaking, which seemed

unconscious, came out of him. Then he rolled over and raised himself

unsteadily on hands and knees. Amid a stream of blood and saliva, the two

halves of a dental plate fell out of his mouth.

The prisoners sat very still, their hands crossed on their knees. The

chinless man climbed back into his place. Down one side of his face the

flesh was darkening. His mouth had swollen into a shapeless cherry-coloured

mass with a black hole in the middle of it.

From time to time a little blood dripped on to the breast of his overalls.

His grey eyes still flitted from face to face, more guiltily than ever,

as though he were trying to discover how much the others despised him for

his humiliation.

The door opened. With a small gesture the officer indicated the

skull-faced man.

'Room 101,' he said.

There was a gasp and a flurry at Winston's side. The man had actually

flung himself on his knees on the floor, with his hand clasped together.

'Comrade! Officer!' he cried. 'You don't have to take me to that place!

Haven't I told you everything already? What else is it you want to know?

There's nothing I wouldn't confess, nothing! Just tell me what it is and

I'll confess straight off. Write it down and I'll sign it--anything!

Not room 101!'

'Room 101,' said the officer.

The man's face, already very pale, turned a colour Winston would not have

believed possible. It was definitely, unmistakably, a shade of green.

'Do anything to me!' he yelled. 'You've been starving me for weeks. Finish

it off and let me die. Shoot me. Hang me. Sentence me to twenty-five

years. Is there somebody else you want me to give away? Just say who it is

and I'll tell you anything you want. I don't care who it is or what you do

to them. I've got a wife and three children. The biggest of them isn't six

years old. You can take the whole lot of them and cut their throats in

front of my eyes, and I'll stand by and watch it. But not Room 101!'

'Room 101,' said the officer.

The man looked frantically round at the other prisoners, as though with

some idea that he could put another victim in his own place. His eyes

settled on the smashed face of the chinless man. He flung out a lean arm.

'That's the one you ought to be taking, not me!' he shouted. 'You didn't

hear what he was saying after they bashed his face. Give me a chance and

I'll tell you every word of it. HE'S the one that's against the Party, not

me.' The guards stepped forward. The man's voice rose to a shriek. 'You

didn't hear him!' he repeated. 'Something went wrong with the telescreen.

HE'S the one you want. Take him, not me!'

The two sturdy guards had stooped to take him by the arms. But just at

this moment he flung himself across the floor of the cell and grabbed one

of the iron legs that supported the bench. He had set up a wordless

howling, like an animal. The guards took hold of him to wrench him loose,

but he clung on with astonishing strength. For perhaps twenty seconds

they were hauling at him. The prisoners sat quiet, their hands crossed on

their knees, looking straight in front of them. The howling stopped; the

man had no breath left for anything except hanging on. Then there was a

different kind of cry. A kick from a guard's boot had broken the fingers

of one of his hands. They dragged him to his feet.

'Room 101,' said the officer.

The man was led out, walking unsteadily, with head sunken, nursing his

crushed hand, all the fight had gone out of him.

A long time passed. If it had been midnight when the skull-faced man was

taken away, it was morning: if morning, it was afternoon. Winston was

alone, and had been alone for hours. The pain of sitting on the narrow

bench was such that often he got up and walked about, unreproved by the

telescreen. The piece of bread still lay where the chinless man had

dropped it. At the beginning it needed a hard effort not to look at it,

but presently hunger gave way to thirst. His mouth was sticky and

evil-tasting. The humming sound and the unvarying white light induced a

sort of faintness, an empty feeling inside his head. He would get up

because the ache in his bones was no longer bearable, and then would sit

down again almost at once because he was too dizzy to make sure of

staying on his feet. Whenever his physical sensations were a little under

control the terror returned. Sometimes with a fading hope he thought of

O'Brien and the razor blade. It was thinkable that the razor blade might

arrive concealed in his food, if he were ever fed. More dimly he thought

of Julia. Somewhere or other she was suffering perhaps far worse than he.

She might be screaming with pain at this moment. He thought: 'If I could

save Julia by doubling my own pain, would I do it? Yes, I would.' But that

was merely an intellectual decision, taken because he knew that he ought

to take it. He did not feel it. In this place you could not feel anything,

except pain and foreknowledge of pain. Besides, was it possible, when you

were actually suffering it, to wish for any reason that your own pain

should increase? But that question was not answerable yet.

The boots were approaching again. The door opened. O'Brien came in.

Winston started to his feet. The shock of the sight had driven all

caution out of him. For the first time in many years he forgot the

presence of the telescreen.

'They've got you too!' he cried.

'They got me a long time ago,' said O'Brien with a mild, almost regretful

irony. He stepped aside. From behind him there emerged a broad-chested

guard with a long black truncheon in his hand.

'You know this, Winston,' said O'Brien. 'Don't deceive yourself. You did

know it--you have always known it.'

Yes, he saw now, he had always known it. But there was no time to think of

that. All he had eyes for was the truncheon in the guard's hand. It might

fall anywhere; on the crown, on the tip of the ear, on the upper arm, on

the elbow----

The elbow! He had slumped to his knees, almost paralysed, clasping the

stricken elbow with his other hand. Everything had exploded into yellow

light. Inconceivable, inconceivable that one blow could cause such pain!

The light cleared and he could see the other two looking down at him. The

guard was laughing at his contortions. One question at any rate was

answered. Never, for any reason on earth, could you wish for an increase

of pain. Of pain you could wish only one thing: that it should stop.

Nothing in the world was so bad as physical pain. In the face of pain

there are no heroes, no heroes, he thought over and over as he writhed

on the floor, clutching uselessly at his disabled left arm.

Chapter 2

He was lying on something that felt like a camp bed, except that it was

higher off the ground and that he was fixed down in some way so that he

could not move. Light that seemed stronger than usual was falling on his

face. O'Brien was standing at his side, looking down at him intently. At

the other side of him stood a man in a white coat, holding a hypodermic

syringe.

Even after his eyes were open he took in his surroundings only gradually.

He had the impression of swimming up into this room from some quite

different world, a sort of underwater world far beneath it. How long he

had been down there he did not know. Since the moment when they arrested

him he had not seen darkness or daylight. Besides, his memories were not

continuous. There had been times when consciousness, even the sort of

consciousness that one has in sleep, had stopped dead and started again

after a blank interval. But whether the intervals were of days or weeks

or only seconds, there was no way of knowing.

With that first blow on the elbow the nightmare had started. Later he was

to realize that all that then happened was merely a preliminary, a routine

interrogation to which nearly all prisoners were subjected. There was a

long range of crimes--espionage, sabotage, and the like--to which everyone

had to confess as a matter of course. The confession was a formality,

though the torture was real. How many times he had been beaten, how long

the beatings had continued, he could not remember. Always there were five

or six men in black uniforms at him simultaneously. Sometimes it was

fists, sometimes it was truncheons, sometimes it was steel rods, sometimes

it was boots. There were times when he rolled about the floor, as shameless

as an animal, writhing his body this way and that in an endless, hopeless

effort to dodge the kicks, and simply inviting more and yet more kicks,

in his ribs, in his belly, on his elbows, on his shins, in his groin,

in his testicles, on the bone at the base of his spine. There were times

when it went on and on until the cruel, wicked, unforgivable thing seemed

to him not that the guards continued to beat him but that he could not

force himself into losing consciousness. There were times when his nerve

so forsook him that he began shouting for mercy even before the beating

began, when the mere sight of a fist drawn back for a blow was enough

to make him pour forth a confession of real and imaginary crimes. There

were other times when he started out with the resolve of confessing

nothing, when every word had to be forced out of him between gasps of

pain, and there were times when he feebly tried to compromise, when he

said to himself: 'I will confess, but not yet. I must hold out till the

pain becomes unbearable. Three more kicks, two more kicks, and then I will

tell them what they want.' Sometimes he was beaten till he could hardly

stand, then flung like a sack of potatoes on to the stone floor of a cell,

left to recuperate for a few hours, and then taken out and beaten again.

There were also longer periods of recovery. He remembered them dimly,

because they were spent chiefly in sleep or stupor. He remembered a cell

with a plank bed, a sort of shelf sticking out from the wall, and a tin

wash-basin, and meals of hot soup and bread and sometimes coffee. He

remembered a surly barber arriving to scrape his chin and crop his hair,

and businesslike, unsympathetic men in white coats feeling his pulse,

tapping his reflexes, turning up his eyelids, running harsh fingers over

him in search for broken bones, and shooting needles into his arm to make

him sleep.

The beatings grew less frequent, and became mainly a threat, a horror

to which he could be sent back at any moment when his answers were

unsatisfactory. His questioners now were not ruffians in black uniforms

but Party intellectuals, little rotund men with quick movements and

flashing spectacles, who worked on him in relays over periods which

lasted--he thought, he could not be sure--ten or twelve hours at a stretch.

These other questioners saw to it that he was in constant slight pain, but

it was not chiefly pain that they relied on. They slapped his face, wrung

his ears, pulled his hair, made him stand on one leg, refused him leave to

urinate, shone glaring lights in his face until his eyes ran with water;

but the aim of this was simply to humiliate him and destroy his power of

arguing and reasoning. Their real weapon was the merciless questioning

that went on and on, hour after hour, tripping him up, laying traps for

him, twisting everything that he said, convicting him at every step of

lies and self-contradiction until he began weeping as much from shame as

from nervous fatigue. Sometimes he would weep half a dozen times in a

single session. Most of the time they screamed abuse at him and threatened

at every hesitation to deliver him over to the guards again; but sometimes

they would suddenly change their tune, call him comrade, appeal to him in

the name of Ingsoc and Big Brother, and ask him sorrowfully whether even

now he had not enough loyalty to the Party left to make him wish to

undo the evil he had done. When his nerves were in rags after hours of

questioning, even this appeal could reduce him to snivelling tears. In the

end the nagging voices broke him down more completely than the boots and

fists of the guards. He became simply a mouth that uttered, a hand that

signed, whatever was demanded of him. His sole concern was to find out

what they wanted him to confess, and then confess it quickly, before the

bullying started anew. He confessed to the assassination of eminent Party

members, the distribution of seditious pamphlets, embezzlement of public

funds, sale of military secrets, sabotage of every kind. He confessed that

he had been a spy in the pay of the Eastasian government as far back as

1968. He confessed that he was a religious believer, an admirer of

capitalism, and a sexual pervert. He confessed that he had murdered his

wife, although he knew, and his questioners must have known, that his wife

was still alive. He confessed that for years he had been in personal touch

with Goldstein and had been a member of an underground organization which

had included almost every human being he had ever known. It was easier to

confess everything and implicate everybody. Besides, in a sense it was all

true. It was true that he had been the enemy of the Party, and in the eyes

of the Party there was no distinction between the thought and the deed.

There were also memories of another kind. They stood out in his mind

disconnectedly, like pictures with blackness all round them.

He was in a cell which might have been either dark or light, because he

could see nothing except a pair of eyes. Near at hand some kind of

instrument was ticking slowly and regularly. The eyes grew larger and more

luminous. Suddenly he floated out of his seat, dived into the eyes, and

was swallowed up.

He was strapped into a chair surrounded by dials, under dazzling lights.

A man in a white coat was reading the dials. There was a tramp of heavy

boots outside. The door clanged open. The waxed-faced officer marched in,

followed by two guards.

'Room 101,' said the officer.

The man in the white coat did not turn round. He did not look at Winston

either; he was looking only at the dials.

He was rolling down a mighty corridor, a kilometre wide, full of glorious,

golden light, roaring with laughter and shouting out confessions at the

top of his voice. He was confessing everything, even the things he had

succeeded in holding back under the torture. He was relating the entire

history of his life to an audience who knew it already. With him were the

guards, the other questioners, the men in white coats, O'Brien, Julia,

Mr Charrington, all rolling down the corridor together and shouting with

laughter. Some dreadful thing which had lain embedded in the future had

somehow been skipped over and had not happened. Everything was all right,

there was no more pain, the last detail of his life was laid bare,

understood, forgiven.

He was starting up from the plank bed in the half-certainty that he had

heard O'Brien's voice. All through his interrogation, although he had

never seen him, he had had the feeling that O'Brien was at his elbow, just

out of sight. It was O'Brien who was directing everything. It was he who

set the guards on to Winston and who prevented them from killing him. It

was he who decided when Winston should scream with pain, when he should

have a respite, when he should be fed, when he should sleep, when the

drugs should be pumped into his arm. It was he who asked the questions and

suggested the answers. He was the tormentor, he was the protector, he was

the inquisitor, he was the friend. And once--Winston could not remember

whether it was in drugged sleep, or in normal sleep, or even in a moment

of wakefulness--a voice murmured in his ear: 'Don't worry, Winston; you

are in my keeping. For seven years I have watched over you. Now the

turning-point has come. I shall save you, I shall make you perfect.' He

was not sure whether it was O'Brien's voice; but it was the same voice

that had said to him, 'We shall meet in the place where there is no

darkness,' in that other dream, seven years ago.

He did not remember any ending to his interrogation. There was a period of

blackness and then the cell, or room, in which he now was had gradually

materialized round him. He was almost flat on his back, and unable to move.

His body was held down at every essential point. Even the back of his head

was gripped in some manner. O'Brien was looking down at him gravely and

rather sadly. His face, seen from below, looked coarse and worn, with

pouches under the eyes and tired lines from nose to chin. He was older

than Winston had thought him; he was perhaps forty-eight or fifty. Under

his hand there was a dial with a lever on top and figures running round

the face.

'I told you,' said O'Brien, 'that if we met again it would be here.'

'Yes,' said Winston.

Without any warning except a slight movement of O'Brien's hand, a wave of

pain flooded his body. It was a frightening pain, because he could not see

what was happening, and he had the feeling that some mortal injury was

being done to him. He did not know whether the thing was really happening,

or whether the effect was electrically produced; but his body was being

wrenched out of shape, the joints were being slowly torn apart. Although

the pain had brought the sweat out on his forehead, the worst of all was

the fear that his backbone was about to snap. He set his teeth and

breathed hard through his nose, trying to keep silent as long as possible.

'You are afraid,' said O'Brien, watching his face, 'that in another moment

something is going to break. Your especial fear is that it will be your

backbone. You have a vivid mental picture of the vertebrae snapping apart

and the spinal fluid dripping out of them. That is what you are thinking,

is it not, Winston?'

Winston did not answer. O'Brien drew back the lever on the dial. The wave

of pain receded almost as quickly as it had come.

