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1984

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by George Orwell

19 It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.
34 Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile
45 wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though
59 not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with
60 him.

74 The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of
89 it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall.
104 It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a
116 man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly
130 handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift.
145 Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric
159 current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive
172 in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston,
186 who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went
199 slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift-
214 shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of
227 those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when
238 you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it
239 ran.

253 Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which
267 had something to do with the production of pig-iron. The voice came from
281 an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface
294 of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank
304 somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the

318 telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting
332 it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail figure, the
344 meagreness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were
358 the uniform of the party. His hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine,
373 his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the
378 winter that had just ended.

389 Outside, even through the shut window-pane, the world looked cold.
403 Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper
418 into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there
431 seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered
440 everywhere. The black-moustachio'd face gazed down from every
450 commanding corner. There was one on the house-front immediately
461 opposite. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said, while the
473 dark eyes looked deep into Winston's own. Down at street level another
485 poster, torn at one corner, flapped fitfully in the wind, alternately covering
497 and uncovering the single word INGSOC. In the far distance a helicopter
509 skimmed down between the roofs, hovered for an instant like a bluebottle,
522 and darted away again with a curving flight. It was the police patrol,
533 snooping into people's windows. The patrols did not matter, however. Only
537 the Thought Police mattered.

547 Behind Winston's back the voice from the telescreen was still
559 babbling away about pig-iron and the overfulfilment of the Ninth Three-
568 Year Plan. The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any
582 sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be
597 picked up by it, moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision
610 which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard.
624 There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at

636 any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police
648 plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable
663 that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug in
677 your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live--did live, from habit
689 that became instinct--in the assumption that every sound you made was
697 overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized.

710 Winston kept his back turned to the telescreen. It was safer; though, as
724 he well knew, even a back can be revealing. A kilometre away the Ministry
737 of Truth, his place of work, towered vast and white above the grimy
750 landscape. This, he thought with a sort of vague distaste--this was London,
764 chief city of Airstrip One, itself the third most populous of the provinces of
776 Oceania. He tried to squeeze out some childhood memory that should tell
788 him whether London had always been quite like this. Were there always
800 these vistas of rotting nineteenth-century houses, their sides shored up with
812 baulks of timber, their windows patched with cardboard and their roofs with
824 corrugated iron, their crazy garden walls sagging in all directions? And the
838 bombed sites where the plaster dust swirled in the air and the willow-herb
851 straggled over the heaps of rubble; and the places where the bombs had
864 cleared a larger patch and there had sprung up sordid colonies of wooden
877 dwellings like chicken-houses? But it was no use, he could not remember:
889 nothing remained of his childhood except a series of bright-lit tableaux
896 occurring against no background and mostly unintelligible.

906 The Ministry of Truth--Minitrue, in Newspeak [Newspeak was the
918 official language of Oceania. For an account of its structure and etymology
930 see Appendix.]--was startlingly different from any other object in sight. It
940 was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring
953 up, terrace after terrace, 300 metres into the air. From where Winston stood

968 it was just possible to read, picked out on its white face in elegant lettering,
974 the three slogans of the Party:

977 WAR IS PEACE
980 FREEDOM IS SLAVERY
983 IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH