

# ANIMAL FARM



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## **'ANIMAL FARM'**

**© Blue Apple Theatre 2023 - adapted from the novel by George Orwell**

**ACT ONE:**

**PROLOGUE:**

**ALL ANIMALS (EXCEPT PIGS & DOGS) ON STAGE AS THEY WILL BE AT THE END: A HALTING,  
THEN CONFIDENT, THEN ROUSING AND ANGRY, REVOLUTIONARY VERSION OF 'BEASTS OF  
ENGLAND'...**

Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, beasts of every land and clime,  
Listen to my joyful tidings of the golden future time.  
All can see the day is coming, man will soon be overthrown,  
And the fruitful fields of England shall be trod by beasts alone.  
Rings shall vanish from our noses, and the harness from our back,  
Bit and spur shall rust forever, cruel whips no more shall crack.  
Riches more than mind can picture, wheat and barley, oats and hay,  
Clover, beans, and beets and grasses shall be ours upon that day  
Bright will shine the fields of England, purer shall its waters be,  
Sweeter yet shall blow its breezes on the day that sets us free.  
For that day we all must labour, though we die before it break;  
Cows and horses, geese and turkeys, all must work for freedom's sake.  
Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken well and spread my tidings of the golden future time.

**THE ANIMALS FREEZE IN REVOLUTIONARY STANCE**

**ORWELL & EILEEN WALK ON IN MID-DISCUSSION**

**SCENE ONE:**

ORWELL: Singing!? Animals!? Singing animals!? This is not me Eileen. This is not my style.

EILEEN: And that's the point Eric, *that's exactly the point.*

ORWELL: I set out to write an essay – and don't call me Eric - an angry essay about how Stalin has turned his back on the true spirit of socialism, and you think I should do...this!?

EILEEN: Yes... this. You know politics George, but I know people. It's what I'm trained in. And people care about people. They want to hear about people, get them to care and then you can sneak in your ideas.

ORWELL: But this isn't even people, *it's animals.*

THE ANIMALS: (whispered) Animals.

EILEEN: And if there's one thing people care more about than other people, it's animals.

ORWELL: Says who?

EILEEN: (gently mocking him) Have you heard of Walt Disney?

ORWELL: But, I mean...animals!?

THE ANIMALS: (whispered) Animals...

ORWELL: And *singing* animals! Is that what I am becoming, the Walt Disney of the left!? (almost to himself) I'm sure he's a racist – something about those white gloves that mouse wears – a bit too 'minstrel' for me...a bit too 'Al Jolson'...

EILEEN: The people love Disney.

ORWELL: The 'people' loved Hitler.

EILEEN: Your problem is that you see injustice everywhere..

ORWELL: That's because it is everywhere...

EILEEN: Well, maybe it is... (speaking away from him, almost to herself) but obviously it's harder to see injustice against women if you're a man...

ORWELL: (missing what she said, distracted) Sorry Eileen – what was that?

EILEEN: I said... 'trust me – try it, it might become a hit'.

ORWELL: Serious writers don't have 'hits'.

EILEEN: That's what writers who don't have hits say. And, by the way, a hit will pay the rent.

ORWELL: There can't be a happy ending...

EILEEN: We'll see.

ORWELL: There are no happy endings in life...

EILEEN: We'll see. You know you don't have to deal with major issues in a minor key...

ORWELL: That was good...you could be a writer.  
EILEEN: I am. I was. Come on George. Instead of an angry essay, what about a...a fable. A parable. A fairy tale...  
ORWELL: ...for adults...?

**IN A SINGLE UNSPOKEN MOMENT, WE SEE THAT ORWELL IS PREPARED TO GIVE THIS A TRY  
AS THE CREATURES ARE INTRODUCED THEY BREAK OUT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY FREEZE  
AND TAKE UP THEIR PLACE IN THE FARMYARD  
WITH NOTEBOOKS AND TYPEWRITER, ORWELL AND EILEEN BEGIN TO CREATE THE WORLD OF  
THE FARM – EXCITED, PLAYFUL...**

**SCENE TWO:**

ORWELL: So, to begin at the beginning.  
EILEEN: Who is who in this tale?  
ORWELL: All farms must have... a farmer...  
JONES: Gosh...I say...(Enters, a little tipsy, drinks from a jug. Looks around...) I do believe...there's a storm coming.  
ORWELL: Oh Farmer Jones – if only you knew.  
MRS JONES: Perfect – then I shan't need to water the roses..  
EILEEN: 'Perfect' Mrs Jones? Perfect? You say that now!. (a new thought) And all farms must have animals.  
ORWELL: Cows and goats to milk...  
MURIEL: He's got such rough hands...  
COW 1: And cold too...  
COW 2: He could be gentler...  
EILEEN: And bulls to...(a little embarrassed)...make more cows...  
BULL 1: It's a tough job but...  
BULL 2: ...someone's got to do it.  
ORWELL: Horses to pull the plough...this one is called.... 'Mollie'...  
MOLLIE: I'll pull no plough – but I'll pull the cart on Sunday with ribbons in my mane...  
EILEEN: And... 'Clover'...  
CLOVER: How is it you get ribbons, and my Boxer here only gets a battered old straw hat?  
FELIX: Mollie looks fine in her ribbons though, you must admit Clover.

BOXER/ORWELL/EILEEN:       And... Boxer.

BOXER:                        You have a point Felix and I'm happy with this hat – I'd want no ribbons if you offered them. I've no time for finery, I'd rather put my back to the plough any day.

ORWELL:                      Sheep for shearing and...well, you know...

SHEEP:                      (as one voice, in fear) Just for shearing, just for shearing!

EILEEN:                      And a host of other animals...Muriel the goat...

MURIEL:                      Pleased to meet you...

ORWELL:                      ...Benjamin the Donkey...

BENJAMIN:                    You think a Mule can be stubborn – you haven't seen anything yet.

ORWELL:                      ...and farm dogs and farm cats and chickens and a cockerel...

CHICKENS/COCKERELS: (in time with Cockadoodle-do) Such-A-Lot-To-DO! Such-A-Lot-To-DO!  
THE-DAY-IS Nearly-THROUGH! The-Day-Is-Nearly-THROUGH! Such-A-Lot-

ORWELL:                      (interrupting them ) THANK YOU! (to the audience) Don't you just love a cockerel? Where was I? Oh yes, and then there's...(knowing this is important)...

ORWELL/BOXER/EILEEN:       ...then there's *the pigs*.

BOXER:                      Now, a pig is an intelligent creature, clever as a dog, but maybe not so... 'moral'.

EILEEN:                      Life and soul of the party but you wouldn't want them to drive you home.

ORWELL:                      (as they enter) Napoleon, cunning and fearless, Snowball, a very clear thinker, Squealer – always eager to please the most useful pig around...and others...quite a gang of them.

BOXER:                      And then there was Old Major...and that's where we start.

**SCENE THREE:**

ALL ANIMALS: Breakfast work, lunch, work, supper, sleep. Breakfast work...  
Winter, spring, summer, autumn, supper, sleep, never shirk,  
Moon-fall and sunrise, month on month, years turn  
Day on day, round and round, crop grow, stubble burn  
Soil turns, life turns, work on work, task on task  
Food enough to keep us going, want for more but never ask  
Bone muscle sinew, work, work, work 'till we drop  
Income, business, grow and fall, we are profit, we are crop  
New life, old life, blinking eyes - final breath  
Manor Farm, cradle, grave, first and last day, birth and death....

ORWELL: Mr. Jones, of Manor Farm, was too drunk to remember to shut the hens in. With the ring of light from his lantern dancing from side to side, he lurched across the yard, kicked off his boots at the back door, poured himself a large brandy from his cellar, and made his way up to bed, where Mrs. Jones was already snoring.

ALL ANIMALS: Major's Dream

ORWELL: (a sudden thought) 'Major' can be a symbol for Karl Marx – in fact each animal could be a representation of the whole lot of them. Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky...

EILEEN: George...no one will care.

ORWELL: Readers and academics will be discussing this for generations...

EILEEN: George. No - one - will - care.

ORWELL: We'll see.

(PERHAPS A RECORDED VOICE & PUPPET HEAD & BODY?)

MAJOR: Comrades, you have heard already about the strange dream that I had last night.... I have had a long life, I have had much time for thought as I lay alone in my stall...  
...What is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. The life of an animal is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth...

...The soil of England is fertile, its climate is good, it is capable of affording food in abundance! But the whole of the produce of our labour is stolen from us. Our problem is summed up in a single word—

DOG 1: Fleas?

CLOVER: The whip?

MAJOR: Man. Man is the only real enemy we have. ...

...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. You cows that I see before me, how many thousands of gallons of milk have you given during this last year? And what has happened to that milk...? And you hens, how many eggs have you laid in this last year, and how many of those eggs ever hatched into chickens? And you, Clover, where are those four foals you bore, who should have been the support and pleasure of your old age? Each was sold at a year old--you will never see one of them again...

...You young porkers who are sitting in front of me, every one of you will scream your lives out at the block within a year. Even the horses and the dogs have no better fate. You, Boxer, the very day that those great muscles of yours lose their power, Jones will sell you to the knacker's yard...

...Almost overnight we could become rich and free. That is my message to you, comrades: Rebellion! I do not know when that Rebellion will come, but justice will be done. Fix your eyes on that, comrades, throughout the short remainder of your lives! But when you have conquered Man, do not adopt his vices. No animal must ever live in a house, or sleep in a bed, or wear clothes, or drink alcohol, or smoke tobacco, or touch money, or engage in trade.

...Never listen when they tell you that Man and the animals have a common interest. 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. And large or small, fur or feather, all animals are equal, all animals are comrades...

**MAJOR - WITH OTHER CREATURES JOINING IN AS THE SONG CONTINUES:**

MAJOR, THEN ALL ANIMALS: Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, beasts of every land and  
clime,

Hearken to my joyful tidings of the golden future time.  
All can see the day is coming, man will soon be overthrown,  
And the fruitful fields of England shall be trod by beasts alone.  
Rings shall vanish from our noses, and the harness from our back,  
Bit and spur shall rust forever, cruel whips no more shall crack.  
Riches more than mind can picture  
(the animals start to bleat, moo and nay as Jones enters)

JONES: (drunkenly rushing into the scene with shotgun & bottle in hand) What on earth is going on!? (he is aware that the animals shouldn't be gathered like this) What are you...how are you...you should be... (looks at his bottle, shakes his head and leaves, muttering)...I could have sworn that I...?

MRS JONES: (calling out) Come to bed you drunken old fool!

**AS JONES WALKS OFF THE ANIMALS CEASE 'PLAYING-DUMB'**

BOXER: Old Major was right – (we see him die) he didn't last long after his speech, but his words, his words had stuck...as if they had landed in...rich soil.

**SCENE FOUR:**

ANIMALS: Every mind is a field, every heart is a farm  
Ideas are like seeds; protect them from harm  
Nurture them, cherish them, shield them from cold  
So root can dig deep and plant can take hold  
As strong as an army that knows how to shoot  
the tree of thought, with trunk, branch and fruit -  
Rebellion, revolt! Tiny seed sown,  
on fertile land, planted and grown  
the grain, the loaf, not chaff nor crumb  
unstoppable! - an idea whose time has come

NAPOLEON: (speaking to the gathered animals) Animalism!

ALL ANIMALS: Animalism?

NAPOLEON: Animalism. Learn that word and learn it well, we enter a new time, a new era. Inspired by Major's dream, the old ways will be overturned. Listen to Comrade Snowball.

SNOWBALL: Comrade Napoleon and I –

BOXER: Comrade, you are comrades?



HENCH PIG: Comrades – yes!

SNOWBALL: We are, and so are you. Comrades, brothers, sisters. Equal. Not slaves. No longer.

BOXER: ‘Comrade’...hmm

SNOWBALL: Napoleon and I have -

SQUEALER: And me, and me –

SNOWBALL: And Comrade Squealer, we have collectively put our heads to what Major said. He saw a world we had never imagined, but now that we have seen what can come, we can not only imagine it, we can create it.

MINIMUS: Major’s dream is our reality, his vision is our new life  
Put an end to human vanity, a world to come, free of strife  
The past was of cruelty, the past was of hate  
The future? Of Hope! Of Joy! Ours to create!

BOXER: We? Create?

NAPOLEON: We will.

SNOWBALL: Rebellion my friends – rebellion!

CLOVER: Rebellion – just like Major said.

MOLLIE: Will there be sugar lumps after the rebellion.

NAPOLEON: There will not!

HENCH PIG: Sugar! No!

MOLLIE: But I shall still wear my ribbons in my mane?

SNOWBALL: You will not!

SQUEALER: Because ribbons are a badge of slavery.

HENCH PIG: Slavery!

NAPOLEON: And liberty is worth more than ribbons!

MOLLIE: (to the audience) No ribbons – I hope liberty is worth that price...

BOXER: But think Mollie, what times might be ahead of us...

MURIEL: They might be...but then again...

THE CAT: What will happen with the birds and the mice – would they be our comrades or would they still be...food?

BENJAMIN: We’ll see what comes. Donkeys live a long time...I am older than most of you and will be around after you – have any of you ever seen a dead donkey!?

THE CAT: Come on Benjamin – why the long face...?

BENJAMIN: Is that meant to be funny?

FELIX: Change is coming Benjamin...

BENJAMIN: Change? Everything changes and nothing is different – only the names, only the names...

### MUSIC

#### SCENE FIVE:

ORWELL: The idea, it lay there – dormant, waiting...

EILEEN: ...waiting for the right conditions.

BOXER: And those conditions came right when Jones, that failure of a farmer, loved his brandy more than his farm.

#### WE SEE JONES FALL DRUNK ONTO THE SOFA

BOXER: Has any of us been fed today? I have not.

MURIEL: Not I

SHEEP: Not us.

MURIEL: Maybe there is no food left!

NAPOLEON: There is food. It's all in the store shed.

SNOWBALL: Oats...

SQUEALER: Hay...

SHEEP: Meal...

ALL PIGS: Pig nuts!

HENCH PIG: Nuts!

MURIEL: Well, if he won't feed us, we'll feed ourselves!

NAPOLEON: Boxer, this is your moment. That great strength of yours is needed by all your comrades, all your brothers and sisters.

SNOWBALL: But listen... when that door is opened, only have what you need. No one should take more than any other. Don't just eat because you want to – we must have high standards. If the humans go low, we go high. After all, we're not animals...well, you know what I mean...

#### A SILENT SCENE - THEY BREAK INTO THE STORE SHED, START TO EAT, GET DISTURBED BY

#### JONES

SHEEP: It's Jones! Jones! It's time to run! Time to run. Whips! Whips!

SQUEALER: It's every animal for itself!

SNOWBALL: Stand fast Comrades, Think of Old Major's words.

NAPOLEON: This is the time he spoke of – time to fight. Rebellion!

SNOWBALL: Revolution!

