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Animal College

Ned Balbo

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Animal College

“Somehow it seemed as if the farm had grown richer without making any of the animals themselves richer—except, of course, for the pigs and the dogs. Perhaps this was partly because there were so many pigs and so many dogs. It was not that the creatures did not work, after their fashion. There was, as Squealer was never tired of explaining, endless work in the supervision and organization of the farm. Much of this work was of a kind that the other animals were too ignorant to understand.”

—ORWELL

Why are there so many Dogs and Pigs
among the deans and trustees at the top?
When did they learn to walk upon two legs?
What work absorbs them? Will they ever stop

e-mailing the edicts which fill up their days?
(Would having power seem pointless otherwise?)
What programs will they next reorganize,
downsize, or slash? And yet, we nap and graze,

Faculty Sheep, who quarrel over scraps,
bleating for more while waiting to be sheared ...
What flatteries lie trembling on our lips,
seeking approval, straining to be heard

by Canines whose replies consist of facts
and PowerPoints of prescience and precision?
Tenure is obsolete. Come, share our vision—

*websites, MOOCS, tech-generated texts,
and porcine deals sealed by a wink and handshake—
these are the future.* Must one more stadium
rise up while Boars and Barkers call, *Awake!*
Enrollment's dropped! and other tedium

that keeps the flock off balance, on all fours?
Increase class size! Impose a salary freeze!
When squeals and howls expose the sympathies
of those who profit while tuition soars,

whose Greater Good is served? More corporate kiosks,
raises for Hogs and Hounds, a Five-Year Plan
whose bullet points raise questions no one asks—
and for those sheepish creatures who remain,

high course loads and resigned obedience ...
Do Dogs and Pigs sleep soundly in the knowledge
that to serve them is to serve the College?
A few lost Sheep could tell the difference, once.