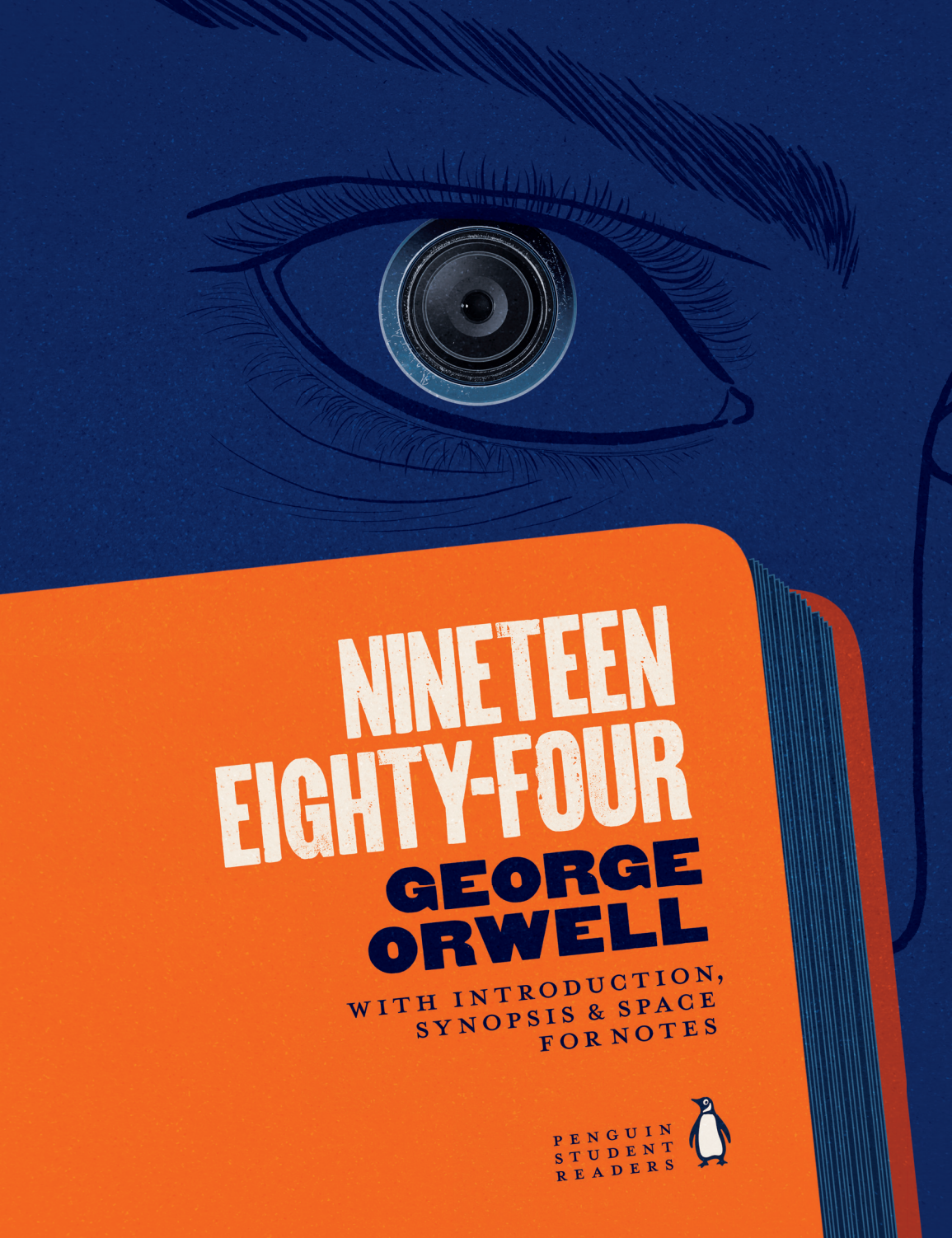


NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

GEORGE ORWELL

WITH INTRODUCTION, SYNOPSIS & SPACE FOR NOTES

PENGUIN STUDENT READERS

Nineteen Eighty-Four

Eric Arthur Blair (GEORGE ORWELL) was born in 1903 in India. In 1907 his family moved to England where he went to school. From 1922 to 1927 he served with the Indian Imperial Police Force in Burma, which inspired his first novel, *Burmese Days* (1934). Several years of poverty followed. He lived in Paris for two years before returning to England, working as a private tutor, schoolteacher and bookshop assistant, and writing for various periodicals. *Down and Out in Paris and London* was published in 1933. In 1936 he was commissioned by the publisher Victor Gollancz to visit areas of mass unemployment in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937) is a description of the poverty he saw there. In 1936 Orwell went to Spain to fight for the Republicans and was wounded. *Homage to Catalonia* is his account of the Spanish Civil War. He spent six months in Morocco and there wrote the novel *Coming Up for Air*. During the Second World War he served in the Home Guard and worked for the BBC. As literary editor of *Tribune* he contributed a regular page of political and literary commentary, and he also wrote for the *Observer* and for the *Manchester Evening News*. The political allegory, *Animal Farm*, was published in 1945 and, together with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), brought him world-wide fame. George Orwell died in London in January 1950.

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GEORGE ORWELL

Nineteen Eighty-Four

Edited by Ronald Carter and Valerie Durow



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Penguin Random House UK

First published by Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd 1949
Published in Penguin Student Editions 2000
Published as a Penguin Student Reader Edition 2024
001

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Set in 10.18/13.25pt New Caledonia LT Std
Typeset by Jouve (UK), Milton Keynes
Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

The authorized representative in the EEA is Penguin Random House Ireland, Morrison Chambers, 32 Nassau Street, Dublin D02 YH68

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978–0–241–70540–7

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Introduction

Almost certainly we are moving into an age of totalitarian dictatorships–an age in which freedom of thought will be at first a deadly sin and later on a meaningless abstraction. The autonomous individual is going to be stamped out of existence. (George Orwell)

