

### 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 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 sallow, 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