

Harvard Lecture Summary

- 0) It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.
- 1) 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.
- 2) Winston kept his back turned to the telescreen.
- 3) So completely did they dwarf the surrounding architecture that from the roof of Victory Mansions you could see all four of them simultaneously.
- 4) There were no windows in it at all.
- 5) Winston had never been inside the Ministry of Love, nor within half a kilometre of it.
- 6) He went back to the living-room and sat down at a small table that stood to the left of the telescreen.
- 7) 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.
- 8) He could be heard, of course, but so long as he stayed in his present position he could not be seen.
- 9) It was partly the unusual geography of the room that had suggested to him the thing that he was now about to do.
- 10) But it had also been suggested by the book that he had just taken out of the drawer.
- 11) 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.
- 12) The thing that he was about to do was to open a diary.
- 13) For the future, for the unborn.
- 14) It was of its nature impossible.
- 15) For some time he sat gazing stupidly at the paper.
- 16) 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.
- 17) His small but childish handwriting straggled up and down the page, shedding first its capital letters and finally even its full stops:
- 18) 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.
- 19) 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.
- 20) He did not know her name, but he knew that she worked in the Fiction Department.
- 21) Winston had disliked her from the very first moment of seeing her.
- 22) But this particular girl gave him the impression of being more dangerous than most.
- 23) 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.
- 24) The idea had even crossed his mind that she might be an agent of the Thought Police.
- 25) And again, perhaps it was not even unorthodoxy that was written in his face, but simply intelligence.
- 26) 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.
- 27) As usual, the face of Emmanuel Goldstein, the Enemy of the People, had flashed on to the screen.
- 28) 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.
- 29) But one knew of such things only through vague rumours.
- 30) 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.

31) 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.

32) 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.

33) 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.

34) 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.

35) 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.

36) The voice of Goldstein had become an actual sheep's bleat, and for an instant the face changed into that of a sheep.

37) Then the face of Big Brother faded away again, and instead the three slogans of the Party stood out in bold capitals:

38) 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.

39) Then she buried her face in her hands.

40) For perhaps as much as thirty seconds they kept it up.

41) He had taken off his spectacles and was in the act of resettling them on his nose with his characteristic gesture.

42) 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.

43) 'I am with you,' O'Brien seemed to be saying to him.

44) And then the flash of intelligence was gone, and O'Brien's face was as inscrutable as everybody else's.

45) He had gone back to his cubicle without looking at O'Brien again.

46) over and over again, filling half a page.

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

48) Whether he wrote DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER, or whether he refrained from writing it, made no difference.

49) The Thought Police would get him just the same.