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Chapter 7

IT WAS a bitter winter. The stormy weather was followed by sleet and snow, and then by a hard frost which did not break till well into February. The animals carried on as best they could with the rebuilding of the windmill, well knowing that the outside world was watching them and that the envious human beings would **rejoice** and triumph if the mill were not finished on time.

Out of **spite**, the human beings pretended not to believe that it was Snowball who had destroyed the windmill: they said that it had fallen down because the walls were too **thin**. The animals knew that this was not the case. Still, it had been decided to build the walls three feet **thick** this time instead of eighteen inches as before, which meant collecting much larger quantities of stone. For a long time the quarry was full of **snowdrifts** and nothing could be done. Some progress was made in the dry frosty weather that followed, but it was cruel work, and the animals could not feel so hopeful about it as they had felt before. They were always cold, and usually hungry **as well**. Only Boxer and Clover **never lost heart**. Squealer made excellent speeches on the joy of service and the dignity of labour, but the other animals found more inspiration in Boxer's **strength** and his never-failing cry of "I will work harder! "

In January food **fell short**. The corn ration was drastically reduced, and it was announced that an extra potato ration would be **issued to make up for it**. Then it was discovered that the greater part of the potato crop had been frosted in the **clamps**, which had not been covered **thickly** enough. The potatoes

dispetto

poco spesso

spessi

accumulo di neve

pure / scoraggiarsi

forza

venne meno

data per compensare

mucchio

spessamente

had become soft and **discoloured**, and only a few were **edible**. For days at a time the animals had nothing to eat but chaff and mangels. **Starvation** seemed to stare them in the face.

scolorite
commestibile
morire di fame

It was vitally necessary to **conceal** this fact from the outside world. **Emboldened** by the collapse of the windmill, the human beings were inventing fresh lies about Animal Farm. Once again it was being **put about** that all the animals were dying of **famine** and disease, and that they were continually fighting among themselves and had **resorted to** cannibalism and infanticide. Napoleon was well **aware** of the bad results that might follow if the real facts of the food situation were known, and he decided to make use of Mr. Whymper to **spread** a contrary impression. **Hitherto** the animals had had little or no contact with Whymper on his weekly visits: now, **however**, a few selected animals, mostly sheep, were instructed to remark casually in his hearing that rations had been increased. In addition, Napoleon ordered the almost empty **bins** in the store-shed to be filled nearly to the **brim** with sand, which was then covered up with what remained of the grain and meal. On some **suitable** pretext Whymper was **led** through the store-shed and allowed to catch a **glimpse** of the bins. He was **deceived**, and continued to report to the outside world that there was no food **shortage** on Animal Farm.

nascondere
incoraggiati

misero in giro
carestia

dati al
cosciente

diffondere
fin ora
tuttavia

recipienti
l'orlo

adatto / condotto
sguardo
ingannato
carestia

Nevertheless, towards the end of January it became obvious that it would be necessary to procure some more grain from **somewhere**. In these days Napoleon rarely appeared in public, but spent all his time in the farmhouse, which was **guarded** at each

qualche parte

sorvegliata

door by fierce-looking dogs. When **he did emerge**, it was in a ceremonial manner, with an **escort** of six dogs who **closely** surrounded him and growled if anyone came too near. Frequently he did not even appear on Sunday mornings, but **issued** his orders through one of the other pigs, usually Squealer.

si che emerge
scorta
strettamente

emanava

One Sunday morning Squealer announced that the hens, who had just come in **to lay** again, must **surrender** their eggs. Napoleon had accepted, through Whymper, a contract for four hundred eggs a week. The price of these would pay for enough grain and meal to keep the farm going till summer came on and conditions were easier.