Nineteen Eighty-Four continues to make a deep impression on generation after generation of readers, although the year in which it was set has long passed without Orwell's dire predictions of a universal totalitarian society being fulfilled. However, it is perhaps wise to bear in mind that the title most likely derives from a reversal of the last two numbers of the year (1948) in which it was written, rather than to think of the book as Orwell's prophecy for the future of society in the 1980s. The popularity of the book is undeniable. Phrases such as Big Brother–referring to overbearing and impersonal authority–and Room 101–as the place where your worst nightmares come true–have passed into common, everyday language and are used by people who have never read the book.

In many ways, *Nineteen Eighty-Four is* a difficult book to describe. It has variously been called science fiction, anti-utopian satire, scientific romance and futuristic

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fantasy.[1] It could even be said to incorporate aspects of the postmodern in its concern with the fictionalizing of history and the questioning of supposed objective fact. Despite these descriptions, the book is very realistic. Orwell creates a wholly believable, but none the less terrifying world, and one into which the reader could conceivably step. It is a world that is firmly rooted in post-Second World War Britain, the era in which the book was written, for instance: 'And the bombed sites where the plaster dust swirled in the air and the willowherb straggled over the heaps of rubble.' Bomb sites were a familiar feature of the British scenery in the late 1940s. Certainly, the power of the book derives, in part, from a defamiliarization of the familiar and from Orwell's stark and simple prose style.

Nineteen Eighty-Four, like *Animal Farm*, can also be seen as a criticism of Stalinism–for example the description of Big Brother as he appears on the posters bears resemblance to Josef Stalin–yet events are not so closely linked to those in Russia as they are in the earlier book. This allows *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to be seen as a criticism not only of extremes of the left, but also those of the right, such as Nazism and fascism. It was Orwell's last book, published in 1949. It was written when he was very ill, suffering from

1 Many critics and commentators discuss *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in terms of its place within a literary tradition. Science fiction usually explores the likely consequences of some improbable or impossible changes to the basic conditions of life. In anti-utopian (or dystopian) literature, an alarming, unpleasant, and usually future world is created. Scientific romance is a term given to books that place a familiar character, whose beliefs about life and reality are shared by the reader, in an unfamiliar, frightening setting. Futuristic fantasies deal with the unrealistic or non-realistic representation of a future world. To some extent, it is possible to place *Nineteen Eighty-Four* within all these categories.

