

## “The Seven Commandments”

A unanimous resolution was passed on the spot that the farmhouse should be preserved as a museum. All were agreed that no animal must ever live there. The animals had their breakfast, and then Snowball and Napoleon called them together again.

5 “Comrades,” said Snowball, “it is half-past six and we have a long day before us. Today we begin the hay harvest. But there is another matter that must be attended to first.”

The pigs now revealed that during the past three months they had taught themselves to read and write from an old spelling book which had belonged to  
10 Mr. Jones’s children and which had been thrown on the rubbish heap. Napoleon sent for pots of black and white paint and led the way down to the five-barred gate that gave on to the main road. Then Snowball (for it was Snowball who was best at writing) took a brush between the two knuckles of his trotter, painted out MANOR FARM from the top bar of the gate and in its place painted ANIMAL  
15 FARM. This was to be the name of the farm from now onwards. After this they went back to the farm buildings, where Snowball and Napoleon sent for a ladder which they caused to be set against the end wall of the big barn. They explained that by their studies of the past three months the pigs had succeeded in reducing the principles of Animalism to Seven Commandments. These Seven  
20 Commandments would now be inscribed on the wall; they would form an unalterable law by which all the animals on Animal Farm must live for ever after. With some difficulty (for it is not easy for a pig to balance himself on a ladder) Snowball climbed up and set to work, with Squealer a few rungs below him holding the paint-pot. The Commandments were written on the tarred  
25 wall in great white letters that could be read thirty yards away. They ran thus:

### THE 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.*
- 30 4. *No animal shall sleep in a bed.*
5. *No animal shall drink alcohol.*
6. *No animal shall kill any other animal.*
7. *All animals are equal.*

It was very neatly written, and except that “friend” was written “freind” and  
35 one of the “S’s” was the wrong way round, the spelling was correct all the way through. Snowball read it aloud for the benefit of the others. All the animals nodded in complete agreement, and the cleverer ones at once began to learn the Commandments by heart.

40 “Now, comrades,” cried Snowball, throwing down the paint-brush, “to the hayfield! Let us make it a point of honour to get in the harvest more quickly than Jones and his men could do.”

But at this moment the three cows, who had seemed uneasy for some time past, set up a loud lowing. They had not been milked for twenty-four hours,

45. and their udders were almost bursting. After a little thought, the pigs sent for buckets and milked the cows fairly successfully, their trotters being well adapted to this task. Soon there were five buckets of frothing creamy milk at which many of the animals looked with considerable interest.

“What is going to happen to all that milk?” said someone.

“Jones used sometimes to mix some of it in our mash,” said one of the hens.

50. “Never mind the milk, comrades!” cried Napoleon, placing himself in front of the buckets. “That will be attended to. The harvest is more important. Comrade Snowball will lead the way. I shall follow in a few minutes. Forward, comrades! The hay is waiting.”

55. So the animals trooped down to the hayfield to begin the harvest, and when they came back in the evening it was noticed that the milk had disappeared.

George Orwell, *Animal Farm*, chapter II

Illustration  
by Ralph Steadman  
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### Guidelines

1. Account for the change in the name of the farm.
2. Explain in your own words the “principles of Animalism”. What do they remind you of?
3. Pick out in the text elements referring to the pigs’ behaviour. What can it presage regarding their future actions?

4. Read the text again, keeping in mind the Seventh Commandment, “All animals are equal”. What is your reaction?

### Read on

Read on, until you reach the beginning of the passage p. 66 of this book (Text 2).

- What significant event has taken place?  
Tell the story in your own words.