

Orwell's use of foreshadowing in novel 1984; "crystal balls and the psychic hotli..."



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Orwell's use of foreshadowing in novel 1984; "Crystal Balls and the Psychic Hotline" Essay Sample

Throughout the centuries, people have often wished they could somehow know what would happen in the future before it actually happened.

Sometimes, however, certain consequences are hinted at ahead of time, giving you a chance to take care of it before it is too late. In his book 1984, George Orwell uses foreshadowing through Winston's dreams and memories to predict what will happen in later events, which then explain what took place before.

(S) One memory that was foreshadowed was the last time Winston ever saw his mother and sister. (E) It is a memory that he purposely forgot as a child because he thought it was because of him that they were killed. (X) It is first foreshadowed when Winston writes in his diary about going to the flicks and seeing a movie where a woman covers a young boy while a helicopter drops a bomb on them and they are killed. (X) Then, Winston has a dream and sees his mother and sister in the saloon of a sinking ship, looking up at him from the water as they head towards their death. (X) Later, Julia gives Winston a piece of real chocolate, and when he smells it, he remembers something "powerful and troubling," which he would like to undo but cannot (Orwell 121). (I) After all these events take place, Winston remembers one day a long time ago, when a chocolate ration was issued, but rather than sharing the chocolate with his mother and sister, Winston took it all. When he took it his sister started to cry and his mother covered her in the same way the woman covered the boy at the flicks. Before someone reads about this

memory, the other three events seem somewhat meaningless and are not fully understood until it is read and everything is explained.

(S) Another example of something that seems confusing until the whole story is read is the torture device in room 101. (E) While in the room above Mr. Charrington's shop, Julia sees a rat, which reminds Winston of an occasionally recurring nightmare that does not make a lot of sense at first but is later explained in room 101. (X) When Julia sees the rat, she talks about how women in London dare not leave their babies alone because the rats will eat them. Then later, O'Brien tells Winston the exact same thing. (X) Julia also talks about how it is always "the great huge brown ones that do it" which is repeated later when Winston notices that "they were at the age when a rat's muzzle grows blunt and fierce and his fur brown instead of gray" (Orwell 144, 285). (X) The third and biggest similarity is the feeling Winston gets, first when he thinks about his dream, then when he thinks about the rats behind the mask. Both times he has a feeling of something unendurable coming towards him that he cannot escape. (I) All these incidents are foreshadowed when Winston is with Julia, and they come true and are better explained in room 101.

(S) A third example of foreshadowing is in the two scenes at the Chestnut Tree Café with Jones, Aaronson and Rutherford, and with Winston, not long after they were released. (E) At first, with Jones, Aaronson and Rutherford, the reader does not understand everything that is going on, but when Winston experiences the same things they did, it is all explained. (X) In both situations, the men were all sitting in silence in front of glasses of gin

flavored with cloves and with a chessboard near by and no one sitting
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anywhere close to them. (X) Another similarity is that Aaronson and Rutherford both had broken noses, which the reader can later assume was the result of something that happened to Jones in room 101. The only reason they know this, though, is because they know what happened to Julia when Winston betrayed her. (X) Also, the song on the telescreen that says, " Under the spreading chestnut tree/I sold you and you sold me" occurs in both scenes, and when it came on, first Rutherford, then Winston, began to cry. (I) Without reading the part when Winston is in the Café, however, the reader does not understand the meaning of the song on the telescreen or why their noses are broken. These are just some examples of events that are foretold and later explained.

Throughout the story, certain events are foretold through Winston's memories and dreams, which then explain all the details of what happened before. Three examples of this are Winston's last memory of his mother, the rats in room 101, and when Winston is in the Chestnut Tree Café. If Winston had paid attention to all the signs, maybe he could have lasted a little longer, but he grew careless, and because of that, he suffered the consequences. Sure, it would be nice to be able to see into the future, but it is not possible, so people will have to make do with what they have and watch for the signs, and maybe they can prevent something from happening by taking care of it right away.

Works Cited:

Orwell, George. 1984. New York: New American Library, 1977.