'That was forty,' said O'Brien. 'You can see that the numbers on this dial

run up to a hundred. Will you please remember, throughout our conversation,

that I have it in my power to inflict pain on you at any moment and to

whatever degree I choose? If you tell me any lies, or attempt to

prevaricate in any way, or even fall below your usual level of

intelligence, you will cry out with pain, instantly. Do you understand

that?'

'Yes,' said Winston.

O'Brien's manner became less severe. He resettled his spectacles

thoughtfully, and took a pace or two up and down. When he spoke his voice

was gentle and patient. He had the air of a doctor, a teacher, even a

priest, anxious to explain and persuade rather than to punish.

'I am taking trouble with you, Winston,' he said, 'because you are worth

trouble. You know perfectly well what is the matter with you. You have

known it for years, though you have fought against the knowledge. You are

mentally deranged. You suffer from a defective memory. You are unable to

remember real events and you persuade yourself that you remember other

events which never happened. Fortunately it is curable. You have never

cured yourself of it, because you did not choose to. There was a small

effort of the will that you were not ready to make. Even now, I am well

aware, you are clinging to your disease under the impression that it is

a virtue. Now we will take an example. At this moment, which power is

Oceania at war with?'

'When I was arrested, Oceania was at war with Eastasia.'

'With Eastasia. Good. And Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia,

has it not?'

Winston drew in his breath. He opened his mouth to speak and then did not

speak. He could not take his eyes away from the dial.

'The truth, please, Winston. YOUR truth. Tell me what you think you

remember.'

'I remember that until only a week before I was arrested, we were not at

war with Eastasia at all. We were in alliance with them. The war was

against Eurasia. That had lasted for four years. Before that----'

O'Brien stopped him with a movement of the hand.

'Another example,' he said. 'Some years ago you had a very serious delusion

indeed. You believed that three men, three one-time Party members named

Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford--men who were executed for treachery and

sabotage after making the fullest possible confession--were not guilty of

the crimes they were charged with. You believed that you had seen

unmistakable documentary evidence proving that their confessions were

false. There was a certain photograph about which you had a hallucination.

You believed that you had actually held it in your hands. It was a

photograph something like this.'

An oblong slip of newspaper had appeared between O'Brien's fingers. For

perhaps five seconds it was within the angle of Winston's vision. It was

a photograph, and there was no question of its identity. It was THE

photograph. It was another copy of the photograph of Jones, Aaronson, and

Rutherford at the party function in New York, which he had chanced upon

eleven years ago and promptly destroyed. For only an instant it was before

his eyes, then it was out of sight again. But he had seen it,

unquestionably he had seen it! He made a desperate, agonizing effort to

wrench the top half of his body free. It was impossible to move so much as

a centimetre in any direction. For the moment he had even forgotten the

dial. All he wanted was to hold the photograph in his fingers again, or at

least to see it.

'It exists!' he cried.

'No,' said O'Brien.

He stepped across the room. There was a memory hole in the opposite wall.

O'Brien lifted the grating. Unseen, the frail slip of paper was whirling

away on the current of warm air; it was vanishing in a flash of flame.

O'Brien turned away from the wall.

'Ashes,' he said. 'Not even identifiable ashes. Dust. It does not exist.

It never existed.'

'But it did exist! It does exist! It exists in memory. I remember it.

You remember it.'

'I do not remember it,' said O'Brien.

Winston's heart sank. That was doublethink. He had a feeling of deadly

helplessness. If he could have been certain that O'Brien was lying, it

would not have seemed to matter. But it was perfectly possible that O'Brien

had really forgotten the photograph. And if so, then already he would have

forgotten his denial of remembering it, and forgotten the act of

forgetting. How could one be sure that it was simple trickery? Perhaps

that lunatic dislocation in the mind could really happen: that was the

thought that defeated him.

O'Brien was looking down at him speculatively. More than ever he had the

air of a teacher taking pains with a wayward but promising child.

'There is a Party slogan dealing with the control of the past,' he said.

'Repeat it, if you please.'

'"Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present

controls the past,"' repeated Winston obediently.

'"Who controls the present controls the past,"' said O'Brien, nodding his

head with slow approval. 'Is it your opinion, Winston, that the past has

real existence?'

Again the feeling of helplessness descended upon Winston. His eyes flitted

towards the dial. He not only did not know whether 'yes' or 'no' was the

answer that would save him from pain; he did not even know which answer he

believed to be the true one.

O'Brien smiled faintly. 'You are no metaphysician, Winston,' he said.

'Until this moment you had never considered what is meant by existence. I

will put it more precisely. Does the past exist concretely, in space? Is

there somewhere or other a place, a world of solid objects, where the past

is still happening?'

'No.'

'Then where does the past exist, if at all?'

'In records. It is written down.'

'In records. And----?'

'In the mind. In human memories.'

'In memory. Very well, then. We, the Party, control all records, and we

control all memories. Then we control the past, do we not?'

'But how can you stop people remembering things?' cried Winston again

momentarily forgetting the dial. 'It is involuntary. It is outside oneself.

How can you control memory? You have not controlled mine!'

O'Brien's manner grew stern again. He laid his hand on the dial.

'On the contrary,' he said, 'YOU have not controlled it. That is what has

brought you here. You are here because you have failed in humility, in

self-discipline. You would not make the act of submission which is the

price of sanity. You preferred to be a lunatic, a minority of one. Only the

disciplined mind can see reality, Winston. You believe that reality is

something objective, external, existing in its own right. You also believe

that the nature of reality is self-evident. When you delude yourself into

thinking that you see something, you assume that everyone else sees the

same thing as you. But I tell you, Winston, that reality is not external.

Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual

mind, which can make mistakes, and in any case soon perishes: only in the

mind of the Party, which is collective and immortal. Whatever the Party

holds to be the truth, is truth. It is impossible to see reality except by

looking through the eyes of the Party. That is the fact that you have got

to relearn, Winston. It needs an act of self-destruction, an effort of the

will. You must humble yourself before you can become sane.'

He paused for a few moments, as though to allow what he had been saying to

sink in.

'Do you remember,' he went on, 'writing in your diary, "Freedom is the

freedom to say that two plus two make four"?'

'Yes,' said Winston.

O'Brien held up his left hand, its back towards Winston, with the thumb

hidden and the four fingers extended.

'How many fingers am I holding up, Winston?'

'Four.'

'And if the party says that it is not four but five--then how many?'

'Four.'

The word ended in a gasp of pain. The needle of the dial had shot up to

fifty-five. The sweat had sprung out all over Winston's body. The air tore

into his lungs and issued again in deep groans which even by clenching his

teeth he could not stop. O'Brien watched him, the four fingers still

extended. He drew back the lever. This time the pain was only slightly

eased.

'How many fingers, Winston?'

'Four.'

The needle went up to sixty.

'How many fingers, Winston?'

'Four! Four! What else can I say? Four!'

The needle must have risen again, but he did not look at it. The heavy,

stern face and the four fingers filled his vision. The fingers stood up

before his eyes like pillars, enormous, blurry, and seeming to vibrate,

but unmistakably four.

'How many fingers, Winston?'

'Four! Stop it, stop it! How can you go on? Four! Four!'

'How many fingers, Winston?'

'Five! Five! Five!'

'No, Winston, that is no use. You are lying. You still think there are

four. How many fingers, please?'

'Four! five! Four! Anything you like. Only stop it, stop the pain!'

Abruptly he was sitting up with O'Brien's arm round his shoulders. He had

perhaps lost consciousness for a few seconds. The bonds that had held his

body down were loosened. He felt very cold, he was shaking uncontrollably,

his teeth were chattering, the tears were rolling down his cheeks. For a

moment he clung to O'Brien like a baby, curiously comforted by the heavy

arm round his shoulders. He had the feeling that O'Brien was his protector,

that the pain was something that came from outside, from some other source,

and that it was O'Brien who would save him from it.

'You are a slow learner, Winston,' said O'Brien gently.

'How can I help it?' he blubbered. 'How can I help seeing what is in front

of my eyes? Two and two are four.'

'Sometimes, Winston. Sometimes they are five. Sometimes they are three.

Sometimes they are all of them at once. You must try harder. It is not

easy to become sane.'

He laid Winston down on the bed. The grip of his limbs tightened again,

but the pain had ebbed away and the trembling had stopped, leaving him

merely weak and cold. O'Brien motioned with his head to the man in the

white coat, who had stood immobile throughout the proceedings. The man in

the white coat bent down and looked closely into Winston's eyes, felt his

pulse, laid an ear against his chest, tapped here and there, then he

nodded to O'Brien.

'Again,' said O'Brien.

The pain flowed into Winston's body. The needle must be at seventy,

seventy-five. He had shut his eyes this time. He knew that the fingers

were still there, and still four. All that mattered was somehow to stay

alive until the spasm was over. He had ceased to notice whether he was

crying out or not. The pain lessened again. He opened his eyes. O'Brien

had drawn back the lever.

'How many fingers, Winston?'

'Four. I suppose there are four. I would see five if I could. I am trying

to see five.'

'Which do you wish: to persuade me that you see five, or really to see

them?'

'Really to see them.'

'Again,' said O'Brien.

Perhaps the needle was eighty--ninety. Winston could not intermittently

remember why the pain was happening. Behind his screwed-up eyelids a

forest of fingers seemed to be moving in a sort of dance, weaving in and

out, disappearing behind one another and reappearing again. He was trying

to count them, he could not remember why. He knew only that it was

impossible to count them, and that this was somehow due to the mysterious

identity between five and four. The pain died down again. When he opened

his eyes it was to find that he was still seeing the same thing.

Innumerable fingers, like moving trees, were still streaming past in

either direction, crossing and recrossing. He shut his eyes again.

'How many fingers am I holding up, Winston?'

'I don't know. I don't know. You will kill me if you do that again. Four,

five, six--in all honesty I don't know.'

'Better,' said O'Brien.

A needle slid into Winston's arm. Almost in the same instant a blissful,

healing warmth spread all through his body. The pain was already

half-forgotten. He opened his eyes and looked up gratefully at O'Brien.

At sight of the heavy, lined face, so ugly and so intelligent, his heart

seemed to turn over. If he could have moved he would have stretched out

a hand and laid it on O'Brien's arm. He had never loved him so deeply as

at this moment, and not merely because he had stopped the pain. The old

feeling, that at bottom it did not matter whether O'Brien was a friend

or an enemy, had come back. O'Brien was a person who could be talked to.

Perhaps one did not want to be loved so much as to be understood. O'Brien

had tortured him to the edge of lunacy, and in a little while, it was

certain, he would send him to his death. It made no difference. In some

sense that went deeper than friendship, they were intimates: somewhere or

other, although the actual words might never be spoken, there was a place

where they could meet and talk. O'Brien was looking down at him with an

expression which suggested that the same thought might be in his own mind.

When he spoke it was in an easy, conversational tone.

'Do you know where you are, Winston?' he said.

'I don't know. I can guess. In the Ministry of Love.'

'Do you know how long you have been here?'

'I don't know. Days, weeks, months--I think it is months.'

'And why do you imagine that we bring people to this place?'

'To make them confess.'

'No, that is not the reason. Try again.'

'To punish them.'

'No!' exclaimed O'Brien. His voice had changed extraordinarily, and his

face had suddenly become both stern and animated. 'No! Not merely to

extract your confession, not to punish you. Shall I tell you why we have

brought you here? To cure you! To make you sane! Will you understand,

Winston, that no one whom we bring to this place ever leaves our hands

uncured? We are not interested in those stupid crimes that you have

committed. The Party is not interested in the overt act: the thought is

all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them.

Do you understand what I mean by that?'

He was bending over Winston. His face looked enormous because of its

nearness, and hideously ugly because it was seen from below. Moreover it

was filled with a sort of exaltation, a lunatic intensity. Again Winston's

heart shrank. If it had been possible he would have cowered deeper into

the bed. He felt certain that O'Brien was about to twist the dial out of

sheer wantonness. At this moment, however, O'Brien turned away. He took a

pace or two up and down. Then he continued less vehemently:

'The first thing for you to understand is that in this place there are no

martyrdoms. You have read of the religious persecutions of the past. In

the Middle Ages there was the Inquisition. It was a failure. It set out

to eradicate heresy, and ended by perpetuating it. For every heretic it

burned at the stake, thousands of others rose up. Why was that? Because

the Inquisition killed its enemies in the open, and killed them while

they were still unrepentant: in fact, it killed them because they were

unrepentant. Men were dying because they would not abandon their true

beliefs. Naturally all the glory belonged to the victim and all the shame

to the Inquisitor who burned him. Later, in the twentieth century, there

were the totalitarians, as they were called. There were the German Nazis

and the Russian Communists. The Russians persecuted heresy more cruelly

than the Inquisition had done. And they imagined that they had learned

from the mistakes of the past; they knew, at any rate, that one must not

make martyrs. Before they exposed their victims to public trial, they

deliberately set themselves to destroy their dignity. They wore them down

by torture and solitude until they were despicable, cringing wretches,

confessing whatever was put into their mouths, covering themselves with

abuse, accusing and sheltering behind one another, whimpering for mercy.

And yet after only a few years the same thing had happened over again.

The dead men had become martyrs and their degradation was forgotten. Once

again, why was it? In the first place, because the confessions that they

had made were obviously extorted and untrue. We do not make mistakes of

that kind. All the confessions that are uttered here are true. We make

them true. And above all we do not allow the dead to rise up against us.

You must stop imagining that posterity will vindicate you, Winston.

Posterity will never hear of you. You will be lifted clean out from the

stream of history. We shall turn you into gas and pour you into the

stratosphere. Nothing will remain of you, not a name in a register, not

a memory in a living brain. You will be annihilated in the past as well

as in the future. You will never have existed.'

Then why bother to torture me? thought Winston, with a momentary

bitterness. O'Brien checked his step as though Winston had uttered the

thought aloud. His large ugly face came nearer, with the eyes a little

narrowed.

'You are thinking,' he said, 'that since we intend to destroy you utterly,

so that nothing that you say or do can make the smallest difference--in

that case, why do we go to the trouble of interrogating you first? That is

what you were thinking, was it not?'

'Yes,' said Winston.

O'Brien smiled slightly. 'You are a flaw in the pattern, Winston. You are

a stain that must be wiped out. Did I not tell you just now that we are

different from the persecutors of the past? We are not content with

negative obedience, nor even with the most abject submission. When finally

you surrender to us, it must be of your own free will. We do not destroy

the heretic because he resists us: so long as he resists us we never

destroy him. We convert him, we capture his inner mind, we reshape him.

