

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. His hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the winter that had just ended. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable.