

# Animal Farm

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*Animal Farm* (1945) is a satirical novella (which can also be understood as a modern fable or allegory) by George Orwell, ostensibly about a group of animals who oust the humans from the farm on which they live. They run the farm themselves, only to have it degenerate into a brutal tyranny of its own.



ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL  
BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE  
EQUAL THAN OTHERS.

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## Chapter 1

- Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength; and the very instant that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty. No animal in England knows the meaning of happiness or leisure after he is a year old. No animal in England is free. The life of an animal is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth.
- Why then do we continue in this miserable condition? Because nearly the whole of the produce of our labour is stolen from us by human beings. There, comrades, is the answer to all our problems. It is summed up in a single word--Man. **Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished for ever**
- Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals. He sets them to work, he gives back to them the bare minimum that will prevent them from starving, and the rest he keeps for himself. Our labour tills the soil, our dung fertilises it, and yet there is not one of us that owns more than his bare skin.
- Is it not crystal clear then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings? Only get rid of Man, and the produce of our labour would be our own. Almost overnight we could become rich and free. What then must we do? Why work night and day, body and soul, for the overthrow of the human race! That is my message to you, comrades: Rebellion!



No argument must lead you astray  
Never listen when they tell you that  
Man and the animals have a  
common interest, that the prosperity  
of the one is the prosperity of the  
others. It is all lies.

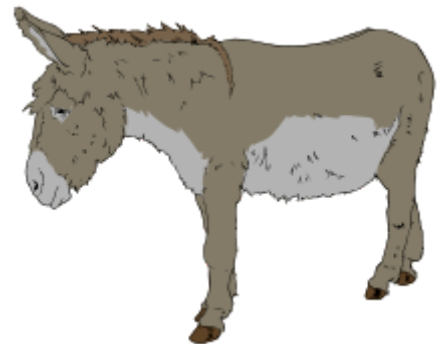
- Remember, comrades, your resolution must never falter. No argument must lead you astray. **Never listen when they tell you that Man and the animals have a common interest, that the prosperity of the one is the prosperity of the others. It is all lies.** Man serves the interests of no creature except himself. And among us animals let there be perfect unity perfect comradeship in the struggle. **All men are enemies. All animals are comrades.**
- The vote was taken at once, and it was agreed by an overwhelming majority that rats were comrades. **There were only four dissentients, the three dogs and the cat, who was afterwards discovered to have voted on both sides.**
- All the habits of Man are evil. And, above all, no animal must ever tyrannise over his own kind. **Weak or strong, clever or simple, we are all brothers. No animal must ever kill any other animal. All animals are equal.**

## Chapter 2

- "Comrade," said Snowball, "those ribbons that you are so devoted to are the badge of slavery. Can you not understand that liberty is worth more than ribbons?"
- The Seven Commandments:**
  - Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy*
  - Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.*
  - No animal shall wear clothes.*
  - No animal shall sleep in a bed.*
  - No animal shall drink alcohol.*
  - No animal shall kill any other animal.*
  - All animals are equal.*

## Chapter 3

- Nobody stole, nobody grumbled over his rations, the quarreling and biting and jealousy which had been normal features of life in the old days had almost disappeared.
- Old Benjamin, the donkey seemed quite unchanged since the Rebellion. He did his work in the same slow obstinate way as he had done it in Jones's time, never shirking and never volunteering for extra work either. About the Rebellion and its results he would express no opinion. When asked whether he was not happier now that Jones was gone, he would say only **"Donkeys live a long time. None of you has ever seen a dead donkey"** and the others had to be content with this cryptic answer.
- Four legs good, two legs bad.
- The early apples were now ripening, and the grass of the orchard was littered with windfalls.** The animals had assumed as a matter of course that these would be shared out equally; one day however, the order went forth that all the windfalls were to be collected and brought to the harness-room for the use of the pigs. **At this some of the other animals murmured, but it was no use. All the pigs were in full agreement on this point, even Snowball and Napoleon.** Squealer was sent to make the necessary explanations to the others. "Comrades!" he cried. "You do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in a spirit of selfishness and privilege? Many of us actually dislike milk and apples. I dislike them myself. Our sole object in taking these things is to preserve our health. Milk and apples (this has been proved by Science, comrades) contain substances absolutely necessary to the well-being of a pig. **We pigs are brainworkers. The whole management and organisation of this farm depend on us. Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for YOUR sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples.** Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back! Jones would come back! Surely comrades," cried Squealer almost pleadingly skipping from side to side and whisking his tail, "surely there is no one among you who wants to see Jones come back?" Now if there was one thing that the animals were completely certain of, it was that they did not want Jones back. When it was put to them in this light, they had no more to say. **The importance of keeping the pigs in good health was all too obvious. So it was agreed without further argument that the milk and the windfall apples (and also the main crop of apples when they ripened) should be reserved for the pigs alone.**



