Winston and Julia: Rebels with Different Causes

In 1984, George Orwell presents a new world divided into three sections Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia. Oceania's government is Big Brother. Everyone who lives there is under constant surveillance and control of the government. In Oceania, lives a man named Winston Smith who is beginning to doubt everything that he has been told about the government. After eyeing a dark-haired girl who also works in the Ministry of Truth with him, she one day fakes a fall and slips Winston a note saying, "I love you." That moment begins a new relationship between Winston and the girl who you later find out is named Julia. Julia is someone Winston believes Julia believes he can relate to because they both have many similarities like hating Big Brother, wanting to rebel against the government, and sharing a mutual love and attraction for each other. However, that being the case, there are also differences between the two. There ages and appearance is a big one and also the fact that Julia, even though wanting to rebel does not really understand or care what she is rebelling against. Winston, on the other hand, is consumed with the lies Big Brother has been telling Oceania.

In the beginning on 1984, readers learn that Winston Smith is not as ignorant and loyal to Big Brother as the other Inner and Outer Party members are. He lacks the capability of double think and does not fully believe everything he is told especially since his job at the Ministry of Truth is rewriting history. He loves his job but begins to wonder if things were better before the revolution. He starts to perform little rebellious acts such as buying a diary at a black market shop to write down his thoughts and memories. In his diary, he blatantly writes "Down with Big Brother" repeatedly showing his hatred and truly disobedient behavior. After we meet Julia we learn that she too, does not favor and thinks ill of Big Brother and likes to involve herself in rebellious acts. Before Julia and Winston consummate their love for each other Winston asks her how many times she rebelled and had intercourse with other party members since it is strictly something they are told not to do and proudly Julia responds, "Hundreds of time—well, scores of times." Winston then tells her that he loves her even more for doing such things. Julia and Winston are both rebels who are love in with the fact that each other rebel.

While they share the passion for rebelling against big brother, there is a major difference between the reasons they are rebelling. Winston truly wants to bring down the government; he even fantasizes about it daily after starting his secret affair with Julia. However, Julia is more of a rebel without a cause. She understands she has the desire to hate Big Brother and stick it to the government anyway she can, but she does not fully understand nor care about what the government is doing. When Winston tries to share his disbelief over the fact the Party lied about Rutherford, Jones, and Aaronson being in Oceania at the time they were supposed to be out of the country committing treason, Julia just zones because frankly she does not really care. She even does not show enthusiasm over the fact Goldstein and the infamous Brotherhood may actually exist. This starts to bother Winston, and he even tells her that she is "only a rebel from only the waist down." That statement does not even bother her because she is only interested in her and Winston.
A reason in the apathy difference between Winston and Julia is related to the fact that their age difference is larger than what is usually deemed acceptable. Julia is a young, vibrant twenty-six year old while Winston is an aging thirty-nine year old. Winston, even though he does not remember much from before the revolution, was born and living in a time before Big Brother was always watching. He has glimpses and reoccurrences of memories from these times that even include his mother. He feels as though times were better before the revolution and seeks and desires the Golden Country he thinks could exist. This is his main motivation for all his traitorous acts. However, Julia was not around during that times and remembers nothing from before the revolution. The only ties she has to the past is a rhyme he grandpa taught her before he was vaporized. She was not even old enough to remember that airplanes were in fact not invented by the party.

Julia and Winston are both rebels set against Big Bother. They do not care to Doublethink and get a thrill out of acting traitorous. However, while they have that in common along with the mutual desire for each other, they have several differences. Winston is older than Julia and remembers the past when Julia cannot. In addition, Julia does not really understand the full concept of what she is rebelling against, and in fact, she does not really even care. She just believes it feels good. However, Winston dreams of the days before Big Brother and possess the desire to join the Brotherhood and bring down Big Brother.