## THE BATTLE STARTS AND FINISHES WITH JONES AND MRS JONES RUNNING OFF

- BOXER: Is that it?
- FELIX: We rebelled.
- CLOVER: Revolted.
- ALL THREE: And won!?
- HENCH PIG: We won!
- CHICKENS: Manor Farm is OURS! Manor Farm is OURS!
- NAPOLEON: Manor farm is ours! (he has a thought) The Harness Room! Everything must be destroyed!
- BULL 1: The whips! Destroy the whips!
- FELIX: The degrading nosebags and the halters and bits.
- BOXER: And the blinkers – we'll be blinkered no more, our eyes can see true.
- MURIEL: And the chains!
- SNOWBALL: And this will go down the well first...
- DOGS: What's that?
- SNOWBALL: That, sisters and brothers, is a castrating knife...
- HENCH PIG: Torture indeed comrades!
- MINIMUS: Down the well, on the fire  
Drowned in the depths, burned on the pyre  
Instruments of torture, no more shall we see...  
Freedom we saw born today. And the death of tyranny!
- BOXER: And the straw hat will burn – on this day which sets us free.
- MOLLIE: But not the ribbons, my pretty ribbons. I am free to wear ribbons I think?
- NAPOLEON: You are free FROM ribbons.
- HENCH PIG: Free!
- SHEEP: Manor Farm is ours, Manor Farm is ours!
- BOXER: *And the house?*
- CLOVER: No animal shall live in it – that's what Old Major said!
- SHEEP: Burn the house, burn the house!
- SQUEALER: Now, now, friends, comrades...let us not be hasty – to destroy the whips and chains and knives, yes, but the farmhouse? With house prices as they are right now? Perhaps the house could stand as...
- SNOWBALL: As a museum, a reminder to us all of the folly and luxury that humans lived in.
- NAPOLEON: Agreed by all? (a general agreement by the animals)

SNOWBALL: The farm is ours, but it cannot be 'Manor Farm' any longer...a new name for a new age...

**THE ANIMALS ALL START THINKING OF POTENTIAL NEW NAMES**

BULL 1: (an idea) Oh! Oh! 'Udder Farm'? (no one is very convinced)

CLOVER: Oh! 'Farm of the Beasts'? (some more positive mumbling)

BULL 2: Animal Manor? (much more positive mumbled responses)

NAPOLEON & SNOWBALL: (instantly knowing it will be liked) '*Animal Farm*'.

ALL ANIMALS: (whispered, as if it has a powerful magic) '*Animal Farm*'!

**THEY START TO HUM 'BEASTS OF ENGLAND' AS THEY GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS WITH POSITIVITY AND EXCITEMENT. DARKNESS – LIGHT FOLLOWED BY**

**SCENE SIX:**

- CHICKENS: The farm is ours but there's work to *DO!* Rise and shine, the skies are *BLUE!*
- NAPOLEON: Our feathered comrade is right. Brothers and sisters, we have a task ahead of us.
- SNOWBALL: The harvest is due to be brought in and we will make it a matter of pride to do it faster and better, with more care than ever before.
- NAPOLEON: The world is watching, and we must show them what we can do.
- SQUEALER: But before we start on the harvest – some news...
- BULL 2: News...
- MINIMUS: Animalism is the creed  
We must all learn by heart  
We'll be the first beasts to learn to read  
This morning marks the start
- SQUEALER: Reading!? Yes, reading. Knowledge is power and words are the means of passing on that knowledge, that wisdom. We, the pigs of Animal Farm have been teaching ourselves to read for three months.
- SNOWBALL: And we have reduced Animalism down to seven commandments which will guide our lives from this day forward.
- ORWELL: In white paint, on the side of a barn, they were...
- NAPOLEON: Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.
- SQUEALER: Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.
- SNOWBALL: No animal shall wear clothes.
- HENCH PIG: No animal shall sleep in a bed.
- MINIMUS: No animal shall drink alcohol.
- SQUEALER: No animal shall kill any other animal.
- NAPOLEON: All animals are equal.
- EILEEN: That's good...
- GEORGE: It is, isn't it?
- ALL ANIMALS: All animals are equal.
- NAPOLEON: Now to the harvest!
- BULL 1: But we have a problem!
- COW 2: Actually *we have the problem!*
- MURIEL: We have not been milked.
- COW 1: We are fit to burst!

NAPOLEON: Bring me buckets!

RAVEN: I remember that Jones used to often put the milk in with the chickens' mash.

SNOWBALL: Do not look to Jones as a model for the future – he is our past.

SQUEALER: We pigs will attend to the milk.

NAPOLEON: Now go! The harvest awaits!

ORWELL: So the animals trooped down to the hayfield to begin the harvest... joy in their hearts and a spring in their step..

ANIMALS: Shoulder to harrow, flank to the plough  
Cutting and raking and stacking and gleaning  
Harvest was profit for man until now  
New purpose, new energy, new glory, new meaning

I work for you and you work for me  
Our muscle is fuel and our pride is our oil  
We work with joy for we know we are free  
Brother and sister, together in toil

Faster than ever, and better than before  
No troublesome Jones to get in the way  
All animals join in, none can do more  
New harvest, new farm, new life, new day

With beasts for muscle and pigs for brains  
Everyone falls to what each can do best  
Ignore the aches and laugh at the pain  
We are comrades, rebels, glorious, blessed!

ORWELL: ...but when they came back in that first evening it was noticed...

EILEEN: ...that the milk had – of course it had George - disappeared.

ANIMALS: (confused and disappointed) oh...

ORWELL: But not to be discouraged, they worked and sweated to get the hay in!

BOXER: Even the ducks and hens worked all day in the sun, carrying tiny wisps of hay in their beaks.

ORWELL: In the end they finished the harvest faster than it had usually taken. It was the biggest harvest that the farm had ever seen and there was no wastage whatever...

EILEEN: ...the hens and ducks with their sharp eyes had gathered up the very last stalk.

BOXER: And not an animal on the farm had stolen so much as a mouthful.

SNOWBALL: This place now runs like clockwork...

SQUEALER: And each doing what he or she does best...

NAPOLEON: Us with our brains...

SNOWBALL: And Boxer with his strength. Have you heard him?

BOXER: (to the audience) I worked hard in Jones's day, then I worked for **him**. I shall work twice as hard now, because I work for us.

NAPOLEON: An inspiration – especially when I hear him say...

BOXER: I will work harder!

## MUSIC

### SCENE SEVEN:

CHICKENS: Sunday! Sunday! The working week is THROUGH! There's not a stitch TO DO!

ORWELL: But Sundays were busy for Snowball.

SNOWBALL: All animals must learn to read – so they can understand the commandments. Now how are you all doing?

ANIMALS: (in some confusion) A...B...D...F...L...

NAPOLEON: Do they really need to read Snowball? I wonder...life might be easier if they did not.

SQUEALER: Perhaps Comrade, not all Animals are natural readers – but still they can understand the basics of Animalism – it may just need to be more...basic.

HENCH PIG: Basic!

SNOWBALL: It needs to be short and sharp, easily understood. We need a three - word - slogan.

SQUEALER: 'Get - Animalism - Done'?

SNOWBALL: Nearly - not quite.

SQUEALER: 'Make - Animalism - Great - Again'?

SNOWBALL: I think I've got it. Listen everyone, if you want to know the one rule that governs our lives now. Repeat after me...Two Legs Bad....

ANIMALS: Two Legs Bad.