deporre
cedere

When the hens heard this, they raised a terrible **outcry**. They had been **warned** earlier that this sacrifice might be necessary, but had not believed that it would really happen. They were just getting their **clutches** ready for the spring sitting, and they protested that to take the eggs away now was **murder**. For the first time since the expulsion of Jones, there was something **resembling** a rebellion. Led by three young Black Minorca **pullets**, the hens made a determined effort to **thwart** Napoleon's wishes. Their method was to fly up to the **rafters** and there lay their eggs, which smashed to pieces on the floor. Napoleon acted **swiftly** and **ruthlessly**. He ordered the hens' rations to be stopped, and **decreed** that any animal giving so much as a grain of corn to a hen should be punished by death. The dogs **saw to** it that these orders were carried out. For five days the hens **held out**, then they capitulated and went back to their **nesting** boxes. Nine hens had died in the **meantime**. Their bodies were buried in the

protesta / avvertite

covate

assassino

simile

galletto

impedire

travetti

velocemente / severamente

decretò

controllarono

resistettero

nidi

frattempo

orchard, and **it was given out** that they had died of coccidiosis. Whympers heard nothing of this affair, and the eggs were **duly** delivered, a grocer's **van** driving up to the farm once a week to take them away.

fu fatto sapere

debitamente / furgone

All this while no more had been seen of Snowball. He was rumoured to be hiding on one of the neighbouring farms, either Foxwood or Pinchfield. Napoleon was by this time on **slightly** better terms with the other farmers than before. It happened that there was in the yard a pile of **timber** which had been **stacked** there ten years earlier when a **beech spinney** was cleared. It was well **seasoned**, and Whympers had advised Napoleon to sell it; both Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Frederick were **anxious** to buy it. Napoleon was hesitating between the two, unable to make up his mind. It was noticed that whenever he seemed on the point of coming to an agreement with Frederick, Snowball was declared to be in hiding at Foxwood, while, when he inclined toward Pilkington, Snowball was said to be at Pinchfield.

leggermente

legno

ammucchiato / faggio

stagionato

ansiosi

Suddenly, early in the spring, an alarming thing was discovered. Snowball was secretly frequenting the farm by night! The animals were so disturbed that they could hardly sleep in their stalls. Every night, it was said, he came creeping in **under cover** of darkness and performed all kinds of **mischief**. He stole the corn, he **upset** the milk-pails, he broke the eggs, he **trampled** the **seedbeds**, he **gnawed** the **bark** off the fruit trees. Whenever anything went wrong it became usual to attribute it to Snowball. If a window was broken or a **drain** was blocked up, someone was certain to say that Snowball had come

sotto copertura

malefatte

rovesciava

calpestava / solchi / rosicchiava

corteccia

fognature

in the night and done it, and when the key of the store-shed was lost, the whole farm was convinced that Snowball had thrown it down the **well**. Curiously enough, they went on believing this even after the **mislaid** key was found under a sack of meal. The cows declared unanimously that Snowball crept into their stalls and milked them in their sleep. The rats, which had been troublesome that winter, were also said **to be in league** with Snowball.

pozzo

smarrimento

essere in combutta

Napoleon decreed that there should be a full investigation into Snowball's activities. With his dogs in **attendance** he set out and made a careful tour of inspection of the farm buildings, the other animals following at a respectful distance. At every few steps Napoleon stopped and snuffed the ground for traces of Snowball's footsteps, which, he said, he could detect by the smell. He snuffed in every corner, in the barn, in the cow-shed, in the henhouses, in the vegetable garden, and found traces of Snowball almost everywhere. He would put his **snout** to the ground, give several deep sniffs, and exclaim in a terrible voice, "Snowball! He has been here! I can smell him distinctly!" and at the word "Snowball" all the dogs let out blood-**curdling** growls and showed their side teeth.

presenti

muso

coagulare

The animals were **thoroughly frightened**. It seemed to them **as though** Snowball were some kind of invisible influence, pervading the air about them and menacing them with all kinds of dangers. In the evening Squealer called them together, and with an alarmed expression on his face told them that he had some serious news to report.

completamente spaventato

come se

"Comrades!" cried Squealer, making little nervous skips, "a most terrible thing has been discovered. Snowball has sold himself to Frederick of Pinchfield Farm, who is even now **plotting** to attack us and take our farm away from us! Snowball **is to** act as his guide when the attack begins. But there is worse than that. We had thought that Snowball's rebellion was caused simply by his vanity and ambition. But we were wrong, comrades. Do you know what the real reason was? Snowball was in league with Jones from the very start! He was Jones's secret agent all the time. It has all been proved by documents which he left behind him and which we have only just discovered. To my mind this explains a **great deal**, comrades. Did we not see for ourselves how he attempted-fortunately without success - to get us **defeated** and destroyed at the Battle of the Cowshed?"