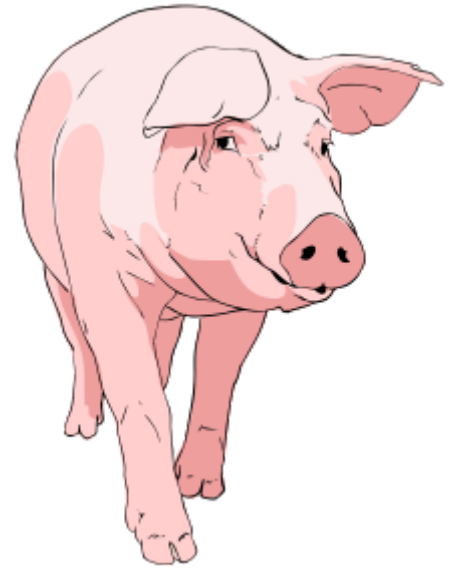
Donkeys live a long time. None of you has ever seen a dead donkey

## Chapter 4

- "No sentimentality, comrade!" cried Snowball from whose wounds the blood was still dripping. "War is war. The only good human being is a dead one."

## Chapter 5

- Until now the animals had been about equally divided in their sympathies, but in a moment Snowball's eloquence had carried them away.
- Do not imagine, comrades, that leadership is a pleasure. On the contrary, it is a deep and heavy responsibility. No one believes more firmly than Comrade Napoleon that all animals are equal. He would be only too happy to let you make your decisions for yourselves. But sometimes you might make the wrong decisions, comrades, and then where should we be?
  - Squealer



The importance of keeping the pigs in good health was all too obvious. So it was agreed without further argument that the milk and the windfall apples (and also the main crop of apples when they ripened) should be reserved for the pigs alone.

## Chapter 6

- All that year the animals worked like slaves. But they were happy in their work; they grudged no effort or sacrifice, well aware that everything that they did was for the benefit of themselves and those of their kind who would come after them, and not for a pack of idle, thieving human beings.
- Once again the animals were conscious of a vague uneasiness. Never to have any dealings with human beings, never to engage in trade, never to make use of money— had not these been among the earliest resolutions passed at the first triumphant Meeting when Jones was expelled? All the animals remembered passing such resolutions: or at least they thought that they remembered it.
- Afterwards Squealer made a round of the farm and set the animals' minds at rest. He assured them that the resolution against engaging in trade and using money had never been passed, or even suggested. It was pure imagination, probably traceable in the beginning to lies circulated by Snowball. A few animals still felt faintly doubtful but Squealer asked them shrewdly "Are you certain that this is not something that you have dreamed, comrades? Have you any record of such a resolution? Is it written down anywhere?" And since it was certainly true that nothing of the kind existed in writing, the animals were satisfied that they had been mistaken.
- Comrades, do you know who is responsible for this? Do you know the enemy who has come in the night and overthrown our windmill? SNOWBALL!
  - Napoleon