SQUEALER: (suddenly coming up with the second part with a smile) *Four Legs... Good.*  
SNOWBALL: Very nice.  
ANIMALS: (starting with the sheep, growing to all animals) Two Legs Bad, Four Legs Good,  
Two Legs Bad, Four Legs Good, Two Legs Bad, Four Legs Good, Two Legs Bad,  
Four Legs Good!

### MUSIC

#### SCENE EIGHT:

ORWELL: Let's not forget that the animals were not the only farmers in the county...  
EILEEN: ...other farmers...human farmers gathered at the Red Lion in the village...

#### THE FARMERS GATHER, DRINKS IN HAND

FREDERICK: I say Pilkington, I have been hearing things are afoot over at Manor Farm...'  
PILKINGTON: Oh yes, yes, Frederick? Do tell me more...  
MRS FREDERICK: Rumour has it, that Mr and Mrs Jones are having what they call 'marital problems'  
MRS PILKINGTON: I can believe that...what with all his drinking  
PILKINGTON: Me too!  
SMITH: Word in the village is that they, over at Manor Farm, can't control their animals any more...control over one's livestock is SO important.  
PILKINGTON: Indeed, use brute force I say! Animals are the lesser species, we must stay superior.  
BROWN: Quite right! Quite right!  
FREDERICK: As I was saying... the animals have turned on their owners. Mr and Mrs Jones have been run out of their own farm!  
BROWN: Run out of their own farm!  
ALL: What!?  
SMITH: Next you will be telling us that the animals are *running their own farm...* (scoffs)  
ALL: (scoff) Running their own farm!?  
FREDERICK: That is exactly what I am telling you  
MRS BROWN: That is exactly what he is telling you... wait what!?  
MRS SMITH: Ohhhh, it's a mutiny!!

#### MR AND MRS JONES COME RUNNING ON

MRS JONES: A mutiny indeed!



MR JONES: It's true, it's true and we just don't know what do...  
FREDERICK: Come now  
PILKINGTON: Come now  
SMITH: Let's not make a song and dance out of it  
MRS BROWN: Yes, let's not make a bloody song and dance out of it...  
MRS SMITH: Well.. [evil smirk] It could be bloody... we have a plan.  
BROWN: And our plan is this!

**THEY ALL GATHER IN A HUDDLE**

**THEY START SAYING THEN CHANTING 'TAKE BACK THE FARM' REPEATEDLY UNTIL...**

PILKINGTON: Attention!  
ALL: Attention!  
PILKINGTON: Front Line!  
ALL: Front Line! (moving into to position)  
PILKINGTON: Mid Line!  
ALL: Mid Line! [move to position]  
PILKINGTON: Back Line!  
ALL: Back Line! [move to position]  
PILKINGTON: Weapons ready!  
ALL: Weapons ready!  
PILKINGTON: Charge!  
All: Charge!

**IN A SERIES OF STILL IMAGES OR SLOW-MOTION MOMENTS, WE WATCH 'THE BATTLE OF THE COWSHED' ACTED OUT (WE SEE SNOWBALL INJURED, SQUEALER HIDING ETC)**

**IT ENDS WITH THE HUMANS RETREATING AND THE ANIMALS NURSING INJURIES**

**SCENE NINE:**

ORWELL: First they had claimed their farm.

EILEEN: And in -

ALL ANIMALS: 'The Battle of the Cowshed!'

EILEEN: - they had defended it.

BOXER: There were losses to be mourned but now, more than ever, they ran their own lives, made their own decisions. Unique. But still, on that farm, as on all others, the sun rose and the sun set, time passed and the seasons turned.

EILEEN: The animals were free but the work was hard...

ORWELL: ...and as things got harder some of the animals noticed tensions between some of the pigs.

SNOWBALL: My fellow animals – I have a proposal to put to you on this one of the coldest days of the year...

NAPOLEON: (mocking) A proposal! I am sure we are all desperate to hear your words Comrade Snowball?

SNOWBALL: (holding up plans) Imagine heated stalls...

NAPOLEON: What an imagination he has...

SNOWBALL: Imagine light on the dark evenings...

NAPOLEON: We can all imagine Snowball, we can dream our lives away if we choose to but imagining and delivering are two different things.

SNOWBALL: If I may speak!? Please...

NAPOLEON: Go ahead.

SNOWBALL: Thank you. Now...I have a proposal –

SHEEP: (interrupting at a nod from Napoleon) Two legs bad, four legs good, two legs bad, four legs good!

SNOWBALL: Napoleon – please.

NAPOLEON: (acting innocent) I will not stifle their free speech!

SNOWBALL: But you stifle mine! (indicating the others) You stifle ours! Listen my fellow animals, something dark is happening under your noses, we must not let it take hold, we struggled for freedom and for what, to have it taken away again while we turn the other way...

NAPOLEON: You've said enough. (calls out) Dogs!

MURIEL: Dogs!?

THE CAT: Do the dogs work for the pigs?!

## THE ANIMALS WATCH IN HORROR AS THE DOGS CHASE SNOWBALL AWAY

- NAPOLEON: I see you are shocked. As am I. But the time has come to tell you some terrible news. Snowball was a traitor! In league with Jones. Waiting for the right time to bring him back.
- SQUEALER: Snowball was a wolf in sheep's clothing.
- BULL 1: A pig?
- COW 2: A wolf?
- FELIX: Sheep's clothing?
- NAPOLEON: We could not have him among us. A hard decision had to be taken and I took it.
- BOXER: Do we not make our own decisions?
- FELIX: Do we not vote..?
- MURIEL: All animals are equal are they not?
- BENJAMIN: (to the audience) Things change...but nothing is different...
- NAPOLEON: I make the decisions now. There will be no more meetings, there will be no more collective rulings on this or that. That way almost had Jones back with his whip and which of us wants that?
- BOXER: Not !!
- BULL 1/COW 2: Not Jones, not Jones!
- MURIEL: But Snowball was a hero in the battle of the cowshed!
- SQUEALER: Was he?
- FELIX: He was injured.
- NAPOLEON: But was he, *was he really?*
- CLOVER: I think so.
- MINIMUS: Or was that false information...*fake...news...*
- BULL 1: I...I'm not sure.
- NAPOLEON: Exactly. Who can be sure in this time of traitors!? Who can you trust?
- SHEEP: Who can we trust! Who can we trust!?
- MINIMUS: When day is dark and evening light  
Where is wrong and where is right?  
Whips are forgotten and chains fall to rust  
All we are left with is faith, hope and trust.
- MURIEL: What the hell does that mean?
- BENJAMIN: I preferred her early work

NAPOLEON: Trust! Put your trust in me. We enter a new phase, still glorious, still heading towards a magnificent future, just... (looks for the right word) simpler. The revolution is over.

ANIMALS: Over?

SQUEALER: What Our Glorious Leader means is the revolution is...complete. There will be no more meetings, we will tell you what is to be and IT WILL BE. And tomorrow we will tell you about our (reaches for Snowball's dropped plans) plans for a Windmill!

ANIMALS: A windmill!?

SQUEALER: Imagine heated stalls, imagine light on the dark evenings!

MURIEL: Weren't those Snowball's plans?

SQUEALER: Were they? Or isn't that just what he'd want you to think...?

BOXER: Oh...clever.

BENJAMIN: (to the audience – he realises the animals are being lied to) Very clever.

SQUEALER: We, the pigs will do everything to stop Jones coming back – who wants Jones back!?

SHEEP: (in panic) No, no, not Jones!

NAPOLEON: Exactly – these meetings, and *all meetings*, are over.

