Book report Animal Farm
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Animal Farm
By George Orwell
First published in 1945

# Summary

Old Major calls all the other animals together and tells them that they are being oppressed and that there should be a revolution. The other animals are persuaded by his ideology, which is called animalism, and start following it. Old Major passes away not long after. A short while later the Mr. Jones’ employees forget to feed the animals. They think this unacceptable and execute the revolution they have been planning. With Snowball and Napoleon leading the revolution, it is a success and they take over the farm. Their first amendments are changing the name into animal farm, introduce a new flag, which is a green flag with a hoof and a horn, and introducing seven commandments, which are: “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 drink alcohol”, “No animal shall kill any other animal” and “All animals are equal”. After the animals have tried to run the farm by themselves for a few days, the humans try to take back the farm. Snowball fights at the frontline defending the farm. After the animals successfully fight off the humans, Napoleon makes up medals of honor and extends one to Snowball and one to himself. They animals then realize that there are responsibilities that need to be taken care of. Since the pigs are the smartest they take charge of the farm. Snowball and Napoleon get into disagreements about how the farm should be run, of which the biggest one is the building of a windmill. Snowball thinks that they should build a windmill to process the grain they farm. Napoleon is strongly against it. During a meeting about the issue, Napoleon enters with a pack of hounds, which he raised from when they were puppies, and ostracizes Snowball. He then tells the group that Snowball was a spy who was working for Mr. Jones. After that, Napoleon starts to favor the dogs and the pigs in multiple ways, like giving them more food than others. and uses the dogs to silence anyone. Napoleon then says that they should build the windmill and that he only told everyone that he was against it to get rid of Snowball. During the construction, which every animal works on with all their might, especially Boxer the horse, whose motto is ‘I shall work harder’, Snowball starts to sell products to farms nearby. When the windmill collapses during a storm because the walls are not thick enough, Napoleon gives Snowball the fault and tells the other animals that Snowball is sabotaging, which sets him in a bad daylight. Some don’t believe them, but Squealer keeps telling them that they are wrong and that Napoleon is right until they believe it. Napoleons next move is adding things to the seven commandments, which causes the pigs and dogs, the smarter animals, to be favored. When Napoleon lets the other animals work harder and longer, gives them less food while living in great luxury with the other pigs and with the dogs and when Napoleon openly executes animals that express that they are against what Napoleon is doing, it is becoming clear that animal farms starts to look more like a dictatorship every day. Boxer gets terribly sick because of his old age and because of the hard work he has been doing. Napoleon sells him to a glue factory and tells the animals that that Boxer was sent to a doctor in the city, but didn’t survive the operations. Short after, the pigs start walking on two legs and start oppressing the other animals even more, it is clear that the revolution has failed miserably and that they are off even worse than when they had to work for the humans. Napoleon changes the seven commands into one command: All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.

# Literary devices

The story is an allegory. An allegory is a like a metaphor, but more complex and uses symbolic figures, actions, imagery and events. The book is a parody on Communism. A way to know that the book is an allegory is by noticing the events and the characters that are similar to the real events and persons. There are multiple things similar.

The first example is that the ground principle of both animalism and communism is equality. Secondly, the flag of animalism is one color, green, and has a hoof and a horn on it, which symbolizes the lower or working class. The communist flag is also one color, red, and has a hammer and sickle on it, which also symbolize working class. The third similarity is Boxer. Boxer symbolizes the working class that does most of the work. This is symbolized by his hard work, his slogan is even ‘I must work harder’. In Soviet Russia, the working people worked very hard for the Soviet Union and were very poor. This is just like Boxer, he works hard for Animal farm and gets treated horribly. In the end, he literally works himself to death. The fourth similarity which shows it is an allegory is the lies and censorship. Napoleon changes history to make himself look good and Snowball look bad. He censors the animals that say otherwise and has someone that constantly tells everyone that what he is saying is the truth. Stalin also told lies about Trotsky to make himself look good and Trotsky look bad. He sent people that spoke against him to Siberia or killed them and Stalin controlled and censored the complete media. There are many similarities throughout the book, but I can’t remember them all.

# Character description

Old Major is the oldest and wisest pig on the farm. He is an inspiration for the other animals. He is the one that sees that they are all being oppressed and talks about a revolution and about a utopia where everybody is equal. He is thought to be an allegory for Karl Marx, but also an allegory for Lenin.

Snowball is one of the leaders of the revolutionized farm. He wants whatever is best for the farm and the animals, but Napoleon wants him out of the way and scares him away. Snowball is thought to be an allegory for Leo Trotsky. Trotsky was independent revolutionary and a big enemy of Joseph Stalin.

Napoleon is the leader of Animal farm that abuses the power he got because of his intelligence and uses the other animals to get what he wants. He makes it look like he wants the best for the animals while he only wants to help himself and the other intelligent animals, while he lets the working class, which are the animals, work themselves to death. After a while, he uses fear, lies, censorship and violence to obtain power over others. He leads the farm after Old Major, who is a representation of Lenin, so he is thought to be an allegory of Joseph Stalin.

Boxer is a horse that does most of the work without asking questions or doubting Napoleon. His personal motto is “I most work harder” He does whatever his leader says and literally works himself to death. He works as hard as possible without getting better of it and even getting worse because it. That is why he is thought to be a representation of the working class.
Squealer does and says whatever Napoleon want him to do or say. He doesn’t think critically about what Napoleon does and justifies everything that Napoleon says and does. Squealer is thought to symbolize the media in the Soviet Union. They reported ,without criticism, everything Stalin said, to the public.

# Personal opinion

I chose to write a book report about Animal farm because I had heard a lot about it, but had never read it. Another reason I chose this book is because I heard it is about communism and I think communism is very interesting, so I thought it might be interesting to read a book that mocks it. I liked the book a lot. The used words are easy to understand and the story is easy to follow, but there was a lot of deeper meaning and there were a lot of references to communism and leaders and events in communist Russia. I would certainly recommend the book to others. It is a book everyone should read at least once and should think about because it is a good representation of communism and its effects.

# Themes and motive

The theme is criticism on society. The whole book is criticism on communism. The farm is a small society is a metaphor for society and it makes it clear for the reader what happens in the normal society when a society becomes communistic. The book criticizes communism under Joseph Stalin in particular and shows that people need to think for themselves, or else it goes wrong.

Motives are “songs, poetry and slogans”, “lies and deceit”, “balances of power” and “the relationship between human and animal”

 songs, poetry, and slogans are ways to make people listen to you like happens in this story. First Old Major uses songs and slogans to persuade them to want a revolution. Later Napoleon uses different songs and poetry to control the animals. Lies and deceit are also thins Napoleon uses to keep the animals under control by telling them he wants the best for them and by telling them that Snowball wants to harm them. Balances of power is an important motive because the book shows that one person having power corrupts. It also shows that when a person power is driven off, a new person will claim the power. The farm animals represent humans. They change what they said earlier to justify what they are doing.

# Time & Setting

The story is set on a farm somewhere. As the names are English, I would guess that the farm is in England. There are no indications when the story is set. I think that is done intentionally because the way a society develops is always the same, especially the way it changes into a dictatorship