## Chapter 7

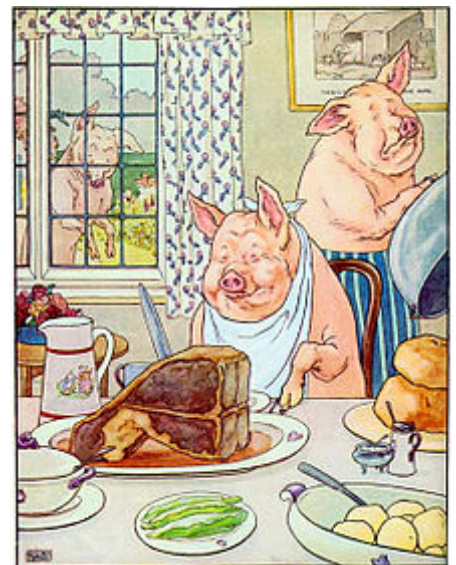
- Whenever anything went wrong it became usual to attribute it to Snowball. If a window was broken or a drain was blocked up, someone was certain to say that Snowball had come in the night and done it, and when the key of the store-shed was lost, the whole farm was convinced that Snowball had thrown it down the well. Curiously enough, they went on believing this even after the mislaid key was found under a sack of meal.
- "Ah, that is different!" said Boxer. "If Comrade Napoleon says it, it must be right."
- And so the tale of confessions and executions went on, until there was a pile of corpses lying before Napoleon's feet and the air was heavy with the smell of blood, which had been unknown there since the expulsion of Jones.

When it was all over, the remaining animals, except for the pigs and dogs, crept away in a body. They were shaken and miserable. They did not know which was more shocking—the treachery of the animals who had leagued themselves with Snowball, or the cruel retribution they had just witnessed. In the old days there had often been scenes of bloodshed equally terrible, but it seemed to all of them that it was far worse now that it was happening among themselves. Since Jones had left the farm, until today no animal had killed another animal.

- As Clover looked down the hillside her eyes filled with tears. If she could have spoken her thoughts, it would have been to say that this was not what they had aimed at when they had set themselves years ago to work for the overthrow of the human race. These scenes of terror and slaughter were not what they had looked forward to on the night when old Major first stirred them to rebellion. If she herself had had any picture of the future, it had been of a society of animals set free from hunger and the whip, all equal, each working according to his capacity, the strong protecting the weak, as she had protected the lost brood of ducklings with her foreleg on the night of Major's speech. Instead--she did not know why--they had come to a time when no one dared speak his mind, when fierce, growling dogs roamed everywhere, and when you had to watch your comrades torn to pieces after confessing to shocking crimes. There was no thought of rebellion or disobedience in her mind. She knew that, even as things were, they were far better of than they had been in the days of Jones, and that before all else it was needful to prevent the return of the human beings. Whatever happened she would remain faithful, work hard, carry out the orders that were given to her, and accept the leadership of Napoleon. But still, it was not for this that she and all the other animals had hoped and toiled.
- Animal Farm, Animal Farm,  
Never through me shalt thou come to harm!**

