

GEORGE ORWELL & CONNY BLOM

1984 UPDATED

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## PART ONE

### CHAPTER 1

It was a bright day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith slipped quickly through the glass doors.

Winston made for the stairs. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston was thirty-nine.

Inside the flat Winston moved over to the window. His hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine.

Outside the sun was shining.

This, he thought – this was London.

The Ministry was different from any other object in sight. It was a pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete. From where Winston stood it was just possible to read, picked out on its white face in elegant lettering, the three slogans:

PEACE

FREEDOM

STRENGTH

Winston turned round. He crossed the room into the kitchen. There was food in the kitchen. He took down from the shelf a bottle of gin. He took a cigarette from a packet and went back to the living-room and sat down at a small table. 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.

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 little shop and had been stricken immediately by an overwhelming desire to possess it. He had 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 home in his briefcase.

Winston fitted a nib into the penholder and sucked it to get the grease off. He dipped the pen into the ink and in small letters he wrote:

*April 4th, 1984. Last night to the flicks.*

Winston stopped writing. 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 realized, 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.

It was nearly eleven. In the Records Department, where Winston worked, 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 department. Presumably – since he had sometimes seen her with oily hands and carrying a spanner – she had some mechanical job. She was a bold-looking girl, of about twenty-seven, with thick hair, a freckled face, and swift, athletic movements. A narrow scarlet sash, was wound several times round the waist of her overalls, just tightly enough to bring out the shapeliness of her hips. Winston had liked her from the very first moment of seeing her. He knew the reason. It was because of the atmosphere of hockey-fields and baths and hikes and general clean-mindedness which she managed to carry about with her. He liked nearly all women, and especially the young and pretty ones. But this particular girl gave him the impression of being more than most. Once when they passed in the corridor she gave him a quick sidelong glance.

The dark-haired girl was young and pretty. He wanted to go to bed with her. Her sweet supple waist seemed to ask you to encircle it with your arm.

He sat back in his chair and laid down the pen. There was a knocking at the door.

He got up and moved towards the door.

## CHAPTER 2

As he put his hand to the door-knob Winston saw that he had left the diary open on the table. 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. A woman was standing outside.

'Oh,' she began, 'I thought I heard you come in. Do you think you could come across and have a look at our kitchen sink?'

It was Mrs Parsons, the wife of a neighbour on the same floor. She was a woman of about thirty. Winston followed her down the passage.

'Of course it's only because Tom isn't home,' said Mrs Parsons.

The Parsons' flat was bigger than Winston's. Games impedimenta – hockey-sticks, boxing-gloves, a football, a pair of shorts turned inside out – lay all over the floor.

'It's the children,' said Mrs Parsons, casting a half-apprehensive glance at the door. 'They haven't been out today.'

Winston knelt down and examined the angle-joint of the pipe. Mrs Parsons looked on.

'Of course if Tom was home he'd put it right in a moment,' she said. 'He loves anything like that. He's ever so good with his hands, Tom is.'

Parsons was Winston's fellow-employee at the Ministry. He was an active man, a mass of enthusiasms – he was a leading figure on the Sports Committee and all the other committees engaged in organizing community hikes, and voluntary activities generally. He would inform you with quiet pride that he had put in an appearance at the Community Centre every evening for the past four years.

'Have you got a spanner?' said Winston, fiddling with the nut on the angle-joint.

'A spanner,' said Mrs Parsons. 'I'm sure.'

Mrs Parsons brought the spanner. Winston let out the water and removed the clot that had blocked up the pipe. He cleaned his fingers in the water from the tap and went back into the other room.

A handsome boy of nine had popped up from behind the table.

He took his leave of Mrs Parsons and made for the door.

Back in the flat he sat down at the table again.

He picked up his pen, wondering whether he could find something more to write in the diary.

Winston walked over to the window. The day was still clear.

The sun had shifted round.

Curiously, the chiming of the hour seemed to put new heart into him. Two fingers of his right hand were inkstained. He went to the bathroom and carefully scrubbed the ink away with the brown soap which was well adapted for this purpose.

He put the diary away in the drawer.

### CHAPTER 3

Winston was dreaming of his mother.

She was a tall, statuesque, rather silent woman with slow movements and magnificent fair hair. His father he remembered more vaguely as dark and thin, dressed always in neat dark clothes and wearing spectacles.

At this moment his mother was sitting with his young sister in her arms.

It was one of those dreams which, while retaining the characteristic dream scenery, are a continuation of one's intellectual life, and in which one becomes aware of facts and ideas which still seem new and valuable after one is awake. The thing that now suddenly struck Winston

was that he belonged to a time when there was privacy, love, and friendship, and when the members of a family stood by one another without needing to know the reason. All this he seemed to see in the large eyes of his mother and his sister, looking at him.

Suddenly he was standing on short springy turf, on a summer evening when the slanting rays of the sun gilded the ground. The landscape that he was looking at recurred so often in his dreams that he was never fully certain whether or not he had seen it in the real world. In his waking thoughts he called it the Golden Country. It was an old pasture, with a foot-track wandering across it and a molehill here and there. In the hedge on the opposite side of the field the boughs of the elm trees were swaying very faintly in the breeze, their leaves just stirring in dense masses like women's hair. Somewhere near at hand, though out of sight, there was a clear, slow-moving stream where dace were swimming in the pools under the willow trees.

The girl with dark hair was coming towards him across the field. With what seemed a single movement she tore off her clothes and flung them aside. Her body was white and smooth, it aroused desire in him. What overwhelmed him in that instant was admiration for the gesture with which she had thrown her clothes aside. With its grace and carelessness it seemed to be a gesture belonging to the ancient time. Winston woke up with the word 'Shakespeare' on his lips.

It was seven fifteen, getting-up time. Winston wrenched his body out of bed – naked, and seized a singlet and a pair of shorts that were lying across a chair.

#### CHAPTER 4

When his day's work started, Winston put on his spectacles. Then he unrolled and clipped together four small cylinders of paper which