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tuberculosis. Orwell's state of health is possibly reflected in the pessimistic and foreboding tone of the book. Indeed, Orwell said that the book might not have been so gloomy if he had not been so ill.

The book is divided into three main parts. In the first part, the reader is introduced to a frightening world where every aspect of life is rigidly controlled. Throughout this section, the dehumanization of society is ruthlessly explored. There is no personal freedom, all actions are observed by the ever-present telescreens and there is the constant fear of being reported to the Thought Police for supposed crimes against the state. Children are indoctrinated into the beliefs of the Party at an early age, an indoctrination which continues into adulthood by means of the daily 'Two Minutes Hate', a regular meeting which is designed to increase the people's love for Big Brother and their hatred for the enemy, including the arch-traitor Emmanuel Goldstein, and 'Hate Week', a week long, frenzied celebration of anger towards Oceania's enemies.

History is presented as non-existent, something that is continually being re-written to suit current circumstances, resulting in people having no sense of continuity, no sense of who they are. Culture and language are shown to have degenerated. New novels are no longer written by authors, but are mass-produced by kaleidoscope-like fiction-writing machines; the imaginative is replaced by the mechanical. Previous works of literature are being re-written so that their original meanings are not just lost, but totally obliterated. Language is being diminished, transformed into 'Newspeak', which allows no shades of meaning and leads to the range of thought being narrowed: 'Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly *one* word, with its

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meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten.' This is a society which has reverted to a less civilised age; living conditions have deteriorated and technological development is centred, not on the improvement of life, but on the creation of better weapons and more sophisticated ways of controlling society. 'Doublethink', a means of controlling reality through the ability to hold two contradictory opinions in the mind at the same time, is considered not only desirable, but normal.

In such a world, Winston Smith, hero or anti-hero, begins what might seem a very small rebellion against the power of the state, the keeping of a private diary.

Part II can be described as the most positive section of the book. It charts not only the growing relationship of Winston and Julia and thus examines the possibility of the survival of human relationships and hopes when faced with overwhelming odds, but also the widening of Winston's rebellion. Part II is a section of contrasts. Whereas the members of the Party are shown as cold and impersonal, relationships being a matter of duty rather than of love and affection, the proles–the lower classes–are depicted as having warmth and humanity: '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.' This theme of the humanity of the proles and their possible role in a future, more humane, society is an important one and is reinforced by the statement reiterated throughout the book: 'If there is hope, it lies in the proles.' Yet Orwell seems to suggest that this hope is a very slim one, as he shows the proles as essentially passive, struggling with day-to-day existence and unconcerned

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about overthrowing the Party, content to argue and fight among themselves.

There is also the contrast between the attitudes of Winston and Julia. Winston is older and is more aware of the past. He possesses an understanding of the way in which present society is controlled and manipulated. His reading of Goldstein's subversive book only tells him what he already knows or suspects. Winston's concern is to rebel and change society for the good of all. Julia, on the other hand, appears more-or-less to believe what she is told by the Party, or at least is uninterested in the fact that she is being told lies. She is basically selfish and her rebellion is restricted to minor private offences, which include the sexual relationship with Winston, designed to make her own life more comfortable and pleasurable.

The drab city, where people are totally dominated, is contrasted with the beauty and relative freedom of the countryside which is depicted in an almost lyrical fashion:

> 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.

The past, through Winston's memories and dreams of his mother, is contrasted with the lack of feeling in individual relationships in the present.

Part III is the darkest and most bleak section, dealing with punishment, betrayal and humiliation. It plays upon the most basic feelings of the reader. The themes of illness, weakness and degeneration, noticeable throughout the book, come to the fore. It examines the breaking of the

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human spirit and Winston's inner betrayal of Julia, which takes place among the horrors of Room 101. Winston, described as the 'last man' and the 'guardian of the human spirit', is totally humiliated. Through alternate bouts of torture and small kindnesses, he is brainwashed to the extent that he not only admits that two and two make five, but truly believes it. With the destruction of Winston's personality and his memory, the impression is gained that now society is totally dehumanised and the spirit of humanity is obliterated for ever.