We burn all evil and all illusion out of him; we bring him over to our

side, not in appearance, but genuinely, heart and soul. We make him one of

ourselves before we kill him. It is intolerable to us that an erroneous

thought should exist anywhere in the world, however secret and powerless

it may be. Even in the instant of death we cannot permit any deviation. In

the old days the heretic walked to the stake still a heretic, proclaiming

his heresy, exulting in it. Even the victim of the Russian purges could

carry rebellion locked up in his skull as he walked down the passage

waiting for the bullet. But we make the brain perfect before we blow it

out. The command of the old despotisms was "Thou shalt not". The command

of the totalitarians was "Thou shalt". Our command is "THOU ART". No one

whom we bring to this place ever stands out against us. Everyone is washed

clean. Even those three miserable traitors in whose innocence you once

believed--Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford--in the end we broke them down.

I took part in their interrogation myself. I saw them gradually worn down,

whimpering, grovelling, weeping--and in the end it was not with pain or

fear, only with penitence. By the time we had finished with them they were

only the shells of men. There was nothing left in them except sorrow for

what they had done, and love of Big Brother. It was touching to see

how they loved him. They begged to be shot quickly, so that they could die

while their minds were still clean.'

His voice had grown almost dreamy. The exaltation, the lunatic enthusiasm,

was still in his face. He is not pretending, thought Winston, he is not a

hypocrite, he believes every word he says. What most oppressed him was the

consciousness of his own intellectual inferiority. He watched the heavy

yet graceful form strolling to and fro, in and out of the range of his

vision. O'Brien was a being in all ways larger than himself. There was no

idea that he had ever had, or could have, that O'Brien had not long ago

known, examined, and rejected. His mind CONTAINED Winston's mind. But

in that case how could it be true that O'Brien was mad? It must be he,

Winston, who was mad. O'Brien halted and looked down at him. His voice had

grown stern again.

'Do not imagine that you will save yourself, Winston, however completely

you surrender to us. No one who has once gone astray is ever spared. And

even if we chose to let you live out the natural term of your life, still

you would never escape from us. What happens to you here is for ever.

Understand that in advance. We shall crush you down to the point from

which there is no coming back. Things will happen to you from which you

could not recover, if you lived a thousand years. Never again will you be

capable of ordinary human feeling. Everything will be dead inside you.

Never again will you be capable of love, or friendship, or joy of living,

or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow.

We shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with ourselves.'

He paused and signed to the man in the white coat. Winston was aware of

some heavy piece of apparatus being pushed into place behind his head.

O'Brien had sat down beside the bed, so that his face was almost on a

level with Winston's.

'Three thousand,' he said, speaking over Winston's head to the man in the

white coat.

Two soft pads, which felt slightly moist, clamped themselves against

Winston's temples. He quailed. There was pain coming, a new kind of pain.

O'Brien laid a hand reassuringly, almost kindly, on his.

'This time it will not hurt,' he said. 'Keep your eyes fixed on mine.'

At this moment there was a devastating explosion, or what seemed like an

explosion, though it was not certain whether there was any noise. There

was undoubtedly a blinding flash of light. Winston was not hurt, only

prostrated. Although he had already been lying on his back when the thing

happened, he had a curious feeling that he had been knocked into that

position. A terrific painless blow had flattened him out. Also something

had happened inside his head. As his eyes regained their focus he

remembered who he was, and where he was, and recognized the face that was

gazing into his own; but somewhere or other there was a large patch of

emptiness, as though a piece had been taken out of his brain.

'It will not last,' said O'Brien. 'Look me in the eyes. What country is

Oceania at war with?'

Winston thought. He knew what was meant by Oceania and that he himself was

a citizen of Oceania. He also remembered Eurasia and Eastasia; but who was

at war with whom he did not know. In fact he had not been aware that there

was any war.

'I don't remember.'

'Oceania is at war with Eastasia. Do you remember that now?'

'Yes.'

'Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia. Since the beginning of your

life, since the beginning of the Party, since the beginning of history,

the war has continued without a break, always the same war. Do you

remember that?'

'Yes.'

'Eleven years ago you created a legend about three men who had been

condemned to death for treachery. You pretended that you had seen a piece

of paper which proved them innocent. No such piece of paper ever existed.

You invented it, and later you grew to believe in it. You remember now the

very moment at which you first invented it. Do you remember that?'

'Yes.'

'Just now I held up the fingers of my hand to you. You saw five fingers.

Do you remember that?'

'Yes.'

O'Brien held up the fingers of his left hand, with the thumb concealed.

'There are five fingers there. Do you see five fingers?'

'Yes.'

And he did see them, for a fleeting instant, before the scenery of his

mind changed. He saw five fingers, and there was no deformity. Then

everything was normal again, and the old fear, the hatred, and the

bewilderment came crowding back again. But there had been a moment--he did

not know how long, thirty seconds, perhaps--of luminous certainty, when

each new suggestion of O'Brien's had filled up a patch of emptiness and

become absolute truth, and when two and two could have been three as

easily as five, if that were what was needed. It had faded but before

O'Brien had dropped his hand; but though he could not recapture it, he

could remember it, as one remembers a vivid experience at some period of

one's life when one was in effect a different person.

'You see now,' said O'Brien, 'that it is at any rate possible.'

'Yes,' said Winston.

O'Brien stood up with a satisfied air. Over to his left Winston saw the

man in the white coat break an ampoule and draw back the plunger of a

syringe. O'Brien turned to Winston with a smile. In almost the old manner

he resettled his spectacles on his nose.

'Do you remember writing in your diary,' he said, 'that it did not matter

whether I was a friend or an enemy, since I was at least a person who

understood you and could be talked to? You were right. I enjoy talking to

you. Your mind appeals to me. It resembles my own mind except that you

happen to be insane. Before we bring the session to an end you can ask me

a few questions, if you choose.'

'Any question I like?'

'Anything.' He saw that Winston's eyes were upon the dial. 'It is switched

off. What is your first question?'

'What have you done with Julia?' said Winston.

O'Brien smiled again. 'She betrayed you, Winston. Immediately--unreservedly.

I have seldom seen anyone come over to us so promptly. You would hardly

recognize her if you saw her. All her rebelliousness, her deceit, her

folly, her dirty-mindedness--everything has been burned out of her. It was

a perfect conversion, a textbook case.'

'You tortured her?'

O'Brien left this unanswered. 'Next question,' he said.

'Does Big Brother exist?'

'Of course he exists. The Party exists. Big Brother is the embodiment of

the Party.'

'Does he exist in the same way as I exist?'

'You do not exist,' said O'Brien.

Once again the sense of helplessness assailed him. He knew, or he could

imagine, the arguments which proved his own nonexistence; but they were

nonsense, they were only a play on words. Did not the statement, 'You do

not exist', contain a logical absurdity? But what use was it to say so?

His mind shrivelled as he thought of the unanswerable, mad arguments with

which O'Brien would demolish him.

'I think I exist,' he said wearily. 'I am conscious of my own identity.

I was born and I shall die. I have arms and legs. I occupy a particular

point in space. No other solid object can occupy the same point

simultaneously. In that sense, does Big Brother exist?'

'It is of no importance. He exists.'

'Will Big Brother ever die?'

'Of course not. How could he die? Next question.'

'Does the Brotherhood exist?'

'That, Winston, you will never know. If we choose to set you free when we

have finished with you, and if you live to be ninety years old, still you

will never learn whether the answer to that question is Yes or No. As long

as you live it will be an unsolved riddle in your mind.'

Winston lay silent. His breast rose and fell a little faster. He still had

not asked the question that had come into his mind the first. He had got

to ask it, and yet it was as though his tongue would not utter it. There

was a trace of amusement in O'Brien's face. Even his spectacles seemed to

wear an ironical gleam. He knows, thought Winston suddenly, he knows what

I am going to ask! At the thought the words burst out of him:

'What is in Room 101?'

The expression on O'Brien's face did not change. He answered drily:

'You know what is in Room 101, Winston. Everyone knows what is in

Room 101.'

He raised a finger to the man in the white coat. Evidently the session was

at an end. A needle jerked into Winston's arm. He sank almost instantly

into deep sleep.

Chapter 3

'There are three stages in your reintegration,' said O'Brien. 'There is

learning, there is understanding, and there is acceptance. It is time for

you to enter upon the second stage.'

As always, Winston was lying flat on his back. But of late his bonds were

looser. They still held him to the bed, but he could move his knees a

little and could turn his head from side to side and raise his arms from

the elbow. The dial, also, had grown to be less of a terror. He could

evade its pangs if he was quick-witted enough: it was chiefly when he

showed stupidity that O'Brien pulled the lever. Sometimes they got through

a whole session without use of the dial. He could not remember how many

sessions there had been. The whole process seemed to stretch out over a

long, indefinite time--weeks, possibly--and the intervals between the

sessions might sometimes have been days, sometimes only an hour or two.

'As you lie there,' said O'Brien, 'you have often wondered--you have even

asked me--why the Ministry of Love should expend so much time and trouble

on you. And when you were free you were puzzled by what was essentially

the same question. You could grasp the mechanics of the Society you lived

in, but not its underlying motives. Do you remember writing in your diary,

"I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY"? It was when you thought about

"why" that you doubted your own sanity. You have read THE BOOK,

Goldstein's book, or parts of it, at least. Did it tell you anything that

you did not know already?'

'You have read it?' said Winston.

'I wrote it. That is to say, I collaborated in writing it. No book is

produced individually, as you know.'

'Is it true, what it says?'

'As description, yes. The programme it sets forth is nonsense. The secret

accumulation of knowledge--a gradual spread of enlightenment--ultimately

a proletarian rebellion--the overthrow of the Party. You foresaw yourself

that that was what it would say. It is all nonsense. The proletarians will

never revolt, not in a thousand years or a million. They cannot. I do

not have to tell you the reason: you know it already. If you have ever

cherished any dreams of violent insurrection, you must abandon them. There

is no way in which the Party can be overthrown. The rule of the Party is

for ever. Make that the starting-point of your thoughts.'

He came closer to the bed. 'For ever!' he repeated. 'And now let us get

back to the question of "how" and "why". You understand well enough HOW

the Party maintains itself in power. Now tell me WHY we cling to power.

What is our motive? Why should we want power? Go on, speak,' he added as

Winston remained silent.

Nevertheless Winston did not speak for another moment or two. A feeling of

weariness had overwhelmed him. The faint, mad gleam of enthusiasm had come

back into O'Brien's face. He knew in advance what O'Brien would say. That

the Party did not seek power for its own ends, but only for the good of

the majority. That it sought power because men in the mass were frail,

cowardly creatures who could not endure liberty or face the truth, and

must be ruled over and systematically deceived by others who were stronger

than themselves. That the choice for mankind lay between freedom and

happiness, and that, for the great bulk of mankind, happiness was better.

That the party was the eternal guardian of the weak, a dedicated sect

doing evil that good might come, sacrificing its own happiness to that of

others. The terrible thing, thought Winston, the terrible thing was that

when O'Brien said this he would believe it. You could see it in his face.

O'Brien knew everything. A thousand times better than Winston he knew what

the world was really like, in what degradation the mass of human beings

lived and by what lies and barbarities the Party kept them there. He had

understood it all, weighed it all, and it made no difference: all was

justified by the ultimate purpose. What can you do, thought Winston,

against the lunatic who is more intelligent than yourself, who gives your

arguments a fair hearing and then simply persists in his lunacy?

'You are ruling over us for our own good,' he said feebly. 'You believe

that human beings are not fit to govern themselves, and therefore----'

He started and almost cried out. A pang of pain had shot through his body.

O'Brien had pushed the lever of the dial up to thirty-five.

'That was stupid, Winston, stupid!' he said. 'You should know better than

to say a thing like that.'

He pulled the lever back and continued:

'Now I will tell you the answer to my question. It is this. The Party

seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good

of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long

life or happiness: only power, pure power. What pure power means you will

understand presently. We are different from all the oligarchies of the

past, in that we know what we are doing. All the others, even those who

resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the

Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never

had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps

they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a

limited time, and that just round the corner there lay a paradise where

human beings would be free and equal. We are not like that. We know that

no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is

not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order

to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish

the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of

torture is torture. The object of power is power. Now do you begin to

understand me?'

Winston was struck, as he had been struck before, by the tiredness of

O'Brien's face. It was strong and fleshy and brutal, it was full of

intelligence and a sort of controlled passion before which he felt himself

helpless; but it was tired. There were pouches under the eyes, the skin

sagged from the cheekbones. O'Brien leaned over him, deliberately bringing

the worn face nearer.

'You are thinking,' he said, 'that my face is old and tired. You are

thinking that I talk of power, and yet I am not even able to prevent the

decay of my own body. Can you not understand, Winston, that the individual

is only a cell? The weariness of the cell is the vigour of the organism.

Do you die when you cut your fingernails?'

He turned away from the bed and began strolling up and down again, one hand

in his pocket.

'We are the priests of power,' he said. 'God is power. But at present

power is only a word so far as you are concerned. It is time for you to

gather some idea of what power means. The first thing you must realize

is that power is collective. The individual only has power in so far as

he ceases to be an individual. You know the Party slogan: "Freedom is

Slavery". Has it ever occurred to you that it is reversible? Slavery is

freedom. Alone--free--the human being is always defeated. It must be so,

because every human being is doomed to die, which is the greatest of all

failures. But if he can make complete, utter submission, if he can escape

from his identity, if he can merge himself in the Party so that he IS the

Party, then he is all-powerful and immortal. The second thing for you to

realize is that power is power over human beings. Over the body--but, above

all, over the mind. Power over matter--external reality, as you would call

it--is not important. Already our control over matter is absolute.'

For a moment Winston ignored the dial. He made a violent effort to raise

himself into a sitting position, and merely succeeded in wrenching his

body painfully.

'But how can you control matter?' he burst out. 'You don't even control

the climate or the law of gravity. And there are disease, pain, death----'

O'Brien silenced him by a movement of his hand. 'We control matter because

we control the mind. Reality is inside the skull. You will learn by

degrees, Winston. There is nothing that we could not do. Invisibility,

levitation--anything. I could float off this floor like a soap bubble if

I wish to. I do not wish to, because the Party does not wish it. You must

get rid of those nineteenth-century ideas about the laws of Nature. We

make the laws of Nature.'

