



## 1984: THE MASTERPIECE THAT KILLED GEORGE ORWELL (CHAPTER I)

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### ABSTRACT

*The novel 1984, the final masterpiece of George Orwell, was published in 1949 which is a dystopian social science fiction novel. Thematically, the core idea of his masterpiece is about the consequences of totalitarianism, mass surveillance and repressive regimentation of people and behaviours within society. Orwell inspired writing his last novel on dystopian novel "We", the production of Russian writer Yevgeny Zamyatin, which was introduced him by literature professor Gleb Struve in 1944. However, later in 1946, George Orwell wrote about dystopian novel "Brave New World" by Aldous Huxley in his article "Freedom and Happiness" for the Tribune. In his article he mentioned about similarities to "We". By this time the political satire "Animal Farm" which Orwell published in 1945, had scored a critical and commercial hit and also raised his profile. So then, Orwell decided to write his novel "1984".*

Writing the novel was completely challenging due to the restrictions and pressures involved with journalism, and especially problem in his health which Orwell suffered with bronchiectasis and inflammation of the lungs. In 1944 George Orwell declared that he had finished writing first 12 pages of his masterpiece before releasing satire "Animal Farm". The idea of writing Nineteen Eighty-Four had come to his mind since the Spanish civil war. In order to finish his novel Orwell had to go somewhere far from the influences at work. He took voyage and completed his book in a house, Barnhill, which was on the remote Scottish island of Jura, next to Islay. That house belonged to Astor whom Orwell had worked since 1942 as a book reviewer and later as a correspondent. He mentioned about this trip as "almost like stocking up ship for an arctic voyage" to his friend Arthur Koestler. Moreover, Orwell complained to his friend about difficulties derived from the success of "Animal Farm", which was neglected about a year, and said that "Everyone keeps coming at me, wanting me to lecture, to write commissioned booklets, to join this and that, etc. - you don't know how I pine to be free of it all and have time to think again". There is a well-known Orwellian coda "Good



prose is like a window pane" mentioned in his essay "Why I Write", where Orwell told how writing a book is horrible and exhausting struggle like a long bout of some painful illness.

Finally, he started writing his novel "The Last Man in Europe" alternative name of "1984" in 1947 at the end of the May. George Orwell was in dilemma on choosing the title of his novel, he wrote that "I am inclined to call it NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR or THE LAST MAN IN EUROPE, but I might just possibly think of something else in the next week or two". By mid-November he completed with his novel and "unbelievably bad" (as he mentioned) manuscript needed retyping. With this task Orwell's agent and Warburg promised to help, unfortunately, he needed to have done it alone. By 30<sup>th</sup> November 1948 Orwell finished typing with long struggles in his health and finally, his typescript reached London in mid-December. On June 8<sup>th</sup> 1949 Orwell's latest novel "1984" was published and five days later in America. The US president Winston Churchill recognized the novel as a masterpiece, also mentioned that he had read it twice.

As for the title, it remains as a mystery. Some say that George Orwell named the masterpiece according to the political movement in the novel "Iron Heel", produced by Jack London, which comes to power in 1984, or may be from Chesterton's story, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill", which is set in 1984. However, there is another claim, Peter Davidson notes about the title of the novel in his edition of the Collected Works (20 volumes) that Orwell's American publisher said that the title derived from reversing the date, 1948, nonetheless, there's no documentary evidence for this. Although, Orwell was never certain about the title, however, his publisher, Fred Warburg suggested him that Nineteen Eighty-Four was a more commercial title.

