



# Why the Yak Had to be Shaved So the Code Could Be Shipped

A developer wanted to ship his code.  
But to ship the code, he needed a code review.  
To get the code review, he needed George to log in.  
To log in, George needed his laptop unlocked.  
To unlock the laptop, IT needed to reset his password.

To reset the password, they needed Sarah in Support.  
But Sarah was stuck at home, waiting on her dad John.  
And John couldn't leave until he finished buying a yak-hair carpet.

Which meant—before anyone could review the code—**someone had to go shave a yak.**

That's **yak-shaving**:  
the chain of unexpected tasks you must handle  
before you can do the *actual* task you started with.

In technical work—coding, sysadmin, devops,  
homelabs—  
you start with a simple goal,  
follow the thread,  
and suddenly you're fixing three systems you never  
meant to touch.

Yak-shaving isn't the distraction.  
It's the **real shape** of the work.

And *that* is why the Yak Pen exists:  
to map the messy, swirling, sideways path from  
“I just need to ship this code”  
to  
“...okay, fine, hand me the clippers.”