'But you do not! You are not even masters of this planet. What about

Eurasia and Eastasia? You have not conquered them yet.'

'Unimportant. We shall conquer them when it suits us. And if we did not,

what difference would it make? We can shut them out of existence. Oceania

is the world.'

'But the world itself is only a speck of dust. And man is tiny--helpless!

How long has he been in existence? For millions of years the earth was

uninhabited.'

'Nonsense. The earth is as old as we are, no older. How could it be older?

Nothing exists except through human consciousness.'

'But the rocks are full of the bones of extinct animals--mammoths and

mastodons and enormous reptiles which lived here long before man was ever

heard of.'

'Have you ever seen those bones, Winston? Of course not. Nineteenth-century

biologists invented them. Before man there was nothing. After man, if he

could come to an end, there would be nothing. Outside man there is

nothing.'

'But the whole universe is outside us. Look at the stars! Some of them are

a million light-years away. They are out of our reach for ever.'

'What are the stars?' said O'Brien indifferently. 'They are bits of fire

a few kilometres away. We could reach them if we wanted to. Or we could

blot them out. The earth is the centre of the universe. The sun and the

stars go round it.'

Winston made another convulsive movement. This time he did not say

anything. O'Brien continued as though answering a spoken objection:

'For certain purposes, of course, that is not true. When we navigate the

ocean, or when we predict an eclipse, we often find it convenient to

assume that the earth goes round the sun and that the stars are millions

upon millions of kilometres away. But what of it? Do you suppose it is

beyond us to produce a dual system of astronomy? The stars can be near

or distant, according as we need them. Do you suppose our mathematicians

are unequal to that? Have you forgotten doublethink?'

Winston shrank back upon the bed. Whatever he said, the swift answer

crushed him like a bludgeon. And yet he knew, he KNEW, that he was in the

right. The belief that nothing exists outside your own mind--surely there

must be some way of demonstrating that it was false? Had it not been

exposed long ago as a fallacy? There was even a name for it, which he

had forgotten. A faint smile twitched the corners of O'Brien's mouth as

he looked down at him.

'I told you, Winston,' he said, 'that metaphysics is not your strong

point. The word you are trying to think of is solipsism. But you are

mistaken. This is not solipsism. Collective solipsism, if you like. But

that is a different thing: in fact, the opposite thing. All this is a

digression,' he added in a different tone. 'The real power, the power we

have to fight for night and day, is not power over things, but over men.'

He paused, and for a moment assumed again his air of a schoolmaster

questioning a promising pupil: 'How does one man assert his power over

another, Winston?'

Winston thought. 'By making him suffer,' he said.

'Exactly. By making him suffer. Obedience is not enough. Unless he is

suffering, how can you be sure that he is obeying your will and not his

own? Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing

human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of

your own choosing. Do you begin to see, then, what kind of world we are

creating? It is the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that

the old reformers imagined. A world of fear and treachery and torment, a

world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not

less but MORE merciless as it refines itself. Progress in our world will

be progress towards more pain. The old civilizations claimed that they

were founded on love or justice. Ours is founded upon hatred. In our world

there will be no emotions except fear, rage, triumph, and self-abasement.

Everything else we shall destroy--everything. Already we are breaking down

the habits of thought which have survived from before the Revolution. We

have cut the links between child and parent, and between man and man, and

between man and woman. No one dares trust a wife or a child or a friend

any longer. But in the future there will be no wives and no friends.

Children will be taken from their mothers at birth, as one takes eggs from

a hen. The sex instinct will be eradicated. Procreation will be an annual

formality like the renewal of a ration card. We shall abolish the orgasm.

Our neurologists are at work upon it now. There will be no loyalty, except

loyalty towards the Party. There will be no love, except the love of

Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over

a defeated enemy. There will be no art, no literature, no science. When

we are omnipotent we shall have no more need of science. There will be

no distinction between beauty and ugliness. There will be no curiosity,

no enjoyment of the process of life. All competing pleasures will be

destroyed. But always--do not forget this, Winston--always there will be

the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing

subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory,

the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a

picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face--for ever.'

He paused as though he expected Winston to speak. Winston had tried to

shrink back into the surface of the bed again. He could not say anything.

His heart seemed to be frozen. O'Brien went on:

'And remember that it is for ever. The face will always be there to be

stamped upon. The heretic, the enemy of society, will always be there, so

that he can be defeated and humiliated over again. Everything that you

have undergone since you have been in our hands--all that will continue,

and worse. The espionage, the betrayals, the arrests, the tortures, the

executions, the disappearances will never cease. It will be a world of

terror as much as a world of triumph. The more the Party is powerful, the

less it will be tolerant: the weaker the opposition, the tighter the

despotism. Goldstein and his heresies will live for ever. Every day, at

every moment, they will be defeated, discredited, ridiculed, spat upon and

yet they will always survive. This drama that I have played out with you

during seven years will be played out over and over again generation after

generation, always in subtler forms. Always we shall have the heretic here

at our mercy, screaming with pain, broken up, contemptible--and in the end

utterly penitent, saved from himself, crawling to our feet of his own

accord. That is the world that we are preparing, Winston. A world of

victory after victory, triumph after triumph after triumph: an endless

pressing, pressing, pressing upon the nerve of power. You are beginning,

I can see, to realize what that world will be like. But in the end you

will do more than understand it. You will accept it, welcome it, become

part of it.'

Winston had recovered himself sufficiently to speak. 'You can't!' he said

weakly.

'What do you mean by that remark, Winston?'

'You could not create such a world as you have just described. It is a

dream. It is impossible.'

'Why?'

'It is impossible to found a civilization on fear and hatred and cruelty.

It would never endure.'

'Why not?'

'It would have no vitality. It would disintegrate. It would commit

suicide.'

'Nonsense. You are under the impression that hatred is more exhausting

than love. Why should it be? And if it were, what difference would that

make? Suppose that we choose to wear ourselves out faster. Suppose that we

quicken the tempo of human life till men are senile at thirty. Still what

difference would it make? Can you not understand that the death of the

individual is not death? The party is immortal.'

As usual, the voice had battered Winston into helplessness. Moreover he

was in dread that if he persisted in his disagreement O'Brien would twist

the dial again. And yet he could not keep silent. Feebly, without

arguments, with nothing to support him except his inarticulate horror of

what O'Brien had said, he returned to the attack.

'I don't know--I don't care. Somehow you will fail. Something will defeat

you. Life will defeat you.'

'We control life, Winston, at all its levels. You are imagining that there

is something called human nature which will be outraged by what we do and

will turn against us. But we create human nature. Men are infinitely

malleable. Or perhaps you have returned to your old idea that the

proletarians or the slaves will arise and overthrow us. Put it out of your

mind. They are helpless, like the animals. Humanity is the Party. The

others are outside--irrelevant.'

'I don't care. In the end they will beat you. Sooner or later they will

see you for what you are, and then they will tear you to pieces.'

'Do you see any evidence that that is happening? Or any reason why it

should?'

'No. I believe it. I KNOW that you will fail. There is something in the

universe--I don't know, some spirit, some principle--that you will never

overcome.'

'Do you believe in God, Winston?'

'No.'

'Then what is it, this principle that will defeat us?'

'I don't know. The spirit of Man.'

'And do you consider yourself a man?'

'Yes.'

'If you are a man, Winston, you are the last man. Your kind is extinct; we

are the inheritors. Do you understand that you are ALONE? You are outside

history, you are non-existent.' His manner changed and he said more

harshly: 'And you consider yourself morally superior to us, with our lies

and our cruelty?'

'Yes, I consider myself superior.'

O'Brien did not speak. Two other voices were speaking. After a moment

Winston recognized one of them as his own. It was a sound-track of the

conversation he had had with O'Brien, on the night when he had enrolled

himself in the Brotherhood. He heard himself promising to lie, to steal,

to forge, to murder, to encourage drug-taking and prostitution, to

disseminate venereal diseases, to throw vitriol in a child's face. O'Brien

made a small impatient gesture, as though to say that the demonstration

was hardly worth making. Then he turned a switch and the voices stopped.

'Get up from that bed,' he said.

The bonds had loosened themselves. Winston lowered himself to the floor

and stood up unsteadily.

'You are the last man,' said O'Brien. 'You are the guardian of the human

spirit. You shall see yourself as you are. Take off your clothes.'

Winston undid the bit of string that held his overalls together. The zip

fastener had long since been wrenched out of them. He could not remember

whether at any time since his arrest he had taken off all his clothes at

one time. Beneath the overalls his body was looped with filthy yellowish

rags, just recognizable as the remnants of underclothes. As he slid

them to the ground he saw that there was a three-sided mirror at the far

end of the room. He approached it, then stopped short. An involuntary cry

had broken out of him.

'Go on,' said O'Brien. 'Stand between the wings of the mirror. You shall

see the side view as well.'

He had stopped because he was frightened. A bowed, grey-coloured,

skeleton-like thing was coming towards him. Its actual appearance was

frightening, and not merely the fact that he knew it to be himself. He

moved closer to the glass. The creature's face seemed to be protruded,

because of its bent carriage. A forlorn, jailbird's face with a nobby

forehead running back into a bald scalp, a crooked nose, and

battered-looking cheekbones above which his eyes were fierce and watchful.

The cheeks were seamed, the mouth had a drawn-in look. Certainly it was

his own face, but it seemed to him that it had changed more than he had

changed inside. The emotions it registered would be different from the

ones he felt. He had gone partially bald. For the first moment he had

thought that he had gone grey as well, but it was only the scalp that was

grey. Except for his hands and a circle of his face, his body was grey all

over with ancient, ingrained dirt. Here and there under the dirt there

were the red scars of wounds, and near the ankle the varicose ulcer was an

inflamed mass with flakes of skin peeling off it. But the truly frightening

thing was the emaciation of his body. The barrel of the ribs was as narrow

as that of a skeleton: the legs had shrunk so that the knees were thicker

than the thighs. He saw now what O'Brien had meant about seeing the side

view. The curvature of the spine was astonishing. The thin shoulders were

hunched forward so as to make a cavity of the chest, the scraggy neck

seemed to be bending double under the weight of the skull. At a guess he

would have said that it was the body of a man of sixty, suffering from

some malignant disease.

'You have thought sometimes,' said O'Brien, 'that my face--the face of a

member of the Inner Party--looks old and worn. What do you think of your

own face?'

He seized Winston's shoulder and spun him round so that he was facing him.

'Look at the condition you are in!' he said. 'Look at this filthy grime

all over your body. Look at the dirt between your toes. Look at that

disgusting running sore on your leg. Do you know that you stink like a

goat? Probably you have ceased to notice it. Look at your emaciation. Do

you see? I can make my thumb and forefinger meet round your bicep. I could

snap your neck like a carrot. Do you know that you have lost twenty-five

kilograms since you have been in our hands? Even your hair is coming out

in handfuls. Look!' He plucked at Winston's head and brought away a tuft

of hair. 'Open your mouth. Nine, ten, eleven teeth left. How many had you

when you came to us? And the few you have left are dropping out of your

head. Look here!'

He seized one of Winston's remaining front teeth between his powerful

thumb and forefinger. A twinge of pain shot through Winston's jaw. O'Brien

had wrenched the loose tooth out by the roots. He tossed it across the

cell.

'You are rotting away,' he said; 'you are falling to pieces. What are you?

A bag of filth. Now turn around and look into that mirror again. Do you

see that thing facing you? That is the last man. If you are human, that is

humanity. Now put your clothes on again.'

Winston began to dress himself with slow stiff movements. Until now he had

not seemed to notice how thin and weak he was. Only one thought stirred in

his mind: that he must have been in this place longer than he had imagined.

Then suddenly as he fixed the miserable rags round himself a feeling of

pity for his ruined body overcame him. Before he knew what he was doing

he had collapsed on to a small stool that stood beside the bed and burst

into tears. He was aware of his ugliness, his gracelessness, a bundle of

bones in filthy underclothes sitting weeping in the harsh white light: but

he could not stop himself. O'Brien laid a hand on his shoulder, almost

kindly.

'It will not last for ever,' he said. 'You can escape from it whenever you

choose. Everything depends on yourself.'

'You did it!' sobbed Winston. 'You reduced me to this state.'

'No, Winston, you reduced yourself to it. This is what you accepted when

you set yourself up against the Party. It was all contained in that first

act. Nothing has happened that you did not foresee.'

He paused, and then went on:

'We have beaten you, Winston. We have broken you up. You have seen what

your body is like. Your mind is in the same state. I do not think there

can be much pride left in you. You have been kicked and flogged and

insulted, you have screamed with pain, you have rolled on the floor in

your own blood and vomit. You have whimpered for mercy, you have betrayed

everybody and everything. Can you think of a single degradation that has

not happened to you?'

Winston had stopped weeping, though the tears were still oozing out of his

eyes. He looked up at O'Brien.

'I have not betrayed Julia,' he said.

O'Brien looked down at him thoughtfully. 'No,' he said; 'no; that is

perfectly true. You have not betrayed Julia.'

The peculiar reverence for O'Brien, which nothing seemed able to destroy,

flooded Winston's heart again. How intelligent, he thought, how

intelligent! Never did O'Brien fail to understand what was said to him.

Anyone else on earth would have answered promptly that he HAD betrayed

Julia. For what was there that they had not screwed out of him under the

torture? He had told them everything he knew about her, her habits, her

character, her past life; he had confessed in the most trivial detail

everything that had happened at their meetings, all that he had said to

her and she to him, their black-market meals, their adulteries, their

vague plottings against the Party--everything. And yet, in the sense in

which he intended the word, he had not betrayed her. He had not stopped

loving her; his feelings towards her had remained the same. O'Brien had

seen what he meant without the need for explanation.

'Tell me,' he said, 'how soon will they shoot me?'

'It might be a long time,' said O'Brien. 'You are a difficult case. But

don't give up hope. Everyone is cured sooner or later. In the end we shall

shoot you.'

Chapter 4

He was much better. He was growing fatter and stronger every day, if it

was proper to speak of days.

The white light and the humming sound were the same as ever, but the cell

was a little more comfortable than the others he had been in. There was a

pillow and a mattress on the plank bed, and a stool to sit on. They had

given him a bath, and they allowed him to wash himself fairly frequently

in a tin basin. They even gave him warm water to wash with. They had given

him new underclothes and a clean suit of overalls. They had dressed his

varicose ulcer with soothing ointment. They had pulled out the remnants

of his teeth and given him a new set of dentures.