#### **THE PIGS BEGIN TO LEAVE**

#### **THE OTHER PIGS ARE CONFUSED AND DOWNHEARTED...**

CLOVER: (trying to bring some cheer) Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken to my joyful tidings of the golden future time.

SQUEALER: (returning) And the singing of that song is, from this day, banned on this farm! The revolution is Complete! Done! Over! No need for 'Beasts of England'...not now.

MURIEL: When was that decided...?

SQUEALER: Today!

BENJAMIN: Today!?

HENCH-PIG: Yes – today!

BOXER: (mishearing) Yesterday?

HENCH-PIG: What!?

SQUEALER: Today!

BENJAMIN: Today?

HENCH-PIG: Yes-today!

CLOVER: (again mishearing, confused) Yesterday?

SQUEALER: Argh! It's banned! It was decided! It doesn't matter when. New songs will be provided. (exits)

EILEEN: (asking about how he thinks the story is working) So...?

ORWELL: So?

CLOVER: (looking to where they exited) Are they gone?

EILEEN: Worth carrying on with?

ORWELL: The jury's out – I normally deal in facts...truth...

BOXER: (looking to where the pigs have just exited) They are.

EILEEN: Maybe you're not dealing with facts here...but you are revealing truths...that's what stories do.

CLOVER: (starting in a whisper, trying to encourage) *Surely it can do no harm...*

ANIMALS: (joining in)...Bright will shine the fields of England, purer shall its waters be,  
Sweeter yet shall blow its breezes on the day that sets us free.  
For that day we all must labour, though we die before it break;  
Cows and horses, geese and turkeys, all must work for freedom's sake.

ORWELL: Talking animals...I'm just still not sure...I mean...will anyone get it?

ANIMALS: (very scared of being overheard) Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken well and spread my tidings of the golden future time.

**THEY FINISH IN TIMID, ANXIOUS WHISPERS, HUDDLED. IN FEAR OF BEING PERSECUTED FOR  
THEIR FAST-FADING BELIEF IN A BETTER FUTURE**

**END OF ACT ONE**

## ACT TWO

### SCENE ONE:

ORWELL: If any animal was the beating heart of the revolution it was...

EILEEN: Boxer.

ORWELL: And he's an allegory for a soviet miner called Alexey Stakhanov – now Stalin loved him...

EILEEN: George...

ORWELL: (remembering her words from earlier) 'No one will care' ... I get it.

EILEEN: So, Boxer....There was much that he did not fully understand, much that he found confusing but two thoughts led him on:

BOXER: 'Napoleon is always right'

ORWELL: and...

BOXER: 'I will work harder'

ORWELL: And he did.

BOXER: He got up earlier than any other beast and he returned to his stall later than any other. He knew that he was just a few years from being retired to the field beyond the orchard with a pension of five pounds of corn a day and, in winter, fifteen pounds of hay, with a carrot or possibly an apple on public holidays. But first... there was a Windmill to build.

### THE WINDMILL IS MADE DURING THE CHORAL SPEAKING

ALL ANIMALS: Carrying rocks, dragging stone,  
All but the pigs bear a load  
Testing muscle, testing bone  
Pulled through dirt, and dusty road.

Pile them high, load them higher  
Keep them straight, pack them tight  
Never complain, never tire  
Never argue, never fight

Rough for hooves and claws and beaks  
We pull together, work as one  
The pigs walk by, and no one speaks

Work not over, job not done

In baking sun, in wind and rain

Sweating beast in dusty heat

Load on load, and pain on pain

The last stone marks the job complete!

**THEY STEP BACK, TIRED BUT HAPPY THAT THEY HAVE DONE SOMETHING IMPORTANT**

EILEEN: They were exhausted and they slept a well-deserved sleep.

ORWELL: But it was a disturbed sleep as a terrible south-westerly wind blew in and shook the foundations of the barns and the sheds. A way off, the animals all heard a terrible rumbling but none was brave enough to look until the morning when they saw...

DOG 1: Our beautiful windmill

SHEEP 1: So close to being ready

HENCH PIG: We worked so hard

SHEEP1/DOG1/HENCH PIG: What has happened Napoleon?

NAPOLEON: (after a moment's thought) Snowball. Snowball happened here. Treachery. Betrayal. Treason. That is what happened here.

BOXER: But Snowball hasn't set a trotter on Animal Farm since she was chased off...

BENJAMIN: In truth I thought she was...(he is about to say 'dead' but thinks better of it)

NAPOLEON: (with great importance) Perhaps now you should know...

SQUEALER: (mirroring Napoleon's style) Yes, perhaps you should know...

RAVEN: Know what, Squealer?

SQUEALER: (realising he doesn't 'know what' after all) Know what Napoleon?

NAPOLEON: That Snowball has been sneaking onto this farm, our farm, at night.

CHICKENS: Is that true?

NAPOLEON: It's true!

SNOWBALL: (narrating) It was very useful to have a scapegoat –

MURIEL: Oi! Watch it with the 'goat' thing!

SNOWBALL: (unseen by the other animals when narrating) Excuse me – it was very useful to have 'a figure to blame'. (referring to himself) And one who couldn't answer back. If a churn was knocked over, or a bag of seed split, it was Snowball. Every

piece of bad luck or poor management has a dark shadowy figure to blame. And the animals had a new fear, and who (indicating Napoleon) would save them from their fear...?

NAPOLEON: And now that you know this much, perhaps you should know it all.. you should know that Snowball was in truth the leader of the attack on the Cowshed...

ANIMALS: Leader!?

HENCH PIG: (clearly making it up) I heard her say – er...‘Long Live the Humans’!

SQUEALER: ‘Down with animalism!’ I heard her clearly.

NAPOLEON: And that is when I sank my teeth in her flank. I remember the blood on her hide...

BOXER: (aghast) That was a...*a gunshot!*

NAPOLEON: Was it?

SQUEALER: Was it?

CLOVER: (struggling to make sense of it all) *I thought* it was...

BOXER: (believing he must be mistaken) Napoleon is always right.

NAPOLEON: For... complex reasons... we needed to let her remain with us. But we were watching. We will keep you safe from Snowball.

SQUEALER: Put your faith in us.

NAPOLEON: And all will be well. (a new thought) What do we say Comrade Boxer?

BOXER: Napoleon is always right...

NAPOLEON: And...

BOXER: I will work harder.

NAPOLEON: ..and that hard work will make a new windmill rise, a better windmill. A testament, a symbol. We will need equipment – pulleys, cogs, dynamos, for which we will need to trade...

COW 2: Old Major said we should not trade – not with humans...

SQUEALER: What old Major meant was we should not trade *for profit*...this is different...

DOG 2: What will we trade with?

NAPOLEON: (realising the shock this will cause) Eggs. (the animals gasp in horror) Get to work hens. For the cause.

**MOST ANIMALS MOVE OFF DESPONDENTLY...EXCEPT MOLLIE, CLOVER, THE CAT AND THE RAVEN**



**SCENE TWO:**

THE CAT: (whispering to Clover) Clover, I saw Mollie being stroked by another farmer and he gave her... some sugar...

CLOVER: (going over to Mollie, not wanting to be heard by the pigs) Mollie, could it be that you spend more time at the fence flirting with the man from the neighbouring farm than you do working for ours?

MOLLIE: That's not true.

CLOVER: It is true Mollie, he strokes your nose.

MOLLIE: Old Major said nothing about *stroking noses*.

CLOVER: That may, but...there are (quieter, not wanting to say it) there are sugar lumps and bunches of ribbons in your stall, hidden under the straw.

MOLLIE: (amazed at this) You spy on me!?

