

## An Interview with Winston Smith

Q: Why did you trust O'Brien?

A: I suppose I don't really know. There was just something about him. The way he adjusted his glasses, I don't know. Also, I saw him in a dream once. He said to me, "We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness." I know it was only a dream, but it felt real. I just felt like I could trust him, like he was on my side.

Q: Why did you start to question The Party and Big Brother?

A: I started to wonder if life was always this way. If it had always been so dreary, and if everything had always had to be sparsely rationed like it is now. I couldn't remember, but I thought it must have been different once, or else now would not seem so bad because there would be nothing better to compare it to. I realized life in Oceania was not perfect like they wanted us to believe, and after that I started questioning other things as well.

Q: Why did you betray Julia?

A: Some things... Some things are just so horrible. You cannot even imagine the fear, it is unfathomable. But some things you just cannot stand against. When they threatened me with the rats I knew the only option was for them to release the rats on Julia instead. I just couldn't resist it.

Q: You work at the Ministry of Truth, altering documents and records to reflect well on Big Brother and The Party. What do you think of this practice being commonplace in the government?

A: I think that it's horrible. Everyone just accepts it -- it's doublethink [a Newspeak word, in this context it would mean that the people know but choose to forget or ignore the fact]. Everyone just accepts the alterations as reality. The practice has erased history. Because there are no records of any kind saying what happened and everyone chooses to forget what they once knew as fact, The Party controls what reality we live in. They control history and can bend it to their own will. It's horrible.

Q: What is it like to know that the Thought Police could be watching and/or listening to you at any given moment?

A: You just learn to adapt. You learn not to let your body give you away, how to control your face, your yawns and sighs, your posture, everything. The littlest thing could arouse suspicion. It's quite terrifying, really, knowing that you are never truly alone.