Weeks or months must have passed. It would have been possible now to keep

count of the passage of time, if he had felt any interest in doing so,

since he was being fed at what appeared to be regular intervals. He was

getting, he judged, three meals in the twenty-four hours; sometimes he

wondered dimly whether he was getting them by night or by day. The food

was surprisingly good, with meat at every third meal. Once there was even

a packet of cigarettes. He had no matches, but the never-speaking guard

who brought his food would give him a light. The first time he tried to

smoke it made him sick, but he persevered, and spun the packet out for

a long time, smoking half a cigarette after each meal.

They had given him a white slate with a stump of pencil tied to the

corner. At first he made no use of it. Even when he was awake he was

completely torpid. Often he would lie from one meal to the next almost

without stirring, sometimes asleep, sometimes waking into vague reveries

in which it was too much trouble to open his eyes. He had long grown

used to sleeping with a strong light on his face. It seemed to make no

difference, except that one's dreams were more coherent. He dreamed a

great deal all through this time, and they were always happy dreams. He

was in the Golden Country, or he was sitting among enormous glorious,

sunlit ruins, with his mother, with Julia, with O'Brien--not doing

anything, merely sitting in the sun, talking of peaceful things. Such

thoughts as he had when he was awake were mostly about his dreams. He

seemed to have lost the power of intellectual effort, now that the

stimulus of pain had been removed. He was not bored, he had no desire

for conversation or distraction. Merely to be alone, not to be beaten

or questioned, to have enough to eat, and to be clean all over, was

completely satisfying.

By degrees he came to spend less time in sleep, but he still felt no

impulse to get off the bed. All he cared for was to lie quiet and feel the

strength gathering in his body. He would finger himself here and there,

trying to make sure that it was not an illusion that his muscles were

growing rounder and his skin tauter. Finally it was established beyond a

doubt that he was growing fatter; his thighs were now definitely thicker

than his knees. After that, reluctantly at first, he began exercising

himself regularly. In a little while he could walk three kilometres,

measured by pacing the cell, and his bowed shoulders were growing

straighter. He attempted more elaborate exercises, and was astonished and

humiliated to find what things he could not do. He could not move out of a

walk, he could not hold his stool out at arm's length, he could not stand

on one leg without falling over. He squatted down on his heels, and found

that with agonizing pains in thigh and calf he could just lift himself to

a standing position. He lay flat on his belly and tried to lift his weight

by his hands. It was hopeless, he could not raise himself a centimetre.

But after a few more days--a few more mealtimes--even that feat was

accomplished. A time came when he could do it six times running. He began

to grow actually proud of his body, and to cherish an intermittent belief

that his face also was growing back to normal. Only when he chanced to put

his hand on his bald scalp did he remember the seamed, ruined face that

had looked back at him out of the mirror.

His mind grew more active. He sat down on the plank bed, his back against

the wall and the slate on his knees, and set to work deliberately at the

task of re-educating himself.

He had capitulated, that was agreed. In reality, as he saw now, he had

been ready to capitulate long before he had taken the decision. From the

moment when he was inside the Ministry of Love--and yes, even during those

minutes when he and Julia had stood helpless while the iron voice from the

telescreen told them what to do--he had grasped the frivolity, the

shallowness of his attempt to set himself up against the power of the

Party. He knew now that for seven years the Thought Police had watched him

like a beetle under a magnifying glass. There was no physical act, no word

spoken aloud, that they had not noticed, no train of thought that they had

not been able to infer. Even the speck of whitish dust on the cover of his

diary they had carefully replaced. They had played sound-tracks to him,

shown him photographs. Some of them were photographs of Julia and himself.

Yes, even... He could not fight against the Party any longer. Besides,

the Party was in the right. It must be so; how could the immortal,

collective brain be mistaken? By what external standard could you check

its judgements? Sanity was statistical. It was merely a question of

learning to think as they thought. Only----!

The pencil felt thick and awkward in his fingers. He began to write down

the thoughts that came into his head. He wrote first in large clumsy

capitals:

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

Then almost without a pause he wrote beneath it:

TWO AND TWO MAKE FIVE

But then there came a sort of check. His mind, as though shying away from

something, seemed unable to concentrate. He knew that he knew what came

next, but for the moment he could not recall it. When he did recall it,

it was only by consciously reasoning out what it must be: it did not come

of its own accord. He wrote:

GOD IS POWER

He accepted everything. The past was alterable. The past never had been

altered. Oceania was at war with Eastasia. Oceania had always been at war

with Eastasia. Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford were guilty of the crimes

they were charged with. He had never seen the photograph that disproved

their guilt. It had never existed, he had invented it. He remembered

remembering contrary things, but those were false memories, products of

self-deception. How easy it all was! Only surrender, and everything else

followed. It was like swimming against a current that swept you backwards

however hard you struggled, and then suddenly deciding to turn round and

go with the current instead of opposing it. Nothing had changed except

your own attitude: the predestined thing happened in any case. He hardly

knew why he had ever rebelled. Everything was easy, except----!

Anything could be true. The so-called laws of Nature were nonsense. The

law of gravity was nonsense. 'If I wished,' O'Brien had said, 'I could

float off this floor like a soap bubble.' Winston worked it out. 'If he

THINKS he floats off the floor, and if I simultaneously THINK I see him

do it, then the thing happens.' Suddenly, like a lump of submerged wreckage

breaking the surface of water, the thought burst into his mind: 'It doesn't

really happen. We imagine it. It is hallucination.' He pushed the thought

under instantly. The fallacy was obvious. It presupposed that somewhere

or other, outside oneself, there was a 'real' world where 'real' things

happened. But how could there be such a world? What knowledge have we of

anything, save through our own minds? All happenings are in the mind.

Whatever happens in all minds, truly happens.

He had no difficulty in disposing of the fallacy, and he was in no danger

of succumbing to it. He realized, nevertheless, that it ought never to

have occurred to him. The mind should develop a blind spot whenever a

dangerous thought presented itself. The process should be automatic,

instinctive. CRIMESTOP, they called it in Newspeak.

He set to work to exercise himself in crimestop. He presented himself with

propositions--'the Party says the earth is flat', 'the party says that

ice is heavier than water'--and trained himself in not seeing or not

understanding the arguments that contradicted them. It was not easy.

It needed great powers of reasoning and improvisation. The arithmetical

problems raised, for instance, by such a statement as 'two and two make

five' were beyond his intellectual grasp. It needed also a sort of

athleticism of mind, an ability at one moment to make the most delicate

use of logic and at the next to be unconscious of the crudest logical

errors. Stupidity was as necessary as intelligence, and as difficult to

attain.

All the while, with one part of his mind, he wondered how soon they would

shoot him. 'Everything depends on yourself,' O'Brien had said; but he knew

that there was no conscious act by which he could bring it nearer. It

might be ten minutes hence, or ten years. They might keep him for years in

solitary confinement, they might send him to a labour-camp, they might

release him for a while, as they sometimes did. It was perfectly possible

that before he was shot the whole drama of his arrest and interrogation

would be enacted all over again. The one certain thing was that death

never came at an expected moment. The tradition--the unspoken tradition:

somehow you knew it, though you never heard it said--was that they shot

you from behind; always in the back of the head, without warning, as you

walked down a corridor from cell to cell.

One day--but 'one day' was not the right expression; just as probably it

was in the middle of the night: once--he fell into a strange, blissful

reverie. He was walking down the corridor, waiting for the bullet. He knew

that it was coming in another moment. Everything was settled, smoothed

out, reconciled. There were no more doubts, no more arguments, no more

pain, no more fear. His body was healthy and strong. He walked easily,

with a joy of movement and with a feeling of walking in sunlight. He was

not any longer in the narrow white corridors in the Ministry of Love, he

was in the enormous sunlit passage, a kilometre wide, down which he had

seemed to walk in the delirium induced by drugs. He was in the Golden

Country, following the foot-track across the old rabbit-cropped pasture.

He could feel the short springy turf under his feet and the gentle sunshine

on his face. At the edge of the field were the elm trees, faintly stirring,

and somewhere beyond that was the stream where the dace lay in the green

pools under the willows.

Suddenly he started up with a shock of horror. The sweat broke out on his

backbone. He had heard himself cry aloud:

'Julia! Julia! Julia, my love! Julia!'

For a moment he had had an overwhelming hallucination of her presence. She

had seemed to be not merely with him, but inside him. It was as though she

had got into the texture of his skin. In that moment he had loved her far

more than he had ever done when they were together and free. Also he knew

that somewhere or other she was still alive and needed his help.

He lay back on the bed and tried to compose himself. What had he done? How

many years had he added to his servitude by that moment of weakness?

In another moment he would hear the tramp of boots outside. They could not

let such an outburst go unpunished. They would know now, if they had not

known before, that he was breaking the agreement he had made with them.

He obeyed the Party, but he still hated the Party. In the old days he had

hidden a heretical mind beneath an appearance of conformity. Now he had

retreated a step further: in the mind he had surrendered, but he had hoped

to keep the inner heart inviolate. He knew that he was in the wrong, but

he preferred to be in the wrong. They would understand that--O'Brien would

understand it. It was all confessed in that single foolish cry.

He would have to start all over again. It might take years. He ran a hand

over his face, trying to familiarize himself with the new shape. There

were deep furrows in the cheeks, the cheekbones felt sharp, the nose

flattened. Besides, since last seeing himself in the glass he had been

given a complete new set of teeth. It was not easy to preserve

inscrutability when you did not know what your face looked like. In any

case, mere control of the features was not enough. For the first time he

perceived that if you want to keep a secret you must also hide it from

yourself. You must know all the while that it is there, but until it is

needed you must never let it emerge into your consciousness in any shape

that could be given a name. From now onwards he must not only think right;

he must feel right, dream right. And all the while he must keep his hatred

locked up inside him like a ball of matter which was part of himself and

yet unconnected with the rest of him, a kind of cyst.

One day they would decide to shoot him. You could not tell when it would

happen, but a few seconds beforehand it should be possible to guess. It

was always from behind, walking down a corridor. Ten seconds would be

enough. In that time the world inside him could turn over. And then

suddenly, without a word uttered, without a check in his step, without the

changing of a line in his face--suddenly the camouflage would be down and

bang! would go the batteries of his hatred. Hatred would fill him like an

enormous roaring flame. And almost in the same instant bang! would go the

bullet, too late, or too early. They would have blown his brain to pieces

before they could reclaim it. The heretical thought would be unpunished,

unrepented, out of their reach for ever. They would have blown a hole in

their own perfection. To die hating them, that was freedom.

He shut his eyes. It was more difficult than accepting an intellectual

discipline. It was a question of degrading himself, mutilating himself. He

had got to plunge into the filthiest of filth. What was the most horrible,

sickening thing of all? He thought of Big Brother. The enormous face

(because of constantly seeing it on posters he always thought of it as

being a metre wide), with its heavy black moustache and the eyes that

followed you to and fro, seemed to float into his mind of its own accord.

What were his true feelings towards Big Brother?

There was a heavy tramp of boots in the passage. The steel door swung open

with a clang. O'Brien walked into the cell. Behind him were the waxen-faced

officer and the black-uniformed guards.

'Get up,' said O'Brien. 'Come here.'

Winston stood opposite him. O'Brien took Winston's shoulders between his

strong hands and looked at him closely.

'You have had thoughts of deceiving me,' he said. 'That was stupid.

Stand up straighter. Look me in the face.'

He paused, and went on in a gentler tone:

'You are improving. Intellectually there is very little wrong with you.

It is only emotionally that you have failed to make progress. Tell me,

Winston--and remember, no lies: you know that I am always able to detect

a lie--tell me, what are your true feelings towards Big Brother?'

'I hate him.'

'You hate him. Good. Then the time has come for you to take the last step.

You must love Big Brother. It is not enough to obey him: you must love

him.'

He released Winston with a little push towards the guards.

'Room 101,' he said.

Chapter 5

At each stage of his imprisonment he had known, or seemed to know,

whereabouts he was in the windowless building. Possibly there were slight

differences in the air pressure. The cells where the guards had beaten him

were below ground level. The room where he had been interrogated by

O'Brien was high up near the roof. This place was many metres underground,

as deep down as it was possible to go.

It was bigger than most of the cells he had been in. But he hardly noticed

his surroundings. All he noticed was that there were two small tables

straight in front of him, each covered with green baize. One was only a

metre or two from him, the other was further away, near the door. He was

strapped upright in a chair, so tightly that he could move nothing, not

even his head. A sort of pad gripped his head from behind, forcing him to

look straight in front of him.

For a moment he was alone, then the door opened and O'Brien came in.

'You asked me once,' said O'Brien, 'what was in Room 101. I told you that

you knew the answer already. Everyone knows it. The thing that is in

Room 101 is the worst thing in the world.'

The door opened again. A guard came in, carrying something made of wire,

a box or basket of some kind. He set it down on the further table. Because

of the position in which O'Brien was standing. Winston could not see what

the thing was.

'The worst thing in the world,' said O'Brien, 'varies from individual to

individual. It may be burial alive, or death by fire, or by drowning, or

by impalement, or fifty other deaths. There are cases where it is some

quite trivial thing, not even fatal.'

He had moved a little to one side, so that Winston had a better view of

the thing on the table. It was an oblong wire cage with a handle on top

for carrying it by. Fixed to the front of it was something that looked

like a fencing mask, with the concave side outwards. Although it was three

or four metres away from him, he could see that the cage was divided

lengthways into two compartments, and that there was some kind of creature

in each. They were rats.

'In your case,' said O'Brien, 'the worst thing in the world happens to be

rats.'

A sort of premonitory tremor, a fear of he was not certain what, had

passed through Winston as soon as he caught his first glimpse of the cage.

But at this moment the meaning of the mask-like attachment in front of it

suddenly sank into him. His bowels seemed to turn to water.

'You can't do that!' he cried out in a high cracked voice. 'You couldn't,

you couldn't! It's impossible.'

'Do you remember,' said O'Brien, 'the moment of panic that used to occur

in your dreams? There was a wall of blackness in front of you, and a

roaring sound in your ears. There was something terrible on the other side

of the wall. You knew that you knew what it was, but you dared not drag it

into the open. It was the rats that were on the other side of the wall.'

'O'Brien!' said Winston, making an effort to control his voice. 'You know

this is not necessary. What is it that you want me to do?'

