

Chapter X

All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.

(See [Important Quotations Explained](#))

Summary

Years pass. Many animals age and die, and few recall the days before the Rebellion. The animals complete a new windmill, which is used not for generating electricity but for milling corn, a far more profitable endeavor. The farm seems to have grown richer, but only the many pigs and dogs live comfortable lives. Squealer explains that the pigs and dogs do very important work—filling out forms and such. The other animals largely accept this explanation, and their lives go on very much as before. They never lose their sense of pride in Animal Farm or their feeling that they have differentiated themselves from animals on other farms. The inhabitants of Animal Farm still fervently believe in the goals of the Rebellion—a world free from humans, with equality for all animals.

One day, Squealer takes the sheep off to a remote spot to teach them a new chant. Not long afterward, the animals have just finished their day's work when they hear the terrified neighing of a horse. It is Clover, and she summons the others hastily to the yard. There, the animals gaze in amazement at Squealer walking toward them on his hind legs. Napoleon soon appears as well, walking upright; worse, he carries a whip. Before the other animals have a chance to react to the change, the sheep begin to chant, as if on cue: "Four legs good, two legs better!"

Clover, whose eyes are failing in her old age, asks Benjamin to read the writing on the barn wall where the Seven Commandments were originally inscribed. Only the last commandment remains: "all animals are equal." However, it now carries an addition: "but some animals are more equal than others." In the days that follow, Napoleon openly begins smoking a pipe, and the other pigs subscribe to human magazines, listen to the radio, and begin to install a telephone, also wearing human clothes that they have salvaged from Mr. Jones's wardrobe.

One day, the pigs invite neighboring human farmers over to inspect Animal Farm. The farmers praise the pigs and express, in diplomatic language, their regret for past "misunderstandings." The other animals, led by Clover, watch through a window as Mr. Pilkington and Napoleon toast each other, and Mr. Pilkington declares that the farmers share a problem with the pigs: "If you have your lower animals to contend with," he says, "we have our lower classes!" Mr. Pilkington notes with appreciation that the pigs have found ways to make Animal Farm's animals work harder and on less food than any other group of farm animals in the county. He adds that he looks forward to introducing these advances on his own farm. Napoleon replies by reassuring his human guests that the pigs never wanted anything other than to conduct business peacefully with their human neighbors and that they have taken steps to further that goal. Animals on Animal Farm will no longer address one another as "Comrade," he says, or pay homage to Old Major; nor will they salute a flag with a horn and hoof upon it. All of these customs have been changed recently by decree, he assures the men. Napoleon even announces that Animal Farm will now be known as the Manor Farm, which is, he believes, its "correct and original name."

The pigs and farmers return to their amiable card game, and the other animals creep away from the window. Soon the sounds of a quarrel draw them back to listen. Napoleon and Pilkington have played the ace of spades simultaneously, and each accuses the other of cheating. The animals, watching through the window, realize with a start that, as they look around the room of the farmhouse, they can no longer distinguish which of the cardplayers are pigs and which are human beings.

Analysis

"If you have your lower animals to contend with," he said, "we have our lower classes!"

(See [Important Quotations Explained](#))

The last chapter of *Animal Farm* brings the novel to its logical, unavoidable, yet chilling conclusion. The pigs wholly consolidate their power and their totalitarian, communist dictatorship completely overwhelms the democratic-socialist ideal of Animal Farm. Napoleon and the other pigs have become identical to the human farmers, just as Stalin and the Russian communists eventually became indistinguishable from the aristocrats whom they had replaced and the Western capitalists whom they had denounced. The significance of Napoleon's name is now entirely clear: the historical Napoleon, who ruled France in the early nineteenth century and conquered much of Europe before being defeated at the Battle of Waterloo in 1814, originally appeared to be a great liberator, overthrowing Europe's kings and monarchs and bringing freedom to its people. But he eventually crowned himself emperor of France, shattering the dreams of European liberalism. Rather than destroying the aris-

tocracy, Napoleon simply remade it around himself. Similarly, the pig Napoleon figures as the champion of Animalism early on. Now, however, he protests to the humans that he wants nothing more than to be one of them—that is, an oppressor.

Throughout the novella, Orwell has told his fable from the animals' point of view. In this chapter, we see clearly the dramatic power achieved by this narrative strategy. The animals remain naïvely hopeful up until the very end. Although they realize that the republic foretold by Old Major has yet to come to fruition, they stalwartly insist that it will come "[s]ome day." These assertions charge the final events of the story with an intense irony. For although Orwell has used foreshadowing and subtle hints to make us more suspicious than the animals of the pigs' motives, these statements of ingenuous faith in Animal Farm on the part of the common animals occur just before the final scene. This gap between the animals' optimism and the harsh reality of the pigs' totalitarian rule creates a sense of dramatic contrast. Although the descent into tyranny has been gradual, Orwell provides us with a restatement of the original ideals only moments before the full revelation of their betrayal.

Orwell uses emphatic one-line paragraphs to heighten the terror of this betrayal: the succinct conveyance of "It was a pig walking on his hind legs" and "He carried a whip in his trotter" drops this stunning information on us without warning, shocking us as much as it does the animals. Moreover, Orwell's decision to tell the story from the animals' point of view renders his final tableau all the more terrible. The picture of the pigs and farmers, indistinguishable from one another, playing cards together is disturbing enough by itself. Orwell, however, enables

us to view this scene from the animals' perspective—from the outside looking in. By framing the scene in this way, Orwell points to the animals' total loss of power and entitlement: Animal Farm has not created a society of equals but has simply established a new class of oppressors to dominate the same class of oppressed—a division embodied, as at the opening of the novella, by the farmhouse wall.

The final distillation of the Seven Commandments that appears on the barn—"all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others"—stands as the last great example of how those in power manipulate language as an instrument of control. At the beginning of the novella, the idea of "more equal" would not only have seemed contrary to the egalitarian socialist spirit of Animal Farm, it would have seemed logically impossible. But after years of violence, hunger, dishonesty, and fear, the spirit of Animal Farm seems lost to a distant past. The concept of inherent equality has given way to notions of material entitlement: Animal Farm as an institution no longer values dignity and social justice; power alone renders a creature worthy of rights. By claiming to be "more equal"—an inherently nonsensical concept—than the other animals, the pigs have distorted the original ideals of the farm beyond recognition and have literally stepped into the shoes of their former tyrannical masters.