The animals were stupefied. This was a **wickedness** far **outdoing** Snowball's destruction of the windmill. But it was some minutes before they could fully **take it in**. They all remembered, or thought they remembered, how they had seen Snowball **charging ahead** of them at the Battle of the Cowshed, how he had **rallied** and encouraged them **at every turn**, and how he had not paused for an instant even when the **pellets** from Jones's gun had **wounded** his back. At first it was a little difficult to see how this **fitted** in with his being on Jones's side. Even Boxer, who seldom asked questions, was **puzzled**. He lay down, **tucked** his fore hoofs beneath him, shut his eyes, and with a hard effort **managed** to formulate his thoughts.

"I do not believe that," he said. "Snowball fought

complotando
deve

molto

sconfinati

cattiveria
oltrepasando
capirlo

caricando in avanti

continuamente

proiettili / ferito
inquadratura

intrigato / conficcò

riuscì a

bravely at the Battle of the Cowshed. I saw him myself. Did we not give him 'Animal Hero, first Class,' immediately afterwards?"

coraggiosamente

"That was our mistake, comrade. **For** we know now – it is all written down in the secret documents that we have found-that in reality he was trying to **lure** us to our **doom**."

perché

attirare con lusinghe
sventura

"But he was **wounded**," said Boxer. "We all saw him running with blood."

ferito

"That was part of the **arrangement!**" cried Squealer. "Jones's shot only **grazed** him. I could show you this in his own writing, if you were able to read it. The plot was for Snowball, at the critical moment, to give the signal for **flight** and leave the field to the enemy. And he very nearly **succeeded** - I will even say, comrades, he would have succeeded if it had not been for our heroic Leader, Comrade Napoleon. Do you not remember how, just at the moment when Jones and his men had got inside the yard, Snowball suddenly turned and **fled**, and many animals followed him? And do you not remember, too, that it was just at that moment, when panic was spreading and all seemed lost, that Comrade Napoleon **sprang** forward with a cry of 'Death to Humanity!' and **sank** his teeth in Jones's leg? Surely you remember that, comrades?"
exclaimed Squealer, **frisking** from side to side.

preparazione

sfiorato

scappare
riuscì

scappò

saltò
affondò

saltellando

Now when Squealer described the scene so graphically, it seemed to the animals that they did remember it. **At any rate**, they remembered that at the critical moment of the battle Snowball had turned

ad ogni modo

to flee. But Boxer was still a little **uneasy**.

incomodo

"I do not believe that Snowball was a traitor at the beginning," he said finally. "What he has done since is different. But I believe that at the Battle of the Cowshed he was a good comrade."

"Our Leader, Comrade Napoleon," announced Squealer, speaking very slowly and firmly, "has **stated** categorically-categorically, comrade-that Snowball was Jones's agent from the very beginning-yes, and from **long before** the Rebellion was ever thought of."

dichiarato

molto tempo prima

"Ah, that is different!" said Boxer. "If Comrade Napoleon says it, it must be right."

"That is the true spirit, comrade!" cried Squealer, but it was noticed he **cast** a very ugly look at Boxer with his little **twinkling** eyes. He turned to go, then paused and added impressively: "I warn every animal on this farm to keep his eyes very wide open. For we have reason to think that some of Snowball's secret agents are **lurking** among us at this moment! "

gettò

sbattendo gli occhi

sono in agguato

Four days later, in the late afternoon, Napoleon ordered all the animals to assemble in the yard. When they were all **gathered** together, Napoleon emerged from the farmhouse, wearing both his medals (for he had recently **awarded** himself "Animal Hero, First Class," and "Animal Hero, Second Class"), with his nine huge dogs frisking round him and **uttering** growls that sent **shivers** down all the animals' **spines**. They all **cowered** silently in their places, seeming to know in advance that some

riuniti

conferito

emettendo / brividi

spine dorsali / acquattarsi

terrible thing was about to happen.