O'Brien made no direct answer. When he spoke it was in the schoolmasterish

manner that he sometimes affected. He looked thoughtfully into the

distance, as though he were addressing an audience somewhere behind

Winston's back.

'By itself,' he said, 'pain is not always enough. There are occasions when

a human being will stand out against pain, even to the point of death.

But for everyone there is something unendurable--something that cannot be

contemplated. Courage and cowardice are not involved. If you are falling

from a height it is not cowardly to clutch at a rope. If you have come up

from deep water it is not cowardly to fill your lungs with air. It is

merely an instinct which cannot be destroyed. It is the same with the

rats. For you, they are unendurable. They are a form of pressure that you

cannot withstand, even if you wished to. You will do what is required of

you.'

'But what is it, what is it? How can I do it if I don't know what it is?'

O'Brien picked up the cage and brought it across to the nearer table.

He set it down carefully on the baize cloth. Winston could hear the blood

singing in his ears. He had the feeling of sitting in utter loneliness.

He was in the middle of a great empty plain, a flat desert drenched with

sunlight, across which all sounds came to him out of immense distances.

Yet the cage with the rats was not two metres away from him. They were

enormous rats. They were at the age when a rat's muzzle grows blunt and

fierce and his fur brown instead of grey.

'The rat,' said O'Brien, still addressing his invisible audience,

'although a rodent, is carnivorous. You are aware of that. You will have

heard of the things that happen in the poor quarters of this town. In some

streets a woman dare not leave her baby alone in the house, even for five

minutes. The rats are certain to attack it. Within quite a small time they

will strip it to the bones. They also attack sick or dying people. They

show astonishing intelligence in knowing when a human being is helpless.'

There was an outburst of squeals from the cage. It seemed to reach Winston

from far away. The rats were fighting; they were trying to get at each

other through the partition. He heard also a deep groan of despair.

That, too, seemed to come from outside himself.

O'Brien picked up the cage, and, as he did so, pressed something in it.

There was a sharp click. Winston made a frantic effort to tear himself

loose from the chair. It was hopeless; every part of him, even his head,

was held immovably. O'Brien moved the cage nearer. It was less than a

metre from Winston's face.

'I have pressed the first lever,' said O'Brien. 'You understand the

construction of this cage. The mask will fit over your head, leaving no

exit. When I press this other lever, the door of the cage will slide up.

These starving brutes will shoot out of it like bullets. Have you ever

seen a rat leap through the air? They will leap on to your face and bore

straight into it. Sometimes they attack the eyes first. Sometimes they

burrow through the cheeks and devour the tongue.'

The cage was nearer; it was closing in. Winston heard a succession of

shrill cries which appeared to be occurring in the air above his head. But

he fought furiously against his panic. To think, to think, even with a

split second left--to think was the only hope. Suddenly the foul musty

odour of the brutes struck his nostrils. There was a violent convulsion of

nausea inside him, and he almost lost consciousness. Everything had gone

black. For an instant he was insane, a screaming animal. Yet he came out

of the blackness clutching an idea. There was one and only one way to save

himself. He must interpose another human being, the BODY of another human

being, between himself and the rats.

The circle of the mask was large enough now to shut out the vision of

anything else. The wire door was a couple of hand-spans from his face. The

rats knew what was coming now. One of them was leaping up and down, the

other, an old scaly grandfather of the sewers, stood up, with his pink

hands against the bars, and fiercely sniffed the air. Winston could see

the whiskers and the yellow teeth. Again the black panic took hold of him.

He was blind, helpless, mindless.

'It was a common punishment in Imperial China,' said O'Brien as

didactically as ever.

The mask was closing on his face. The wire brushed his cheek. And then--no,

it was not relief, only hope, a tiny fragment of hope. Too late, perhaps

too late. But he had suddenly understood that in the whole world there was

just ONE person to whom he could transfer his punishment--ONE body that he

could thrust between himself and the rats. And he was shouting frantically,

over and over.

'Do it to Julia! Do it to Julia! Not me! Julia! I don't care what you do

to her. Tear her face off, strip her to the bones. Not me! Julia! Not me!'

He was falling backwards, into enormous depths, away from the rats. He was

still strapped in the chair, but he had fallen through the floor, through

the walls of the building, through the earth, through the oceans, through

the atmosphere, into outer space, into the gulfs between the stars--always

away, away, away from the rats. He was light years distant, but O'Brien

was still standing at his side. There was still the cold touch of wire

against his cheek. But through the darkness that enveloped him he heard

another metallic click, and knew that the cage door had clicked shut and

not open.

Chapter 6

The Chestnut Tree was almost empty. A ray of sunlight slanting through a

window fell on dusty table-tops. It was the lonely hour of fifteen. A

tinny music trickled from the telescreens.

Winston sat in his usual corner, gazing into an empty glass. Now and again

he glanced up at a vast face which eyed him from the opposite wall.

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said. Unbidden, a waiter came and

filled his glass up with Victory Gin, shaking into it a few drops from

another bottle with a quill through the cork. It was saccharine flavoured

with cloves, the speciality of the cafe.

Winston was listening to the telescreen. At present only music was coming

out of it, but there was a possibility that at any moment there might be

a special bulletin from the Ministry of Peace. The news from the African

front was disquieting in the extreme. On and off he had been worrying

about it all day. A Eurasian army (Oceania was at war with Eurasia:

Oceania had always been at war with Eurasia) was moving southward at

terrifying speed. The mid-day bulletin had not mentioned any definite

area, but it was probable that already the mouth of the Congo was a

battlefield. Brazzaville and Leopoldville were in danger. One did not have

to look at the map to see what it meant. It was not merely a question of

losing Central Africa: for the first time in the whole war, the territory

of Oceania itself was menaced.

A violent emotion, not fear exactly but a sort of undifferentiated

excitement, flared up in him, then faded again. He stopped thinking about

the war. In these days he could never fix his mind on any one subject for

more than a few moments at a time. He picked up his glass and drained it

at a gulp. As always, the gin made him shudder and even retch slightly.

The stuff was horrible. The cloves and saccharine, themselves disgusting

enough in their sickly way, could not disguise the flat oily smell; and

what was worst of all was that the smell of gin, which dwelt with him

night and day, was inextricably mixed up in his mind with the smell of

those----

He never named them, even in his thoughts, and so far as it was possible

he never visualized them. They were something that he was half-aware of,

hovering close to his face, a smell that clung to his nostrils. As the gin

rose in him he belched through purple lips. He had grown fatter since they

released him, and had regained his old colour--indeed, more than regained

it. His features had thickened, the skin on nose and cheekbones was

coarsely red, even the bald scalp was too deep a pink. A waiter, again

unbidden, brought the chessboard and the current issue of 'The Times',

with the page turned down at the chess problem. Then, seeing that Winston's

glass was empty, he brought the gin bottle and filled it. There was no

need to give orders. They knew his habits. The chessboard was always

waiting for him, his corner table was always reserved; even when the place

was full he had it to himself, since nobody cared to be seen sitting too

close to him. He never even bothered to count his drinks. At irregular

intervals they presented him with a dirty slip of paper which they said

was the bill, but he had the impression that they always undercharged him.

It would have made no difference if it had been the other way about. He

had always plenty of money nowadays. He even had a job, a sinecure, more

highly-paid than his old job had been.

The music from the telescreen stopped and a voice took over. Winston raised

his head to listen. No bulletins from the front, however. It was merely a

brief announcement from the Ministry of Plenty. In the preceding quarter,

it appeared, the Tenth Three-Year Plan's quota for bootlaces had been

overfulfilled by 98 per cent.

He examined the chess problem and set out the pieces. It was a tricky

ending, involving a couple of knights. 'White to play and mate in two

moves.' Winston looked up at the portrait of Big Brother. White always

mates, he thought with a sort of cloudy mysticism. Always, without

exception, it is so arranged. In no chess problem since the beginning of

the world has black ever won. Did it not symbolize the eternal, unvarying

triumph of Good over Evil? The huge face gazed back at him, full of calm

power. White always mates.

The voice from the telescreen paused and added in a different and much

graver tone: 'You are warned to stand by for an important announcement at

fifteen-thirty. Fifteen-thirty! This is news of the highest importance.

Take care not to miss it. Fifteen-thirty!' The tinkling music struck up

again.

Winston's heart stirred. That was the bulletin from the front; instinct

told him that it was bad news that was coming. All day, with little spurts

of excitement, the thought of a smashing defeat in Africa had been in and

out of his mind. He seemed actually to see the Eurasian army swarming

across the never-broken frontier and pouring down into the tip of Africa

like a column of ants. Why had it not been possible to outflank them in

some way? The outline of the West African coast stood out vividly in his

mind. He picked up the white knight and moved it across the board. THERE

was the proper spot. Even while he saw the black horde racing southward he

saw another force, mysteriously assembled, suddenly planted in their rear,

cutting their communications by land and sea. He felt that by willing it he

was bringing that other force into existence. But it was necessary to act

quickly. If they could get control of the whole of Africa, if they had

airfields and submarine bases at the Cape, it would cut Oceania in two. It

might mean anything: defeat, breakdown, the redivision of the world, the

destruction of the Party! He drew a deep breath. An extraordinary medley

of feeling--but it was not a medley, exactly; rather it was successive

layers of feeling, in which one could not say which layer was

undermost--struggled inside him.

The spasm passed. He put the white knight back in its place, but for the

moment he could not settle down to serious study of the chess problem.

His thoughts wandered again. Almost unconsciously he traced with his

finger in the dust on the table:

2+2=5

'They can't get inside you,' she had said. But they could get inside you.

'What happens to you here is FOR EVER,' O'Brien had said. That was a true

word. There were things, your own acts, from which you could never recover.

Something was killed in your breast: burnt out, cauterized out.

He had seen her; he had even spoken to her. There was no danger in it. He

knew as though instinctively that they now took almost no interest in his

doings. He could have arranged to meet her a second time if either of them

had wanted to. Actually it was by chance that they had met. It was in the

Park, on a vile, biting day in March, when the earth was like iron and

all the grass seemed dead and there was not a bud anywhere except a few

crocuses which had pushed themselves up to be dismembered by the wind. He

was hurrying along with frozen hands and watering eyes when he saw her not

ten metres away from him. It struck him at once that she had changed in

some ill-defined way. They almost passed one another without a sign, then

he turned and followed her, not very eagerly. He knew that there was no

danger, nobody would take any interest in him. She did not speak. She

walked obliquely away across the grass as though trying to get rid of him,

then seemed to resign herself to having him at her side. Presently they

were in among a clump of ragged leafless shrubs, useless either for

concealment or as protection from the wind. They halted. It was vilely

cold. The wind whistled through the twigs and fretted the occasional,

dirty-looking crocuses. He put his arm round her waist.

There was no telescreen, but there must be hidden microphones: besides,

they could be seen. It did not matter, nothing mattered. They could have

lain down on the ground and done THAT if they had wanted to. His flesh

froze with horror at the thought of it. She made no response whatever to

the clasp of his arm; she did not even try to disengage herself. He knew

now what had changed in her. Her face was sallower, and there was a long

scar, partly hidden by the hair, across her forehead and temple; but that

was not the change. It was that her waist had grown thicker, and, in a

surprising way, had stiffened. He remembered how once, after the explosion

of a rocket bomb, he had helped to drag a corpse out of some ruins, and

had been astonished not only by the incredible weight of the thing, but by

its rigidity and awkwardness to handle, which made it seem more like stone

than flesh. Her body felt like that. It occurred to him that the texture

of her skin would be quite different from what it had once been.

He did not attempt to kiss her, nor did they speak. As they walked back

across the grass, she looked directly at him for the first time. It

was only a momentary glance, full of contempt and dislike. He wondered

whether it was a dislike that came purely out of the past or whether it

was inspired also by his bloated face and the water that the wind kept

squeezing from his eyes. They sat down on two iron chairs, side by side

but not too close together. He saw that she was about to speak. She moved

her clumsy shoe a few centimetres and deliberately crushed a twig. Her

feet seemed to have grown broader, he noticed.

'I betrayed you,' she said baldly.

'I betrayed you,' he said.

She gave him another quick look of dislike.

'Sometimes,' she said, 'they threaten you with something something you

can't stand up to, can't even think about. And then you say, "Don't do it

to me, do it to somebody else, do it to so-and-so." And perhaps you might

pretend, afterwards, that it was only a trick and that you just said it to

make them stop and didn't really mean it. But that isn't true. At the time

when it happens you do mean it. You think there's no other way of saving

yourself, and you're quite ready to save yourself that way. You WANT it to

happen to the other person. You don't give a damn what they suffer. All

you care about is yourself.'

'All you care about is yourself,' he echoed.

'And after that, you don't feel the same towards the other person any

longer.'

'No,' he said, 'you don't feel the same.'

There did not seem to be anything more to say. The wind plastered their

thin overalls against their bodies. Almost at once it became embarrassing

to sit there in silence: besides, it was too cold to keep still. She said

something about catching her Tube and stood up to go.

'We must meet again,' he said.

'Yes,' she said, 'we must meet again.'

He followed irresolutely for a little distance, half a pace behind her.

They did not speak again. She did not actually try to shake him off, but

walked at just such a speed as to prevent his keeping abreast of her.

He had made up his mind that he would accompany her as far as the Tube

station, but suddenly this process of trailing along in the cold seemed

pointless and unbearable. He was overwhelmed by a desire not so much to

get away from Julia as to get back to the Chestnut Tree Cafe, which had

never seemed so attractive as at this moment. He had a nostalgic vision

of his corner table, with the newspaper and the chessboard and the

ever-flowing gin. Above all, it would be warm in there. The next moment,

not altogether by accident, he allowed himself to become separated from

her by a small knot of people. He made a half-hearted attempt to catch up,

then slowed down, turned, and made off in the opposite direction. When he

had gone fifty metres he looked back. The street was not crowded, but

already he could not distinguish her. Any one of a dozen hurrying figures

might have been hers. Perhaps her thickened, stiffened body was no longer

recognizable from behind.

'At the time when it happens,' she had said, 'you do mean it.' He had

meant it. He had not merely said it, he had wished it. He had wished that

she and not he should be delivered over to the----

Something changed in the music that trickled from the telescreen. A

cracked and jeering note, a yellow note, came into it. And then--perhaps

it was not happening, perhaps it was only a memory taking on the semblance

of sound--a voice was singing:

'Under the spreading chestnut tree

I sold you and you sold me----'

The tears welled up in his eyes. A passing waiter noticed that his glass

was empty and came back with the gin bottle.