### **How the story begins (I chapter)**

The story begins with the feelings of the hero Winston Smith, who works in a low position in the ruling Party in London. He feels frustrated due to the unfair and rigid control of the Party that bans free thoughts, sex and any expression of individuality. Winston works in the Ministry of Truth in records department where he will be busy with "CORRECTION" of some news. Everywhere Winston looks there is a portrait of man, who is known as "BIG BROTHER", an omniscient leader that watches you through telescreen, with the caption "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU" beneath it. Because of his strong hate towards the Party, one day Winston bought a diary and stated writing his "CRIMINAL THOUGHTS". For a while he wondered for whom he is writing this diary, for the future, for the unborn. So, Winston wrote greetings in his diary to "the future or to the past, to a time when thought is free, when men are different from one another and do not live alone – to a time when truth exists and what is done cannot be undone: From the age of uniformity, from the age of solitude, from the age of Big Brother, from the age of doublethink – greetings!"

Every morning at eleven hundred in the Ministry every worker must watch The Two Minutes Hate in the in a big telescreen. That short story film showed about Emanuel Goldstein who is accepted as the enemy of people. Once he had been one of the leading figures of the Party, almost on a level with Big Brother. However, later Goldstein engaged in counter-revolutionary activities and had been condemned to death, and had mysteriously escaped and disappeared. The program showed not only about the crimes of Goldstein, but also the speech of Big Brother who tells a few words of encouragement. In this screen Big Brother seemed a



fearless protector for the audience. So, during watching the video the hate of people to Goldstein rose to its climax, people started to shout at screen and crying out “Swine! Swine! Swine!”, even one of the audiences threw a heavy NEWSPEAK dictionary to the big screen. However, when there was a face of Big Brother people’s hate diminished and started on chant of “Big Brother”, meanwhile, a woman with slow voice called him as “her Saviour”. At the end of the hate time there were three sentences, the slogans of the Party, WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH – the sentences which were on the wall of the Ministry of Truth in capital letters.

During the “Hate time” the eyes of Winston and O’Brien, who is a member of Inner Party, caught each other. In this time Winston thought that he and O’Brien were thinking about the same thing which they had shared an unmistakable message. The thought (message) that “I am with you. I know precisely what you are feeling. I know all about your contempt, your hatred, your disgust. But don’t worry I’m on your side!” flew from each other’s eyes. From this moment Winston begin to believe in him whom he thought that O’Brien is a secret member of the BROTHERHOOD.

There is another person to whom Winston’s eyes looked at, a woman that is unnamed (later Julia) in this chapter. She works in Fiction Department of the Party. The appearance of the girl was given in the book such as “she was a bold-looking girl, of about twenty-seven, with thick hair, a freckled face, and swift, athletic movements. A narrow scarlet sash, emblem of the Junior Anti-Sex League, was wounded several times round the waist of her overall, just tightly enough to bring out shapeliness of her hips”. Conversely to O’Brien, Winston cannot stand to all women, especially those who are beautiful and attractive, so as with this unnamed woman. Since, Winston thinks that women with such appearance were usually the swallows of slogans, the amateur spies and nosers-out of unorthodoxy. Thus, he hates nearly all women.

The story continues with the words “DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER” which was written by Winston in his diary, meanwhile, there was a knock of the door. Mrs. Parsons, the neighbor who lives in the same floor with Winston. She came to him to ask help to repair her kitchen sink that was blocked up. While cleaning the kitchen sink, there were two children (Mrs.Parsons’ children) who were playing a game in that room. Both of them wore like the Spies – blue shorts, grey shirts and red neckerchiefs, and both shouted at Winston “up with your hands!” and continued “you’re a traitor! You’re a thought criminal! You’re a Eurasian spy! I’ll shoot you, I’ll vaporize you, I’ll send you to the salt mines!”. Those words somehow frightened Winston, the words always belonged to children of Youth League, and always loyal to the Party. And he predicts that quite soon these children will denounce their parents to the Thought Police and be publicly named “child heroes”. When Winston finished with cleaning of the kitchen sink he came back to his room and started to think about O’Brien again. He remembered the voice that said “We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness” which Winston thought that it was O’Brien’s voice. Then, he went back to his table and stated writing – “thoughtcrime does not entail death: thoughtcrime IS death.” While putting down those words he had recognized himself as a dead man.



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