CLOVER: For your own good! This is a dangerous game Mollie.

MOLLIE: There are no games any longer Clover, that is the point. No games, no ribbons, no sugar. Life is not so sweet now.

ORWELL: Three days later Mollie disappeared.

EILEEN: For some weeks nothing was known of her whereabouts, then the raven reported -

RAVEN: I saw her on the other side of the village. A fat red-faced man who looked like a publican, was stroking her nose and feeding her with sugar!

THE CAT: I wish someone would stroke my fur and put ribbons in my hair.

MOLLIE: (walking on unseen, in narration mode) Her coat was newly clipped and she wore a scarlet ribbon.

ORWELL: She appeared to be enjoying herself, so the raven said.

EILEEN: None of the animals ever mentioned Mollie again.

SNOWBALL: (narrating) It wasn't only Old Major's words about 'trade' that seemed to change in the light of the real world. It had been noted that the pigs now used the house to work in *but also to sleep in...*

FELIX: I'm sure there was mention of 'No Animal Shall Sleep in a Bed'!?

SQUEALER: A bed *with sheets* – is what Old Major meant comrades, because, let's face it, a bed is a bed. A stall is a bed, a shed is a bed, but to have sheets...that would be wrong, so of course we do not use sheets!

**SCENE THREE:**

BOXER: (narrating) First it was the house, then it was beds...and there followed a very strange evening indeed...

**THE PIGS EMERGE, DRUNK, DANCE AROUND THE STAGE, THEN RETURN TO THE HOUSE**

ORWELL: Followed by an announcement the following morning.

SQUEALER: (clearly hung over himself) Comrade Napoleon is dying! And it will be his last wish to make this decree: the drinking of alcohol is to be punishable by death!

SNOWBALL: Followed later that day by...

SQUEALER: (still suffering) Great news! Comrade Napoleon will pull through.

BOXER: Followed the next day by...

SQUEALER: (back to normal now) The small paddock by the orchard is to be an experimental field to test out new crops...the first trials are to be with...(a little ashamed to say it) barley and hops.

BENJAMIN: (to the audience) What did I say? Everything changes and nothing is different – only the names, only the names...

BOXER: (narrating) The animals were confused about what they thought they remembered and what they really did – about what were Old Major's rules and what were perhaps just *guidelines*.

CLOVER: Benjamin – will you help me with the words please, the seven commandments of animalism sometimes seem to change – has something new been painted in there?

FELIX: It certainly looks freshly written.

BENJAMIN: It says, my friends, 'No animal shall drink alcohol...'

FELIX: (baffled) So it's the same then..?

BENJAMIN: (realising there are new words) '...to excess. No animal shall drink alcohol - to excess.'

.....

**SCENE FOUR:**

PILKINGTON: I say Frederick, our business with Animal Farm needs to have a clear way forward.

FREDERICK: A clear way forward indeed.

SMITH: We must move forward.

BROWN: Move forward!

MRS BROWN: From what we can see, the pigs seem to be doing a mighty fine job.

MRS SMITH: And turning over a mighty fine profit!

ALL FARMERS: A mighty fine profit [scoff, scoff, rubbing hands together]

MRS PILKINGTON: And as for Mr Jones, well, he is not helping oneself

MRS FREDERICK: Not helping oneself at all!

FREDERICK: I would trust the pigs over him any day!

SMITH: Here, here!

ALL FARMERS: [scoff in agreement, raise glasses etc...]

MRS BROWN: I do feel for Mrs Jones...but at the end of the day...

MRS SMITH: When all is said and done...

PILKINGTON: Trade wins!

FREDERICK: Trade wins!

ALL FARMERS: [scoff in agreement]

MRS PILKINGTON: Oh but wait, wait! If we trade with the pigs, then what do we tell the Joneses?!

PLIKINGTON: (knowing he has a great joke) Any old *porky*! Just don't ...*ham it up*!

MRS PILKINGTON: 'Porky' – very funny.

FREDERICK: 'Ham it up'! That's good!

ALL FARMERS: (laughing) Ham it up! Porky! Oh I say....!

**JONES & MRS JONES ENTER TO SUDDEN SILENCE**

MR & MRS JONES: Ham what up!?

FARMERS: (making excuses) Gosh! Is that the time? Must dash...another appointment...terribly sorry...

MRS JONES: (realising they have become a joke in the village) Come on you! (they exit)

.....

**SCENE FIVE:**

- SQUEALER: Make way for Our Glorious Leader, make way...
- MINIMUS: Friend of the fatherless! Fountain of happiness!  
Oh, how my soul is on Fire when I gaze at thy  
Calm and commanding eye, Comrade Napoleon!  
Thou art the giver of All that thy creatures love,  
Full belly twice a day, clean straw to roll upon;  
Every beast great or small, Sleeps at peace in his stall,  
And you, you watch over us all, Comrade Napoleon!
- SHEEP 2: (to the other animals) Full belly!? I haven't had a full belly since...
- BULL 1: (hoping not to be heard by the pigs) Clean straw!? As if...
- SHEEP 1: (in the same manner) That's not poetry, that's just telling stories...
- NAPOLEON: We thank you for all you do to help us trade with the outside world. It has brought benefits, but also problems. Lies are spreading that we run a poor farm here –
- DOG 2: (with authority) Not true!
- NAPOLEON: That there has been cannibalism...
- DOG 1: (the same) Not true!
- NAPOLEON: That food is scarce and we go hungry.
- CHICKENS: (forgetting the danger in stating facts) That is true... (all other animals 'shhh')
- NAPOLEON: To quash these rumours we will open the farm on Sunday to show these humans that we mean business!
- FELIX: So the humans will look around the farm, have a decent look, a proper-gander at the place?
- NAPOLEON: A what?
- BULL 1: *A proper-gander.*
- NAPOLEON: But we control what they see. Yes...a (experimenting with this new word) proper-gander...
- SNOWBALL: So it came to pass. (the humans wander through, inspecting the farm) The nearly empty food bins were filled with sand then topped with grain so they *appeared* full. Every mane was combed, every bed was freshly filled with straw, every hinge was oiled.
- ORWELL: There were no shortages at animal farm.
- BOXER: It ran smoothly, and productively.

SNOWBALL: And every animal was...

ALL CREATURES: Happy!

.....

**SCENE SIX:**

ORWELL: One by one the old laws changed.

EILEEN: Old Major's rules for life, bent out of shape.

ORWELL: Clearly no longer 'fit for purpose'.

SNOWBALL: But none was more shocking than when some creatures were accused of working with Snowball. Of working against Animal Farm. There were trials, there were purges. The dogs took some animals away and they were never seen again.

ORWELL: Disappeared, they were.

BOXER: And one day, as with so many others, the smell of fresh paint brought the creatures to the side of the barn to see what had changed now.

ALL CREATURES: "No animal shall kill any other animal...'

BOXER/EILEEN/ORWELL: '*...without cause.*'"

BENJAMIN: Well, at least the last one still stands – 'all animals are equal'. But Boxer, I am not sure how many are equal to you...

BOXER: (conflicted) I must work harder.

SHEEP: Must you Boxer?

BOXER: I work for **you**. And Benjamin, and Clover...

SNOWBALL: (narrating) And work he did – harder than any other animal...

SHEEP: ...longer than any other animal.

ALL CREATURES: Something had to give.

**WE SEE BOXER WORKING HARD, SUDDENLY HE CLUTCHES HIS HEART AND STAGGERS**

RAVEN: Boxer has fallen.

DOG 1: He's on his side..