He took up his glass and sniffed at it. The stuff grew not less but more

horrible with every mouthful he drank. But it had become the element he

swam in. It was his life, his death, and his resurrection. It was gin that

sank him into stupor every night, and gin that revived him every morning.

When he woke, seldom before eleven hundred, with gummed-up eyelids and

fiery mouth and a back that seemed to be broken, it would have been

impossible even to rise from the horizontal if it had not been for the

bottle and teacup placed beside the bed overnight. Through the midday

hours he sat with glazed face, the bottle handy, listening to the

telescreen. From fifteen to closing-time he was a fixture in the Chestnut

Tree. No one cared what he did any longer, no whistle woke him, no

telescreen admonished him. Occasionally, perhaps twice a week, he went

to a dusty, forgotten-looking office in the Ministry of Truth and did

a little work, or what was called work. He had been appointed to a

sub-committee of a sub-committee which had sprouted from one of the

innumerable committees dealing with minor difficulties that arose in the

compilation of the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak Dictionary. They were

engaged in producing something called an Interim Report, but what it was

that they were reporting on he had never definitely found out. It was

something to do with the question of whether commas should be placed

inside brackets, or outside. There were four others on the committee, all

of them persons similar to himself. There were days when they assembled

and then promptly dispersed again, frankly admitting to one another that

there was not really anything to be done. But there were other days when

they settled down to their work almost eagerly, making a tremendous show

of entering up their minutes and drafting long memoranda which were never

finished--when the argument as to what they were supposedly arguing about

grew extraordinarily involved and abstruse, with subtle haggling over

definitions, enormous digressions, quarrels--threats, even, to appeal to

higher authority. And then suddenly the life would go out of them and

they would sit round the table looking at one another with extinct eyes,

like ghosts fading at cock-crow.

The telescreen was silent for a moment. Winston raised his head again. The

bulletin! But no, they were merely changing the music. He had the map of

Africa behind his eyelids. The movement of the armies was a diagram: a

black arrow tearing vertically southward, and a white arrow horizontally

eastward, across the tail of the first. As though for reassurance he

looked up at the imperturbable face in the portrait. Was it conceivable

that the second arrow did not even exist?

His interest flagged again. He drank another mouthful of gin, picked up

the white knight and made a tentative move. Check. But it was evidently

not the right move, because----

Uncalled, a memory floated into his mind. He saw a candle-lit room with a

vast white-counterpaned bed, and himself, a boy of nine or ten, sitting on

the floor, shaking a dice-box, and laughing excitedly. His mother was

sitting opposite him and also laughing.

It must have been about a month before she disappeared. It was a moment of

reconciliation, when the nagging hunger in his belly was forgotten and his

earlier affection for her had temporarily revived. He remembered the day

well, a pelting, drenching day when the water streamed down the window-pane

and the light indoors was too dull to read by. The boredom of the two

children in the dark, cramped bedroom became unbearable. Winston whined

and grizzled, made futile demands for food, fretted about the room pulling

everything out of place and kicking the wainscoting until the neighbours

banged on the wall, while the younger child wailed intermittently. In the

end his mother said, 'Now be good, and I'll buy you a toy. A lovely

toy--you'll love it'; and then she had gone out in the rain, to a little

general shop which was still sporadically open nearby, and came back with

a cardboard box containing an outfit of Snakes and Ladders. He could still

remember the smell of the damp cardboard. It was a miserable outfit. The

board was cracked and the tiny wooden dice were so ill-cut that they

would hardly lie on their sides. Winston looked at the thing sulkily and

without interest. But then his mother lit a piece of candle and they sat

down on the floor to play. Soon he was wildly excited and shouting with

laughter as the tiddly-winks climbed hopefully up the ladders and then

came slithering down the snakes again, almost to the starting-point. They

played eight games, winning four each. His tiny sister, too young to

understand what the game was about, had sat propped up against a bolster,

laughing because the others were laughing. For a whole afternoon they had

all been happy together, as in his earlier childhood.

He pushed the picture out of his mind. It was a false memory. He was

troubled by false memories occasionally. They did not matter so long as

one knew them for what they were. Some things had happened, others had not

happened. He turned back to the chessboard and picked up the white knight

again. Almost in the same instant it dropped on to the board with a

clatter. He had started as though a pin had run into him.

A shrill trumpet-call had pierced the air. It was the bulletin! Victory!

It always meant victory when a trumpet-call preceded the news. A sort of

electric drill ran through the cafe. Even the waiters had started and

pricked up their ears.

The trumpet-call had let loose an enormous volume of noise. Already an

excited voice was gabbling from the telescreen, but even as it started

it was almost drowned by a roar of cheering from outside. The news had

run round the streets like magic. He could hear just enough of what was

issuing from the telescreen to realize that it had all happened, as he had

foreseen; a vast seaborne armada had secretly assembled a sudden blow in

the enemy's rear, the white arrow tearing across the tail of the black.

Fragments of triumphant phrases pushed themselves through the din: 'Vast

strategic manoeuvre--perfect co-ordination--utter rout--half a million

prisoners--complete demoralization--control of the whole of Africa--bring

the war within measurable distance of its end--victory--greatest victory

in human history--victory, victory, victory!'

Under the table Winston's feet made convulsive movements. He had not

stirred from his seat, but in his mind he was running, swiftly running,

he was with the crowds outside, cheering himself deaf. He looked up again

at the portrait of Big Brother. The colossus that bestrode the world!

The rock against which the hordes of Asia dashed themselves in vain! He

thought how ten minutes ago--yes, only ten minutes--there had still been

equivocation in his heart as he wondered whether the news from the front

would be of victory or defeat. Ah, it was more than a Eurasian army that

had perished! Much had changed in him since that first day in the Ministry

of Love, but the final, indispensable, healing change had never happened,

until this moment.

The voice from the telescreen was still pouring forth its tale of prisoners

and booty and slaughter, but the shouting outside had died down a little.

The waiters were turning back to their work. One of them approached with

the gin bottle. Winston, sitting in a blissful dream, paid no attention

as his glass was filled up. He was not running or cheering any longer. He

was back in the Ministry of Love, with everything forgiven, his soul white

as snow. He was in the public dock, confessing everything, implicating

everybody. He was walking down the white-tiled corridor, with the feeling

of walking in sunlight, and an armed guard at his back. The long-hoped-for

bullet was entering his brain.

He gazed up at the enormous face. Forty years it had taken him to learn

what kind of smile was hidden beneath the dark moustache. O cruel, needless

misunderstanding! O stubborn, self-willed exile from the loving breast!

Two gin-scented tears trickled down the sides of his nose. But it was all

right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won

the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.

THE END

APPENDIX.

The Principles of Newspeak

Newspeak was the official language of Oceania and had been devised to meet

the ideological needs of Ingsoc, or English Socialism. In the year 1984

there was not as yet anyone who used Newspeak as his sole means of

communication, either in speech or writing. The leading articles in

'The Times' were written in it, but this was a TOUR DE FORCE which could

only be carried out by a specialist. It was expected that Newspeak would

have finally superseded Oldspeak (or Standard English, as we should

call it) by about the year 2050. Meanwhile it gained ground steadily, all

Party members tending to use Newspeak words and grammatical constructions

more and more in their everyday speech. The version in use in 1984, and

embodied in the Ninth and Tenth Editions of the Newspeak Dictionary, was

a provisional one, and contained many superfluous words and archaic

formations which were due to be suppressed later. It is with the final,

perfected version, as embodied in the Eleventh Edition of the Dictionary,

that we are concerned here.

The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression

for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc,

but to make all other modes of thought impossible. It was intended that

when Newspeak had been adopted once and for all and Oldspeak forgotten,

a heretical thought--that is, a thought diverging from the principles of

Ingsoc--should be literally unthinkable, at least so far as thought is

dependent on words. Its vocabulary was so constructed as to give exact and

often very subtle expression to every meaning that a Party member could

properly wish to express, while excluding all other meanings and also the

possibility of arriving at them by indirect methods. This was done partly

by the invention of new words, but chiefly by eliminating undesirable

words and by stripping such words as remained of unorthodox meanings, and

so far as possible of all secondary meanings whatever. To give a single

example. The word FREE still existed in Newspeak, but it could only be

used in such statements as 'This dog is free from lice' or 'This field is

free from weeds'. It could not be used in its old sense of 'politically

free' or 'intellectually free' since political and intellectual freedom no

longer existed even as concepts, and were therefore of necessity nameless.

Quite apart from the suppression of definitely heretical words, reduction

of vocabulary was regarded as an end in itself, and no word that could be

dispensed with was allowed to survive. Newspeak was designed not to extend

but to DIMINISH the range of thought, and this purpose was indirectly

assisted by cutting the choice of words down to a minimum.

Newspeak was founded on the English language as we now know it, though

many Newspeak sentences, even when not containing newly-created words,

would be barely intelligible to an English-speaker of our own day. Newspeak

words were divided into three distinct classes, known as the A vocabulary,

the B vocabulary (also called compound words), and the C vocabulary.

It will be simpler to discuss each class separately, but the grammatical

peculiarities of the language can be dealt with in the section devoted to

the A vocabulary, since the same rules held good for all three categories.

THE A VOCABULARY. The A vocabulary consisted of the words needed for the

business of everyday life--for such things as eating, drinking, working,

putting on one's clothes, going up and down stairs, riding in vehicles,

gardening, cooking, and the like. It was composed almost entirely of words

that we already possess words like HIT, RUN, DOG, TREE, SUGAR, HOUSE,

FIELD--but in comparison with the present-day English vocabulary their

number was extremely small, while their meanings were far more rigidly

defined. All ambiguities and shades of meaning had been purged out of

them. So far as it could be achieved, a Newspeak word of this class was

simply a staccato sound expressing ONE clearly understood concept. It

would have been quite impossible to use the A vocabulary for literary

purposes or for political or philosophical discussion. It was intended

only to express simple, purposive thoughts, usually involving concrete

objects or physical actions.

The grammar of Newspeak had two outstanding peculiarities. The first of

these was an almost complete interchangeability between different parts of

speech. Any word in the language (in principle this applied even to very

abstract words such as IF or WHEN) could be used either as verb, noun,

adjective, or adverb. Between the verb and the noun form, when they were

of the same root, there was never any variation, this rule of itself

involving the destruction of many archaic forms. The word THOUGHT, for

example, did not exist in Newspeak. Its place was taken by THINK, which

did duty for both noun and verb. No etymological principle was followed

here: in some cases it was the original noun that was chosen for retention,

in other cases the verb. Even where a noun and verb of kindred meaning

were not etymologically connected, one or other of them was frequently

suppressed. There was, for example, no such word as CUT, its meaning being

sufficiently covered by the noun-verb KNIFE. Adjectives were formed by

adding the suffix -FUL to the noun-verb, and adverbs by adding -WISE. Thus

for example, SPEEDFUL meant 'rapid' and SPEEDWISE meant 'quickly'. Certain

of our present-day adjectives, such as GOOD, STRONG, BIG, BLACK, SOFT,

were retained, but their total number was very small. There was little

need for them, since almost any adjectival meaning could be arrived at by

adding -FUL to a noun-verb. None of the now-existing adverbs was retained,

except for a very few already ending in -WISE: the -WISE termination was

invariable. The word WELL, for example, was replaced by GOODWISE.

In addition, any word--this again applied in principle to every word in

the language--could be negatived by adding the affix UN-, or could be

strengthened by the affix PLUS-, or, for still greater emphasis,

DOUBLEPLUS-. Thus, for example, UNCOLD meant 'warm', while PLUSCOLD and

DOUBLEPLUSCOLD meant, respectively, 'very cold' and 'superlatively cold'.

It was also possible, as in present-day English, to modify the meaning of

almost any word by prepositional affixes such as ANTE-, POST-, UP-, DOWN-,

etc. By such methods it was found possible to bring about an enormous

diminution of vocabulary. Given, for instance, the word GOOD, there was no

need for such a word as BAD, since the required meaning was equally

well--indeed, better--expressed by UNGOOD. All that was necessary, in any

case where two words formed a natural pair of opposites, was to decide

which of them to suppress. DARK, for example, could be replaced by UNLIGHT,

or LIGHT by UNDARK, according to preference.

The second distinguishing mark of Newspeak grammar was its regularity.

Subject to a few exceptions which are mentioned below all inflexions

followed the same rules. Thus, in all verbs the preterite and the past

participle were the same and ended in -ED. The preterite of STEAL was

STEALED, the preterite of THINK was THINKED, and so on throughout the

language, all such forms as SWAM, GAVE, BROUGHT, SPOKE, TAKEN, etc., being

abolished. All plurals were made by adding -S or -ES as the case might be.

The plurals OF MAN, OX, LIFE, were MANS, OXES, LIFES. Comparison of

adjectives was invariably made by adding -ER, -EST (GOOD, GOODER, GOODEST),

irregular forms and the MORE, MOST formation being suppressed.

The only classes of words that were still allowed to inflect irregularly

were the pronouns, the relatives, the demonstrative adjectives, and the

auxiliary verbs. All of these followed their ancient usage, except that

WHOM had been scrapped as unnecessary, and the SHALL, SHOULD tenses had

been dropped, all their uses being covered by WILL and WOULD. There were

also certain irregularities in word-formation arising out of the need for

rapid and easy speech. A word which was difficult to utter, or was liable

to be incorrectly heard, was held to be ipso facto a bad word; occasionally

therefore, for the sake of euphony, extra letters were inserted into a word

or an archaic formation was retained. But this need made itself felt

chiefly in connexion with the B vocabulary. WHY so great an importance was

attached to ease of pronunciation will be made clear later in this essay.

THE B VOCABULARY. The B vocabulary consisted of words which had been

deliberately constructed for political purposes: words, that is to say,

which not only had in every case a political implication, but were intended

to impose a desirable mental attitude upon the person using them. Without

a full understanding of the principles of Ingsoc it was difficult to use

these words correctly. In some cases they could be translated into

Oldspeak, or even into words taken from the A vocabulary, but this usually

demanded a long paraphrase and always involved the loss of certain

overtones. The B words were a sort of verbal shorthand, often packing

whole ranges of ideas into a few syllables, and at the same time more

accurate and forcible than ordinary language.