Napoleon stood **sternly surveying** his audience; then he uttered a high - **pitched whimper**. Immediately the dogs **bounded** forward, **seized** four of the pigs by the ear and **dragged** them, squealing with pain and terror, to Napoleon's feet. The pigs' ears were **bleeding**, the dogs had tasted blood, and for a few moments they appeared to go quite mad. To the amazement of everybody, three of them **flung** themselves upon Boxer. Boxer saw them coming and put out his great hoof, caught a dog in mid-air, and **pinned** him to the ground. The dog **shrieked for mercy** and the other two fled with their tails between their legs. Boxer looked at Napoleon to know whether he should crush the dog to death or let it go. Napoleon appeared to change **countenance**, and sharply ordered Boxer to let the dog go, **whereat** Boxer lifted his hoof, and the dog **slunk** away, **bruised** and **howling**.

Presently the tumult died down. The four pigs waited, trembling, with **guilt** written on every line of their countenances. Napoleon now called upon them to confess their crimes. They were the same four pigs as had protested when Napoleon abolished the Sunday Meetings. Without any further **prompting** they confessed that they had been secretly in touch with Snowball ever since his expulsion, that they had collaborated with him in destroying the windmill, and that they had entered into an agreement with him to **hand over** Animal Farm to Mr. Frederick. They added that Snowball had privately admitted to them that he had been Jones's secret agent for years past. When they had finished their confession, the

sorvegliando severamente
tono / mugolio
diressero / afferrarono
trascinarono

sanguinando

si lanciarono

inchiodò / gridò per pietà

aspetto
come conseguenza
si lanciò
ferito / ululando

dopo
colpevolezza

suggerimento

dare

dogs promptly **tore** their throats out, and in a terrible voice Napoleon demanded whether any other animal had anything to confess.

The three hens who had been the **ringleaders** in the attempted rebellion over the eggs now came forward and **stated** that Snowball had appeared to them in a dream and incited them to disobey Napoleon's orders. They, too, were **slaughtered**. Then a goose came forward and confessed to having **secreted** six **ears of corn** during the last year's harvest and eaten them in the night. Then a sheep confessed to having urinated in the drinking pool-urged to do this, so she said, by Snowball-and two other sheep confessed to having murdered an old **ram**, an especially devoted follower of Napoleon, by **chasing** him round and round a **bonfire** when he was suffering from a **cough**. They were all **slain** on the spot. And so the **tale** of confessions and executions went on, until there was a pile of **corpses** lying before Napoleon's feet and the air was heavy with the smell of blood, which had been unknown there since the expulsion of Jones.

When it was all over, the remaining animals, except for the pigs and dogs, crept away in a body. They were **shaken** and **miserable**. They did not know which was more shocking - the **treachery** of the animals who had **leagued** themselves **with** Snowball, or the cruel retribution they had just **witnessed**. In the old days there had often been scenes of **bloodshed** equally terrible, but it seemed to all of them that it was far worse now that it was happening among themselves. Since Jones had left the farm, until today, no animal had killed another animal. Not even a rat had been killed. They had **made their way** on to

strapparono

capobanda

affermarono

uccise violentemente

nascosto

pannocchie

montone

rincorrere

falò tosse

uccisi / code

cadaveri

sconvolti / infelice

tradimento

alleatisi

testimoniato

versamento di sangue

farsi strada

the little knoll where the half - finished windmill stood, and with one accord they all lay down as though **huddling** together for **warmth** - Clover, Muriel, Benjamin, the cows, the sheep, and a whole flock of geese and hens - everyone, indeed, except the cat, who had suddenly disappeared just before Napoleon ordered the animals to assemble. For some time nobody spoke. Only Boxer remained on his feet. He **fidgeted** to and fro, **swishing** his long black tail against his sides and occasionally uttering a little **whinny** of surprise. Finally he said:

"I do not understand it. I would not have believed that such things could happen on our farm. It must be **due** to some **fault** in ourselves. The solution, as I see it, is to work harder. From now onwards I shall get up a full hour earlier in the mornings."