DOG 2: He can't get up..

FELIX: Boxer has fallen.

MURIEL: His heart?

THE CAT: His lungs?

SHEEP 3: Boxer has fallen.

ORWELL: The word went round...

HENCH PIG: (to squealer) Boxer has fallen.

ORWELL: From mouth to ear, from field to field...

SQUEALER: (to Napoleon) Boxer has fallen.

NAPOLEON: (coldly, as if it's just a tedious problem to solve) Oh God.

BOXER: (to the other animals, who have gathered around him) It does not matter. I think you will be able to finish the windmill without me. There is a pretty good store of stone. I had only another month to go in any case.

SQUEALER: (to Napoleon) What do we say? What do we do?

NAPOLEON: (malevolently) This is what *you say*? And this is what *we do*... (they are clearly two different things)

BOXER: (making the best) To tell you the truth, I had been looking forward to my retirement. And perhaps, as Benjamin is growing old too, they will let him retire at the same time and be a companion to me.

SQUEALER: (shocked at the plan) Are you sure...won't there be anger...unrest...?

NAPOLEON: There's always an explanation...always...

BOXER: (warming to the idea) That field beyond the orchard is calling....with a pension of five pounds of corn a day and, in winter, fifteen pounds of hay, with a carrot or possibly an apple on public holidays.

SQUEALER: (addressing the animal around Boxer) All animals are equal and we will treat Comrade Boxer equal to what he has given this farm. First, he will be taken to the village –

BULL 1: Taken!?

SQUEALER: And *treated by the vet*.

COW 2: A human – the enemy?

SQUEALER: (brushing aside their concerns) Not so much the enemy now...Boxer will be - *made comfortable* – so, you can all go back to work. An ambulance will be sent for. Napoleon will organise it.

BOXER: (cheering his friends) Napoleon is always right.

ORWELL: And the next day all the animals heard the vehicle arrive. From the fields they watched as it drove from the gate to the farmhouse. From a distance they watched as Boxer struggled in.

ANIMALS: (as they wave him off) Goodbye Boxer. Good luck, get well soon (etc)

ORWELL: And then they closed the doors and Benjamin read the sign...

BENJAMIN: Fools! Fools! Do you not see what is written on the side of that van!

ANIMALS: (confused) What is it Benjamin!? What does it say? Help us with the words...

BENJAMIN/ORWELL: “Alfred Simmonds, Horse Slaughterer and Glue Boiler. Dealer  
in Hides and Bonemeal. Kennels Supplied.”

SNOWBALL: ...then others knew...

BENJAMIN: Dear God!

**A SLOW MOTION, GESTURAL SCENE WITH MUSIC AS EACH ANIMAL TRIES TO WARN BOXER  
WHO, DESPITE HIS ATTEPMTS, IS TOO WEAK TO ESCAPE.**

.....

EILEEN: You had to kill Boxer?

ORWELL: It had to be Boxer.

EILEEN: You're... (trying to think of the right word) harsh.

ORWELL: It had to be Boxer...

SQUEALER: (with pretend emotion) For three days the vets tried to help him. I was with him  
at the end. There was no hope. He was at peace. (awkwardly, as if expecting the  
question) And I want to take this opportunity to put your minds at rest – the  
ambulance he was taken in, some of you may have seen the sign-writing of the  
old vehicle owner. (discontented grumbles) The van has just changed hands, and  
the veterinary surgeon had not yet had a chance to re-paint it. (the animals  
seem to accept this as a truth)

NAPOLEON: The pigs will hold a banquet in memory of Boxer. He was the best of comrades.

CHICKENS: (panicked) The van is coming back –

SHEEP: Are they coming for us!?

NAPOLEON: Calm down, it is just a - (realising this is awkward) - just a delivery.

**THE VAN DRIVER WALKS NERVOUSLY AND DELIVERS A CRATE OF GOODS.**

It is just food for the banquet. Nothing but the fruits of... *honest trade*.

**THE PIGS TAKE THE CRATE AND LEAVE**

BOXER: (narrating) A box of food for a banquet? Hmmm. And a crate of whisky too? But  
what did they trade for it, the animals thought? What did they trade?

EILEEN: You *ARE* harsh.

.....

**SCENE SEVEN:**

ORWELL: Life moved on and some things stayed the same...

SNOWBALL: The animals were hungry...

BOXER: And some things changed...

BULL 2: The pigs! They're wearing clothes and walking on two legs!

**THE PIGS WALK PAST, POMPOUS & COMICALLY WOBBLY**

MURIEL: What happened to 'whatever goes on two legs is an enemy'?

BENJAMIN: New times, new slogans...

SHEEP: Four legs good, two legs better! Four legs good, two legs better!

FELIX: Were we not told that when the windmill was finished we would have heat in the cold, light in the dark?

BENJAMIN: We were. But what *we were told*, and *what we got*, were two different things.

BOXER: Young animals were born who knew nothing of the time when the farm was run by Jones. Many piglets were born of Napoleon who had merely grown fatter and wore more medals.

SNOWBALL: But surely on some things they could rely – one commandment would always remain. One at least would never change.

ALL CREATURES: (proudly) 'All animals are equal!' (then noticing new words and trying to read them)

CREATURES/ORWELL/SNOWBALL/EILEEN: 'But some... are... more equal... than others.'

**THIS FEELS LIKE THE LAST STRAW AND THE ANIMALS ARE AS IF BACK WHERE THEY WERE**

**UNDER JONES**

ALL ANIMALS: Breakfast work, lunch, work, supper, sleep. Breakfast work...  
Winter, spring, summer, autumn, supper, sleep, never shirk,  
Moon-fall and sunrise, month on month, years turn  
Day on day, round and round, crop grow, stubble burn  
Soil turns, life turns, work on work, task on task  
Food enough to keep us going, want for more but never ask  
Bone muscle sinew, work, work, work 'till we drop  
Income, business, grow and fall, we are profit, we are crop  
New life, old life, blinking eyes - final breath  
Animal Farm, cradle, grave, first and last day, birth and death....

.....



**SCENE EIGHT:**

- BOXER: The world turned, and the sun rose and set. The seasons came and went and the harvest was sown and reaped. They reaped what they had sown, year after year. Reap and sow. Reap and sow.
- SNOWBALL: And the animals who remembered the time before, the time of Jones, found it hard to know what was different now, what was better.
- ORWELL: It was the night the other farmers visited that did it...
- COW 2: Is this right? Napoleon in there smoking cigars...
- BULL 1: And drinking brandy?
- BULL 2: Is this what we fought for?
- SHEEP 4: Is this what Boxer died for?
- BENJAMIN: They read newspapers, they carry whips, Napoleon has a pipe in his mouth when he strolls in the farmhouse garden!
- THE CAT: Shh! Listen.
- PILKINGTON: Gentlemen!
- MRS BROWN: And ladies...
- PILKINGTON: A few words if I may. The relationship between humans and pigs may have got off to a poor start.
- FREDERICK: There was no trust, there was not a sense of common gain.
- BROWN: But we have seen what you have done here and we are impressed.
- MRS SMITH: You are more like us than you know.
- SMITH: And perhaps we are more like you than we thought.
- MRS BROWN: This farm is well run and it makes a healthy profit.
- PILKINGTON: The lower animals on Animal Farm do more work...
- FREDERICK: ...and receive less food...
- PILKINGTON: ...than any animals in the county.
- MRS BROWN: We face the same challenges.
- MRS SMITH: You have your lower animals to contend with...
- ALL FARMERS: ...and we have our lower classes.
- PILKINGTON: Gentlemen, raise your glasses. To Animal Farm! (They toast the farm)
- NAPOLEON: Gentlemen. Ladies. Thank you. You are right that we may have got off on the wrong foot in the beginning.
- MRS SMITH: The wrong hoof!