The B words were in all cases compound words. [Compound words such as

SPEAKWRITE, were of course to be found in the A vocabulary, but these were

merely convenient abbreviations and had no special ideological colour.]

They consisted of two or more words, or portions of words, welded together

in an easily pronounceable form. The resulting amalgam was always a

noun-verb, and inflected according to the ordinary rules. To take a single

example: the word GOODTHINK, meaning, very roughly, 'orthodoxy', or, if

one chose to regard it as a verb, 'to think in an orthodox manner'. This

inflected as follows: noun-verb, GOODTHINK; past tense and past participle,

GOODTHINKED; present participle, GOOD-THINKING; adjective, GOODTHINKFUL;

adverb, GOODTHINKWISE; verbal noun, GOODTHINKER.

The B words were not constructed on any etymological plan. The words of

which they were made up could be any parts of speech, and could be placed

in any order and mutilated in any way which made them easy to pronounce

while indicating their derivation. In the word CRIMETHINK (thoughtcrime),

for instance, the THINK came second, whereas in THINKPOL (Thought Police)

it came first, and in the latter word POLICE had lost its second syllable.

Because of the great difficulty in securing euphony, irregular formations

were commoner in the B vocabulary than in the A vocabulary. For example,

the adjective forms of MINITRUE, MINIPAX, and MINILUV were, respectively,

MINITRUTHFUL, MINIPEACEFUL, and MINILOVELY, simply because -TRUEFUL,

-PAXFUL, and -LOVEFUL were slightly awkward to pronounce. In principle,

however, all B words could inflect, and all inflected in exactly the

same way.

Some of the B words had highly subtilized meanings, barely intelligible to

anyone who had not mastered the language as a whole. Consider, for example,

such a typical sentence from a 'Times' leading article as OLDTHINKERS

UNBELLYFEEL INGSOC. The shortest rendering that one could make of this

in Oldspeak would be: 'Those whose ideas were formed before the Revolution

cannot have a full emotional understanding of the principles of English

Socialism.' But this is not an adequate translation. To begin with, in

order to grasp the full meaning of the Newspeak sentence quoted above,

one would have to have a clear idea of what is meant by INGSOC. And in

addition, only a person thoroughly grounded in Ingsoc could appreciate

the full force of the word BELLYFEEL, which implied a blind, enthusiastic

acceptance difficult to imagine today; or of the word OLDTHINK, which was

inextricably mixed up with the idea of wickedness and decadence. But the

special function of certain Newspeak words, of which OLDTHINK was one,

was not so much to express meanings as to destroy them. These words,

necessarily few in number, had had their meanings extended until they

contained within themselves whole batteries of words which, as they were

sufficiently covered by a single comprehensive term, could now be scrapped

and forgotten. The greatest difficulty facing the compilers of the Newspeak

Dictionary was not to invent new words, but, having invented them, to make

sure what they meant: to make sure, that is to say, what ranges of words

they cancelled by their existence.

As we have already seen in the case of the word FREE, words which had

once borne a heretical meaning were sometimes retained for the sake of

convenience, but only with the undesirable meanings purged out of them.

Countless other words such as HONOUR, JUSTICE, MORALITY, INTERNATIONALISM,

DEMOCRACY, SCIENCE, and RELIGION had simply ceased to exist. A few blanket

words covered them, and, in covering them, abolished them. All words

grouping themselves round the concepts of liberty and equality, for

instance, were contained in the single word CRIMETHINK, while all words

grouping themselves round the concepts of objectivity and rationalism

were contained in the single word OLDTHINK. Greater precision would have

been dangerous. What was required in a Party member was an outlook similar

to that of the ancient Hebrew who knew, without knowing much else, that

all nations other than his own worshipped 'false gods'. He did not need to

know that these gods were called Baal, Osiris, Moloch, Ashtaroth, and the

like: probably the less he knew about them the better for his orthodoxy.

He knew Jehovah and the commandments of Jehovah: he knew, therefore, that

all gods with other names or other attributes were false gods. In somewhat

the same way, the party member knew what constituted right conduct, and in

exceedingly vague, generalized terms he knew what kinds of departure from

it were possible. His sexual life, for example, was entirely regulated by

the two Newspeak words SEXCRIME (sexual immorality) and GOODSEX (chastity).

SEXCRIME covered all sexual misdeeds whatever. It covered fornication,

adultery, homosexuality, and other perversions, and, in addition, normal

intercourse practised for its own sake. There was no need to enumerate

them separately, since they were all equally culpable, and, in principle,

all punishable by death. In the C vocabulary, which consisted of scientific

and technical words, it might be necessary to give specialized names to

certain sexual aberrations, but the ordinary citizen had no need of them.

He knew what was meant by GOODSEX--that is to say, normal intercourse

between man and wife, for the sole purpose of begetting children, and

without physical pleasure on the part of the woman: all else was SEXCRIME.

In Newspeak it was seldom possible to follow a heretical thought further

than the perception that it WAS heretical: beyond that point the necessary

words were nonexistent.

No word in the B vocabulary was ideologically neutral. A great many were

euphemisms. Such words, for instance, as JOYCAMP (forced-labour camp) or

MINIPAX (Ministry of Peace, i.e. Ministry of War) meant almost the exact

opposite of what they appeared to mean. Some words, on the other hand,

displayed a frank and contemptuous understanding of the real nature of

Oceanic society. An example was PROLEFEED, meaning the rubbishy

entertainment and spurious news which the Party handed out to the masses.

Other words, again, were ambivalent, having the connotation 'good' when

applied to the Party and 'bad' when applied to its enemies. But in

addition there were great numbers of words which at first sight appeared

to be mere abbreviations and which derived their ideological colour not

from their meaning, but from their structure.

So far as it could be contrived, everything that had or might have

political significance of any kind was fitted into the B vocabulary. The

name of every organization, or body of people, or doctrine, or country, or

institution, or public building, was invariably cut down into the familiar

shape; that is, a single easily pronounced word with the smallest number

of syllables that would preserve the original derivation. In the Ministry

of Truth, for example, the Records Department, in which Winston Smith

worked, was called RECDEP, the Fiction Department was called FICDEP, the

Teleprogrammes Department was called TELEDEP, and so on. This was not

done solely with the object of saving time. Even in the early decades of

the twentieth century, telescoped words and phrases had been one of the

characteristic features of political language; and it had been noticed

that the tendency to use abbreviations of this kind was most marked in

totalitarian countries and totalitarian organizations. Examples were such

words as NAZI, GESTAPO, COMINTERN, INPRECORR, AGITPROP. In the beginning

the practice had been adopted as it were instinctively, but in Newspeak

it was used with a conscious purpose. It was perceived that in thus

abbreviating a name one narrowed and subtly altered its meaning, by

cutting out most of the associations that would otherwise cling to it.

The words COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, for instance, call up a composite

picture of universal human brotherhood, red flags, barricades, Karl Marx,

and the Paris Commune. The word COMINTERN, on the other hand, suggests

merely a tightly-knit organization and a well-defined body of doctrine.

It refers to something almost as easily recognized, and as limited in

purpose, as a chair or a table. COMINTERN is a word that can be uttered

almost without taking thought, whereas COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL is a phrase

over which one is obliged to linger at least momentarily. In the same way,

the associations called up by a word like MINITRUE are fewer and more

controllable than those called up by MINISTRY OF TRUTH. This accounted not

only for the habit of abbreviating whenever possible, but also for the

almost exaggerated care that was taken to make every word easily

pronounceable.

In Newspeak, euphony outweighed every consideration other than exactitude

of meaning. Regularity of grammar was always sacrificed to it when it

seemed necessary. And rightly so, since what was required, above all for

political purposes, was short clipped words of unmistakable meaning which

could be uttered rapidly and which roused the minimum of echoes in the

speaker's mind. The words of the B vocabulary even gained in force from

the fact that nearly all of them were very much alike. Almost invariably

these words--GOODTHINK, MINIPAX, PROLEFEED, SEXCRIME, JOYCAMP, INGSOC,

BELLYFEEL, THINKPOL, and countless others--were words of two or three

syllables, with the stress distributed equally between the first syllable

and the last. The use of them encouraged a gabbling style of speech, at

once staccato and monotonous. And this was exactly what was aimed at. The

intention was to make speech, and especially speech on any subject not

ideologically neutral, as nearly as possible independent of consciousness.

For the purposes of everyday life it was no doubt necessary, or sometimes

necessary, to reflect before speaking, but a Party member called upon to

make a political or ethical judgement should be able to spray forth the

correct opinions as automatically as a machine gun spraying forth bullets.

His training fitted him to do this, the language gave him an almost

foolproof instrument, and the texture of the words, with their harsh sound

and a certain wilful ugliness which was in accord with the spirit of

Ingsoc, assisted the process still further.

So did the fact of having very few words to choose from. Relative to our

own, the Newspeak vocabulary was tiny, and new ways of reducing it were

constantly being devised. Newspeak, indeed, differed from most all other

languages in that its vocabulary grew smaller instead of larger every

year. Each reduction was a gain, since the smaller the area of choice,

the smaller the temptation to take thought. Ultimately it was hoped to

make articulate speech issue from the larynx without involving the higher

brain centres at all. This aim was frankly admitted in the Newspeak word

DUCKSPEAK, meaning 'to quack like a duck'. Like various other words in

the B vocabulary, DUCKSPEAK was ambivalent in meaning. Provided that the

opinions which were quacked out were orthodox ones, it implied nothing but

praise, and when 'The Times' referred to one of the orators of the Party

as a DOUBLEPLUSGOOD DUCKSPEAKER it was paying a warm and valued compliment.

THE C VOCABULARY. The C vocabulary was supplementary to the others and

consisted entirely of scientific and technical terms. These resembled the

scientific terms in use today, and were constructed from the same roots,

but the usual care was taken to define them rigidly and strip them of

undesirable meanings. They followed the same grammatical rules as the

words in the other two vocabularies. Very few of the C words had any

currency either in everyday speech or in political speech. Any scientific

worker or technician could find all the words he needed in the list devoted

to his own speciality, but he seldom had more than a smattering of the

words occurring in the other lists. Only a very few words were common to

all lists, and there was no vocabulary expressing the function of Science

as a habit of mind, or a method of thought, irrespective of its particular

branches. There was, indeed, no word for 'Science', any meaning that it

could possibly bear being already sufficiently covered by the word INGSOC.

From the foregoing account it will be seen that in Newspeak the expression

of unorthodox opinions, above a very low level, was well-nigh impossible.

It was of course possible to utter heresies of a very crude kind, a

species of blasphemy. It would have been possible, for example, to say

BIG BROTHER IS UNGOOD. But this statement, which to an orthodox ear merely

conveyed a self-evident absurdity, could not have been sustained by

reasoned argument, because the necessary words were not available. Ideas

inimical to Ingsoc could only be entertained in a vague wordless form,

and could only be named in very broad terms which lumped together and

condemned whole groups of heresies without defining them in doing so.

One could, in fact, only use Newspeak for unorthodox purposes by

illegitimately translating some of the words back into Oldspeak. For

example, ALL MANS ARE EQUAL was a possible Newspeak sentence, but only

in the same sense in which ALL MEN ARE REDHAIRED is a possible Oldspeak

sentence. It did not contain a grammatical error, but it expressed

a palpable untruth--i.e. that all men are of equal size, weight, or

strength. The concept of political equality no longer existed, and this

secondary meaning had accordingly been purged out of the word EQUAL.

In 1984, when Oldspeak was still the normal means of communication,

the danger theoretically existed that in using Newspeak words one might

remember their original meanings. In practice it was not difficult for

any person well grounded in DOUBLETHINK to avoid doing this, but within

a couple of generations even the possibility of such a lapse would have

vanished. A person growing up with Newspeak as his sole language would no

more know that EQUAL had once had the secondary meaning of 'politically

equal', or that FREE had once meant 'intellectually free', than for

instance, a person who had never heard of chess would be aware of the

secondary meanings attaching to QUEEN and ROOK. There would be many

crimes and errors which it would be beyond his power to commit, simply

because they were nameless and therefore unimaginable. And it was to be

foreseen that with the passage of time the distinguishing characteristics

of Newspeak would become more and more pronounced--its words growing

fewer and fewer, their meanings more and more rigid, and the chance of

putting them to improper uses always diminishing.

When Oldspeak had been once and for all superseded, the last link with

the past would have been severed. History had already been rewritten,

but fragments of the literature of the past survived here and there,

imperfectly censored, and so long as one retained one's knowledge of

Oldspeak it was possible to read them. In the future such fragments, even

if they chanced to survive, would be unintelligible and untranslatable.

It was impossible to translate any passage of Oldspeak into Newspeak unless

it either referred to some technical process or some very simple everyday

action, or was already orthodox (GOODTHINKFUL would be the Newspeak

expression) in tendency. In practice this meant that no book written before

approximately 1960 could be translated as a whole. Pre-revolutionary

literature could only be subjected to ideological translation--that is,

alteration in sense as well as language. Take for example the well-known

passage from the Declaration of Independence:

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL,

THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS,

THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

THAT TO SECURE THESE RIGHTS, GOVERNMENTS ARE INSTITUTED AMONG MEN,

DERIVING THEIR POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED. THAT WHENEVER

ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT BECOMES DESTRUCTIVE OF THOSE ENDS, IT IS THE RIGHT

OF THE PEOPLE TO ALTER OR ABOLISH IT, AND TO INSTITUTE NEW GOVERNMENT...

It would have been quite impossible to render this into Newspeak while

keeping to the sense of the original. The nearest one could come to doing

so would be to swallow the whole passage up in the single word CRIMETHINK.

A full translation could only be an ideological translation, whereby

Jefferson's words would be changed into a panegyric on absolute government.

A good deal of the literature of the past was, indeed, already being

transformed in this way. Considerations of prestige made it desirable to

preserve the memory of certain historical figures, while at the same time

bringing their achievements into line with the philosophy of Ingsoc.

Various writers, such as Shakespeare, Milton, Swift, Byron, Dickens, and

some others were therefore in process of translation: when the task had

been completed, their original writings, with all else that survived of

the literature of the past, would be destroyed. These translations were

a slow and difficult business, and it was not expected that they would

be finished before the first or second decade of the twenty-first

century. There were also large quantities of merely utilitarian

literature--indispensable technical manuals, and the like--that had to

be treated in the same way. It was chiefly in order to allow time for

the preliminary work of translation that the final adoption of Newspeak

had been fixed for so late a date as 2050.