And he moved off at his **lumbering** trot and **made for** the **quarry**. Having got there, he collected two successive loads of stone and dragged them down to the windmill before retiring for the night.

The animals **huddled** about Clover, not speaking. The knoll where they were lying gave them a wide prospect across the countryside. Most of Animal Farm was within their view-the long pasture **stretching** down to the main road, the hayfield, the **spinney**, the drinking pool, the ploughed fields where the young **wheat** was **thick** and green, and the red **roofs** of the farm buildings with the smoke **curling** from the **chimneys**. It was a clear spring evening. The grass and the **bursting** hedges were **gilded** by the level rays of the sun. Never had the farm-and with a kind of surprise they remembered that it was

rannicchiati / riscaldarsi

si dimenava / muovendo le mani

nitrito

dovuto / mancanza

faticosamente / diresse
cava

si accovacciarono

estendendosi
boschetto
frumento / spesso
tetti / arricciandosi
comignoli
sbocciando / indorati

their own farm, every inch of it their own property- appeared to the animals so desirable a place. As Clover looked down the hillside her eyes filled with tears. If she could have spoken her thoughts, it would have been to say that this was not what they had **aimed** at when they had set themselves years ago to work for the overthrow of the human race. These scenes of terror and **slaughter** were not what they had looked forward to on that night when old Major first **stirred** them to rebellion. If she herself had had any picture of the future, it had been of a society of animals set free from hunger and the whip, all equal, each working according to his capacity, the strong protecting the weak, as she had protected the lost **brood** of ducklings with her foreleg on the night of Major's speech. Instead-she did not know why -they had come to a time when no one **dared speak his mind**, when **fierce**, growling dogs **roamed** everywhere, and when you had to watch your comrades **torn** to pieces after confessing to shocking crimes. There was no thought of rebellion or disobedience in her mind. She knew that, even as things were, they were far better off than they had been in the days of Jones, and that before all else it was needful to prevent the return of the human beings. Whatever happened she would remain faithful, work hard, carry out the orders that were given to her, and accept the leadership of Napoleon. But still, it was not for this that she and all the other animals had hoped and **toiled**. It was not for this that they had built the windmill and faced the bullets of Jones's gun. Such were her thoughts, though she **lacked** the words to express them.

At last, feeling this to be in some way a substitute for

mirato

macello

promosse

gruppo di

osava dire le proprie
selvaggio / vagavano

lacerati

lavorato

mancarono

the words she was unable to find, she began to sing Beasts of England. The other animals sitting round her **took it up**, and they sang it three times over - very **tunefully**, but slowly and **mournfully**, in a way they had never sung it before.

seguendola
intonati / tristemente

They had just finished singing it for the third time when Squealer, attended by two dogs, approached them with the air of having something important to say. He announced that, by a special decree of Comrade Napoleon, Beasts of England had been abolished. From now onwards it was **forbidden** to sing it.

proibito

The animals were **taken aback**.

presi alla sprovvista

"Why?" cried Muriel.

"It's no longer needed, comrade," said Squealer **stiffly**. "Beasts of England was the song of the Rebellion. But the Rebellion is now completed. The execution of the traitors this afternoon was the final act. The enemy both external and internal has been **defeated**. In Beasts of England we expressed our **longing** for a better society in days to come. But that society has now been established. Clearly this song has no longer any **purpose**."

rigidamente

sconfitti
grande desiderio

ragione

Frightened though they were, some of the animals might possibly have protested, but at this moment the sheep set up their usual bleating of "Four legs good, two legs bad," which went on for several minutes and put an end to the discussion.

spaventati

So Beasts of England was heard no more. In its

place Minimus, the poet, had composed another song which began:

Animal Farm, Animal Farm,
Never through me shalt thou come to harm!

and this was sung every Sunday morning after the hoist
somehow neither the words nor the tune ever seemed to
come up to Beasts of England.

shall / you

essere all'altezza