This part of the book is also concerned with the strange love–hate relationship formed between torturer and tortured, and with the motivations of the power-mad. O'Brien claims that power is an end, and not a means to an end: '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.' This could be seen as unconvincing. It is possible that the 'why' of Winston's statement 'I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY' remains unexplained to the reader's total satisfaction.

On the one hand, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* could be described as a deeply pessimistic book. Orwell himself said that the only 'ism' that has justified itself is pessimism. Certainly, the final picture of Winston as a broken and worthless man, who ultimately admits his love for Big Brother, and thus submits to the will of the totalitarian dictatorship, is a very desolate one. However, the book can be seen in a more positive light, if it is taken as a 'cautionary tale', a powerful warning against the evils of totalitarianism, rather than an exploration of how this form of government can be overthrown once it is firmly established.

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Chronology

George Orwell's Life

1903 Eric Blair born in India. He later changes his name to George Orwell.
1907 The family returns to England.

1917 Eric begins studying at Eton College, one of England's foremost private schools.

1922–7 Eric becomes a policeman in the Burmese division of the Indian Imperial Police.

1933 *Down and Out in Paris and London*, his first book, principally autobiographical in nature, is published under the name of George Orwell.
1934 *Burmese Days*, based on his experiences in Burma and critical of English imperialism, is published.

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George Orwell's Times

1901 Death of Queen Victoria; a new 'Edwardian' era. Strong ideas about the imperial role of Britain in the world continue.

1914–18 First World War.
1917 The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia establishes Soviet Communism, with Lenin as the first leader of the Soviet Union.

1924 Death of Lenin. Replaced as leader by Josef Stalin.
1929 New York stock market crash creates greater poverty in the capitalist West.
1931 Coalition national government in Britain until 1945.
1933 Adolf Hitler elected Chancellor of Germany.

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1936–43 Now well known as a writer and journalist, Orwell is sponsored by the publisher Victor Gollancz and then by the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). He makes several radio broadcasts and writes about urban poverty, especially in the North of England. *The Road to Wigan Pier* is published in 1937. In *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) he writes about his experiences as someone who fought on the side of the left-wing Republican cause (against the Fascists) in the Spanish Civil War (1936–7).
1945 Publishes *Animal Farm*, which is critical of the Stalinist regime in Russia.

1949 *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell's last book, is published. He is very ill, suffering from tuberculosis.
1950 George Orwell dies in January at the age of 46.

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1936–9 Spanish Civil War. Fascist forces led by General Franco eventually overcome left-wing republican forces which many British writers support.
1939–45 Second World War. Britain and France need United States and Russian assistance to defeat Germany.

1945 Labour (socialist) government elected in Britain (until 1951).
1947 Britain gives independence to India and Pakistan, its largest colonial territory.

1953 Death of Stalin.

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Nineteen Eighty-Four

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PART ONE

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I

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.

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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 emphasised 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.

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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 scrutinised.

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 bomb sites where the plaster dust swirled in the air and the willowherb straggled over the heaps of rubble; and the

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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[1]–was startlingly different from any other object in sight. It was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring up, terrace after terrace, three hundred 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

1 Newspeak was the official language of Oceania. For an account of its structure and etymology see Appendix.

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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

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crumpled packet marked VICTORY CIGARETTES and incautiously held it upright, whereupon the tobacco fell out onto 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 frowzy 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),

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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 speakwrite, 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

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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

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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 gun-sights, 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 middleaged 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 didn't oughter of showed it not in front of kids they

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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 realised, 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 dark 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

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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 had given 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 re-settling his spectacles on his nose which was curiously disarming–in some indefinable way, curiously civilised. It was a gesture which, if anyone had still thought in such terms, might have recalled an eighteenth-century nobleman offering his snuff-box. Winston had seen O'Brien perhaps a dozen times in almost as

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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 prizefighter'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 wristwatch, 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 onto 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

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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 sheeplike 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

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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

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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 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

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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 civilisation.

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 realised *why* it was that he hated her. He hated her because she was young and

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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

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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! . . . 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 subhuman 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 in 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 re-settling them on his nose with his characteristic gesture. But there was a fraction of a second when their

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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 hands 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

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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

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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 dont 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.

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II

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 realised, 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

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