## Chapter 8

- A few days later, when the terror caused by the executions had died down, some of the animals remembered--or thought they remembered--that the Sixth Commandment decreed "No animal shall kill any other animal." And though no one cared to mention it in the hearing of the pigs or the dogs, it was felt that the killings which had taken place did not square with this. Clover asked Benjamin to read her the Sixth Commandment, and when Benjamin, as usual, said that he refused to meddle in such matters, she fetched Muriel. Muriel read the Commandment for her. It ran: "No animal shall kill any other animal WITHOUT CAUSE." Somehow or other the last two words had slipped out of the animals' memory. But they saw now that the Commandment had not been violated; for clearly there was good reason for killing the traitors who had leagued themselves with Snowball.
- Napoleon was now never spoken of simply as "Napoleon." He was always referred to in formal style as "our Leader Comrade Napoleon," and this pigs liked to invent for him such titles as Father of All Animals, Terror of Mankind, Protector of the Sheep-fod, Ducklings' Friend, and the like. In his speeches, Squealer would talk with the tears rolling down his cheeks of Napoleon's wisdom, the goodness of his heart, and the deep love he bore to all animals everywhere, even and especially the unhappy animals who still lived in ignorance and slavery on other farms. It had become usual to give Napoleon the credit for every successful achievement and every stroke of good fortune. You would often hear one hen remark to another, "Under the guidance of our Leader, Comrade Napoleon, I have laid five eggs in six days"; or two cows, enjoying a drink at the pool, would exclaim, "Thanks to the leadership of Comrade Napoleon, how excellent this water tastes!"
- At the foot of the end wall of the big barn, where the Seven Commandments were written, there lay a ladder broken in two pieces. Squealer, temporarily stunned, was sprawling beside it, and near at hand there lay a lantern, a paintbrush, and an overturned pot of white paint. The dogs immediately made a ring round Squealer and escorted him back to the farmhouse as soon as he was able to walk. None of the animals could form any idea as to what this meant, except old Benjamin, who nodded his muzzle with a knowing air and seemed to understand, but would say nothing.
- But a few days later Muriel, reading over the Seven Commandments to herself, noticed that there was yet another of them which the animals had remembered wrong. They had thought the Fifth Commandment was "No animal shall drink alcohol," but there were two words that they had forgotten. Actually the Commandment read: "No animal shall drink alcohol TO EXCESS."



Somehow it seemed as though the farm had grown richer without making the animals themselves any richer — except, of course, for the pigs and the dogs.

## Chapter 9

- For the time being, certainly it had been found necessary to make a readjustment of rations (Squealer always spoke of it as a "readjustment," never as a "reduction"), but in comparison with the days of Jones, the improvement was enormous. Reading out the figures in a shrill, rapid voice, he proved to them in detail that they had more oats, more

hay, more turnips than they had had in Jones's day, that they worked shorter hours, that their drinking water was of better quality, that they lived longer, that a larger proportion of their young ones survived infancy, and that they had more straw in their stalls and suffered less from fleas. The animals believed every word of it. Truth to tell, Jones and all he stood for had almost faded out of their memories. They knew that life nowadays was harsh and bare, that they were often hungry and often cold, and that they were usually working when they were not asleep. But doubtless it had been worse in the old days. They were glad to believe so. Besides, in those days they had been slaves and now they were free, and that made all the difference, as Squealer did not fail to point out.

## Chapter 10

- Somehow it seemed as though the farm had grown richer without making the animals themselves any richer — except, of course, for the pigs and the dogs.
- Four legs good, two legs *better!*
- **ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL,  
BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS.**
- The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which.

## Quotes about *Animal Farm*

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- In *Animal Farm*, though Napoleon and the pigs may not "own" the means to production in the technical sense of possessing a legal piece of paper that says they do ... the pigs behave as if they own the farm and have a canine police force to back up their claim.
  - Peter Edgerly Firchow in *Modern Utopian Fictions from H.G. Wells to Iris Murdoch* (2007), p. 106
- RYNN BERRY: I understand that you greatly influenced George Orwell while he was writing *Animal Farm*. Having reread the book since I became a vegetarian, I now find that it could just as easily be interpreted as an argument against man's inhumanity to animals. Perhaps someday it may be remembered better for its treatment of this theme than for its allegorical references to the Russian Revolution.  
MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE: Well, it's quite possible, because that might sink into insignificance. But the question of animals never will. And I profoundly believe that insofar as we are brutal to animals, insofar as we just use animals for our purposes, we are laying ourselves open to the danger that that will be done to us.  
RYNN BERRY: The farm depicted in *Animal Farm* is a rather benign, old-fashioned farm where the animals are free to pasture. What would Orwell have had to say I wonder, about the modern factory farm?  
MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE: I'm sure it would have disgusted him utterly; he would have loathed it. He loved animals, you know. And I think in some ways he understood them better than he understood human beings. I think his animals in *Animal Farm* are more alive than the characters in his novels.
  - Interview in *The Vegetarians* (Autumn Press, 1979), pp. 98-99

## External links

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  - [Animal Farm quotes analyzed; themes, symbolism, characters, teacher guide](#)
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