NAPOLEON: But we are as one now. We understand each other. You know that I have changed working practices on this farm to make it work better. I have changed the practice of animals referring to each other as 'comrade' – what an old-fashioned thing to do! And the old flag has had its white hoof and horn removed, so we now work under a simple flag of green from here on.

SQUEALER: And there is more to come, the best is to come...

NAPOLEON: In your toast there was one mistake, but you were not to know. From today the name of Animal Farm is abolished. Animal Farm is no more.

ORWELL/NAPOLEON: We are reverting back to what it was called before. 'Manor Farm'.

SQUEALER: To Manor Farm!

**THERE IS A SLOW-MOTION TOAST AFTER WHICH THE PIGS AND HUMANS START STUFFING THEIR FACES WITH FOOD AND DRINK – GROTESQUE AND OBSCENE**

EILEEN: As the animals outside gazed at the scene, it seemed to them that some strange thing was happening.

ORWELL: What had altered in the faces of the pigs, or was it in the faces of the humans?

EILEEN: Clover's old dim eyes flitted from one face to another.

ORWELL: What was it that seemed to be melting...

EILEEN: ...and changing?

SNOWBALL: There was no question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs.

BOXER: The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again...

ORWELL/EILEEN: (with an air of finality) ...but already it was impossible to say which was which. (they both close the notebook or put the last typed page on a pile as if the job is done)

BOXER: And **that** was the moment. (Eileen and George look surprised at this)

SNOWBALL: ...when the pigs reaped what they had sown.

ORWELL: (to the audience, confused) I'm terribly sorry, something odd has happened. This is not my ending.

EILEEN: (intrigued, but not worried) No. It's not.

BOXER: Something snapped.

ORWELL: (angrily) These are not - my - words!

EILEEN: I rather think, George, that...that's the point.

SNOWBALL: With all due respect...

BOXER: ...we didn't like your ending.

SNOWBALL: This is not your story...

BOXER: Not anymore.

ORWELL: It is my story! My - story!

EILEEN: But is it? Once it goes out into the world? Once readers read it. Is it yours then, or theirs? Don't you give it to the world? Or more precisely, they've bought it from you. *Honest trade*. You've provided a service – then it's theirs to do with whatever they want...?

GEORGE: Well...(thinking through it) I clearly can't win this and look like a decent socialist...so... (giving up) ...whatever...do what you will, it's yours! Fair point.

EILEEN: Come on..

**THEY PREPARE TO LEAVE...**

GEORGE: (a last thought shared with the cast and the audience) Just don't ever, what ever you do, over my dead body, *let Walt bloody Disney get his hands on this!* (Orwell and Eileen exit)

**BOXER AND SNOWBALL RESTART FROM A FEW MOMENTS BEFORE**

**EPILOGUE:**

BOXER: The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again...

SNOWBALL ...but already it was impossible to say which was which.

BOXER: And **that** was the moment.

SNOWBALL: ...when the pigs reaped what they had sown.

BOXER: Something snapped.

SNOWBALL: Reap, and sow.

BOXER: Scatter and harvest. Raise up and cut down. It was a moment where the animals could have said 'yes, we can live like this'...

BOXER/SNOWBALL: ...but what actually happened, was this...

ALL CREATURES: (the single word rising up from a deep place of anger, indignation and frustration) **NO!**

**THE PIGS AND HUMANS HEAR THE VOICES OUTSIDE, LIKE A MINOR QUAKE  
STARTING QUIETLY AND BUILDING, THE SINGING OF THE SONG MAKES THE PIGS AND  
HUMANS FLEE THE HOUSE AND THE FARM...**

Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken to my joyful tidings of the golden future time.  
All can see the day is coming, man will soon be overthrown,  
And the fruitful fields of England shall be trod by beasts alone.  
Rings shall vanish from our noses, and the harness from our back,  
Bit and spur shall rust forever, cruel whips no more shall crack.  
Riches more than mind can picture, wheat and barley, oats and hay,  
Clover, beans, and beets and grasses shall be ours upon that day  
Bright will shine the fields of England, purer shall its waters be,  
Sweeter yet shall blow its breezes on the day that sets us free.  
For that day we all must labour, though we die before it break;  
Cows and horses, geese and turkeys, all must work for freedom's sake.  
Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken well and spread my tidings of the golden future time!

**THE FINAL IMAGE IS OF THE ANIMALS AS IF ON THE BARRICADES, AGAIN FULL OF REBELLIOUS  
FERVOUR AND OPTIMISM**

**END**

**BOW, CURTAIN**

## SOME THOUGHTS ON THE TEXT

We hope that this version of *Animal Farm* is about as accessible as a young cast might find. We at Blue Apple have a reputation for going back to (and paying due respect to) the source material of whatever we work on, but we are not reverent – we reserve the right to be playful and even a little subversive or provocative in our approach. Purists will disapprove of this version, but young actors might find an optimism in it which suits them better than the original. We hope that girls and young women will find a value in our inclusion of Eileen Blair as a character – her contribution to the creation of the fable has been written out of history, but we are shining a light on her – even as we acknowledge (with some sadness) that George Orwell had feet of clay after all – and was simply a product of his patriarchal times. Not only can this piece be used to discuss totalitarianism, it can also open up debate around everyday sexism.

(suggested further reading: *Wifedom* by Anna Funder)

The final section asks big questions about who owns any work of art and who has the right to amend or adapt it. If Orwell had lived to see the Berlin Wall come down in 1989, would he have been so pessimistic? Perhaps he would have every right to be if he had lived to see Russian tanks roll into Ukraine again – there are no simple answers here, but we are by nature, optimists.

If fully-staged, both the farmyard and the world of the other (human) farmers can be approached pragmatically – lines can be divided up if you have lots of spare actors, or you can double up if running short of performers. This text has been created by a writer, director, cast and volunteers who know what it means to make the text work, not just on the page, but on stage in front of an audience.

**A thought on the troublesome *animal-ness* of the performance;** We didn't think any audiences needed to see actors strutting and prancing around pretending to be animals for the majority of this show, so we invoked what we think of as the *Toy-Story Protocol*. Our animal actors all had costumes which included a form of 'hood' and whenever humans were around the hoods went up and they performed as lumbering beasts (with attendant sounds) – but when no humans were watching the hoods came down and they acted as regular characters, with only the smallest hint of an animal trait in the voice, just to remind the audience now and again. It got more complex towards the end as the pigs begin to display human traits, but we think it made sense overall. It worked for us, but you may find a better convention to leap over this ever-tricky conundrum.

CHARACTER	ACTOR?
ORWELL	
EILEEN	
BOXER – HORSE	
MR JONES	
MRS JONES	
MURIEL – GOAT	
COW 1	
COW 2	
BULL 1	
BULL 2	
MOLLIE – HORSE	
CLOVER – HORSE	
SHEEP (ONE OR MORE)	
COCKERELS/CHICKENS	
DOGS X 2	
MAPOLEON – PIG	
SNOWBALL – PIG	
SQUEALER - PIG	
MINIMUS - PIG	
HENCH-PIG	
CAT	
RAVEN	
MR PILKINGTON	
MRS PILKINGTON	
MR FREDERICK	
MRS FREDERICK	
MR SMITH	
MRS SMITH	
MR BROWN	
MRS BROWN	



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