

# Animal Farm : George Orwell

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# ANIMAL FARM: GEORGE ORWELL

- ◉ **Title of the Novel:** Animal Farm
- ◉ **Name of the novelist:** George Orwell
- ◉ **Type of novel:** political satire/  
Political allegory
- ◉ **Class:** B.A. II/ BCA II/BBM II (English)
- ◉ **Paper:** Subsidiary

# ANIMAL FARM: BRIEF INTRODUCTION

- ◉ 'Animal Farm' - an allegorical novella by George Orwell - first published in England on 17 August 1945
- ◉ story of the novel is told by an all-knowing narrator in the third person.
- ◉ It is about the rebellion of the animals of the farm against their unjust master.
- ◉ They hope to live a happy and free life after they have established their own rule.
- ◉ However, as things turn out they find that animal kingdom is as oppressive as was the old human regime.

# BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF CHARACTERS

- ◉ **Mr. Jones** - a parallel for Czar Nicholas II, the last Russian ruler
- ◉ **Old Major** - the old pig, an allegory for Marx/Lenin
- ◉ **Snowball** - Napoleon's partner at first, an allegory for Leon Trotsky, had a good way of realizing socialism
- ◉ **Napoleon** - the dictator pig, an allegory for Stalin, valued power for his own sake
- ◉ **Squealer** - the propagandist; represents power of language in political manipulation
- ◉ **Mollie** - the vain white mare, she's apolitical, only cares about herself
- ◉ **Benjamin** - the donkey, cynical, realizes what is really happening on the farm, but doesn't take action
- ◉ **Moses** - the raven, acts like a prophet/priest
- ◉ **Boxer** - the working class hero, sacrifices his life for the benefit of community

# PLOT: HOW THE NOVEL BEGINS

- The action begins when Old Major, the oldest pig on the farm, calls all animals to a secret meeting
- The Old Major tells them about his dream of a revolution against their cruel master Mr Jones.
- The Old Major dies three days after this speech.
- However, his speech inspires the more intelligent animals to have a new outlook on life.
- Three pigs - Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer - take the lead.
- Together they work out the theory of "Animalism".

# PLOT: HOW THE NOVEL PROGRESSES

- ◉ One night Mr Jones comes home drunk and forgets to feed the animals.
- ◉ The angry animals break out of the barns and run to the house, where the food is stored.
- ◉ They drive Mr. Jones off the farm.
- ◉ Now they become the master and name it Animal farm.
- ◉ They decide about seven commandments which they write above the door of the big barn.

# PLOT: SEVEN COMMANDMENTS

1. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.
  2. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings is a friend.
  3. No animal shall wear clothes.
  4. No animal shall sleep in a bed.
  5. No animal shall drink alcohol.
  6. No animal shall kill another animal.
  7. All animals are equal.
- ⦿ The commandments are summarised in the simple phrase: "Four legs good, two legs bad".
  - ⦿ The animals also agree that no animal shall ever enter the farmhouse, and that no animal shall have contact with humans.

## PLOT: MR. JONES RETALIATES....

- ◉ With the help of other men from the village, Mr. Jones tries to recapture the farm.
- ◉ But the animals fight bravely and manage to defend the farm.
- ◉ Snowball and Boxer receive medals of honour for defending the farm so bravely.
- ◉ Even Napoleon, who had not fought at all, takes a medal.

# PLOT: POWER CONFLICT

- ◉ Snowball does not like Napoleon taking a medal without fighting
- ◉ The two pigs often argue over the issue.
- ◉ Snowball presents his idea to build a windmill to produce electricity for the other animals
- ◉ Napoleon perceives danger and calls nine strong dogs.
- ◉ The dogs drive Snowball from the farm.
- ◉ Napoleon then defames Snowball as being in league with Mr Jones.

# PLOT: DEVELOPMENT WORKS

- The animals start building the windmill - a tough task.
- Gradually, the working-time goes up whereas the food rations decline - but only for the "common" animals.
- The pigs grow fatter and fatter.
- They tell the other animals that they need more food, for they are managing the whole farm.
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# TRADE: COMPROMISING BEGINS

- ◉ Pigs insist on having trade with the neighbouring farms.
- ◉ common animals upset - there has been a resolution that no animal shall trade with a human.
- ◉ But the pigs assure them that there never has been such a resolution - it was an evil lie of Snowball.
- ◉ Very soon, the pigs move to the farmhouse.
- ◉ The other animals remember - a commandment that forbids sleeping in beds
- ◉ They go to the big barn to look at the commandments.
- ◉ When they arrive there they can't believe their eyes, the fourth commandment has been changed to: "No animal shall sleep in bed *with sheets*".
- ◉ And the other commandments have also been changed:
- ◉ "No animal shall kill another animal without reason", and
- ◉ "No animal shall drink alcohol in excess".

# PLOT: WARNING OF DESTRUCTION

- Some months later a heavy storm destroys the windmill, which is nearly finished.
- Napoleon accuses Snowball of destroying the mill.
- He promises a reward to the animal that gets Snowball.
- He also explains that:
  - Snowball in reality never had a medal of honour
  - Snowball was always trying to cover up that he was fighting on the side of Mr Jones.

# PLOT: REBUILDING

- ◉ The rebuilding of the mill takes two years.
- ◉ A neighbouring farm owner Frederick attacks the animal farm because of Napoleon's undue favour to another farm owner Pilkington.
- ◉ The animals are able to defend the farm
- ◉ But the windmill is once again destroyed.
- ◉ The pigs decide to rebuild the mill again
- ◉ they cut down the food rations to a minimum.

# PLOT: FATE OF THE COMMON MAN AND THE PRIVILEGED ONES

- ◉ Boxer, the brave and committed horse, breaks down.
- ◉ He is sold to a butcher
- ◉ Napoleon tells that Boxer has been brought to a hospital where he has died.
- ◉ Three years later, the mill is finally completed.
- ◉ During this time Napoleon deepens the relations with the neighbouring farm
- ◉ One day Napoleon even invites the owners of this farm for an inspection.
- ◉ They sit inside the farmhouse and celebrate the efficiency of his farm - the animals work very hard with a minimum of food.
- ◉ During this celebration, all the other animals assemble at the window of the farm - look inside - they can't distinguish between man and animal.

# LET'S SUM UP

- ◉ *Animal Farm* is a stinging critique of the history and rhetoric of the Russian Revolution.
- ◉ Retells the story of the emergence and development of Soviet communism in the form of an animal fable.
- ◉ Allegorizes the rise to power of the dictator Joseph Stalin.
- ◉ *Animal Farm* offers commentary on the development of class tyranny and the human tendency to maintain and reestablish class structures even in societies that allegedly stand for total equality.
- ◉ The novella illustrates how classes that are initially unified in the face of a common enemy, as the animals are against the humans, may become internally divided when that enemy is eliminated.

# Thank

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