

By Geoff Brown

At the end of Orwell's 1984 Winston Smith has been purged of his rebellious nature by torture and re-education. He is now a perfectly compliant puppet of the Party. He loves Big Brother...or does he? Here is the opening to 1985.

1985 by George Orwell

Winston Smith left his solitary game of chess at the Chestnut Tree café and trudged back to his soulless flat. His head throbbed. One of his recurring, blinding headaches. He was having terrifying dreams every night. The nightmares always featured Julia and often pictured her being attacked by rats in room 101 at the Ministry of Love. Both he and Julia were now rehabilitated but their love for each other had been eradicated by their mutual betrayal. He had finally succumbed to the torture and given her up, "Do it to her! Do it to anyone else but me." Julia admitted that in the end she had also turned him in.

Winston stood in front of the giant screen in the square. He listened numbly to a triumphant Party bulletin announcing yet another grand victory in Africa. He knew his rebellious nature should have been expunged and he should now be a perfect Party member. Over recent days though, he had been grappling with a maelstrom of emotions. Part of him loved Big Brother but there was an increasingly insistent voice in his brain whispering seditious thoughts..."*You know what they did to you...aren't you proud of how long your rebellion lasted...how much effort it cost the Party to break you?"*

He found himself reflecting on his job at the Ministry of Truth. He had to find and obliterate any record of activities or people in the past the Party wished to erase. The last trace of them was dropped down the 'memory hole'. Over time, this cleaning up of history had appeared increasingly absurd. The fact that the only truth was that which was shaped by the Party had inexorably pushed him towards his personal mutiny. He could no longer stomach the ridiculous premise of doublethink, of $2+2=5$. He now realised that the admiration he felt for his chief interrogator, O'Brien was totally misplaced. "*I knew he was cleverer than me,*" he thought, "*and even when he was torturing me I still saw him as my protector and friend. He convinced me that my rebellion was a disease and he would cure me. How could I have been so comprehensively manipulated?"*

That night he had a dream-free sleep and the next morning his mind was crystal clear. He replayed many of the pernicious things O'Brien had said.

"If you want a picture of the future imagine a boot stamping on a human face – forever."

"Never again will you be capable of ordinary human feeling. Everything will be dead inside you. Never again will you be capable of love or friendship, or the joy of living, or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow. We shall squeeze you empty and then we shall fill you with ourselves."

With a cry of pure joy Winston shouted, "But they failed. Somehow the effects of the brainwashing have ebbed away." He made himself a solemn promise.

*"I **will** resist again. I **will** contact the Brotherhood. There **will** be a revolution."*