

Animal Farm



Good morning, y'all. It is a spectacular day here in the mountains. In Athens, it's a gorgeous day for barbecuing some chickens. Particularly if those chickens are of the South Carolina variety. Our beloved Dawgs hope to make a quick feast of the offering from the East today, in what we hope is their coach's last season. Fingers crossed.

Anyway, I've been busier than a three legged cat in a sandbox. I no more got the rec room cleaned up from the Battle of Debate II, than I had to get ready for our AA meeting. Since the meeting is held in our rec room, I didn't have to go too far. I did wish I'd had time to shower and change my shirt. It can get right airy in there sometimes.

The meetings kind of run themselves really. There are rarely any new members, we're a pretty closed community here at TackyToo. That is not to say that there aren't some people in TackyToo that shouldn't be attending the meetings, they just haven't seen the light yet.

When I say "seen the light", I don't mean it in a religious way, although I know most do. I mean "seen the light", like you're walking on the railroad tracks at midnight and the 12:15 express is coming at you at 70 miles per hour. Now, you can either change your behavior and step off the tracks, or continue walking and let your hard headedness lead to your destruction. When you're caught up in the web of addiction that choice is harder than you think. Listen to me talking like a counselor.

Speaking of a counselor, the fellow that runs the meetings here at TackyToo is pretty doggone good. He's always here on time and conducts the meeting in a way that is respectful to all of us. It would be easy to look down on many of us, but our counselor makes all of us feel that we are deserving of his attention. The counselor tries to bring something new to each meeting to keep things interesting, and this meeting he had a corker.

Now, I know everybody knows how an AA meeting goes, at least you've seen them on TV. After we had gone around the room, and the people that wanted to speak, spoke, the counselor sprung a little twist on us. He asked us to think of a favorite character from a book that we identified with. The essence of it was, when you read about this character you felt something in your heart that made you identify strongly with that character. Who was that character and why?

Well, we got some fantastic answers. There was a surprising Holden Caulfield, and a very surprising Lolita, and of course a James Bond and a Harry Potter. The second A in AA prevents me from discussing who saw themselves as Lolita, but I will relate my own answer. I see myself as the horse in "Animal Farm", Boxer. I read the book in the ninth or tenth grade and for some reason the character just hit all of the right nerves.

For those of you unfamiliar with the work, "Animal Farm" was written by George Orwell, the "1984" guy, and dealt with the various forms of socio-political situations we are confronted with in the world. To give an over-simplification, the farm animals revolt against their masters, the farmers. After the revolt, the real struggle begins as each of the groups vie for power. Through it all, the work horse, Boxer, listens to the diatribe, watches the back and forth, and then gets up and goes to work each day. He gives his best effort every day to improve the lot of the group. Even though his size would make him the most powerful, he chooses to not exercise it. He's dedicated to the group right until the end.

Now, clearly that's not me, but perhaps it's who I wish I could be. Anyway, no other character has stood out as clearly to me as Boxer. Holden Caulfield is a distant second.

It's a short book, plenty of time to read it between now and kickoff. It might add a different dimension to our dismemberment of the chickens later today.