**NOT ASKING FOR TROUBLE**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of Sugarcube Corner, seen from down the street during the day. The ponies out for a little shopping and strolling are brought up short by the following words.*)

**Pinkie Pie:** (*from inside*) Oh, wow!

(*Close-up of the front door, whose top and bottom halves both fly open so she can bound out.*)

**Pinkie:** Oh, my gosh!

(*She peels out like a Formula One race car about to blow its engine, leaving an extremely confused Rainbow Dash hovering above the mailbox. Cut to the front door of the Carousel Boutique.*)

**Pinkie:** (*hopping past*) Oh my gosh, oh my gosh, oh my gosh, oh my gosh!

(*Rarity opens the top half to stare curiously after her. The fashionista is in her robe and has a towel wrapped around her mane, a mud mask treatment covering her face, and cucumber slices over her eyes; one of these falls free. In the Sweet Apple Acres orchards, Applejack has filled three baskets with fruit; she gets a loose apple in her teeth and adds it to the stash.*)

**Pinkie:** (*barreling through, upsetting tubs*) Oh my gosh, oh my gosh, oh my gosh! (*now o.s., distant; Fluttershy wings into view*) Sorry, Applejack!

(*The yellow pegasus flips one tub upright, and she and the perturbed farmer both stare after the pink bundle of energy. Cut to an overhead shot of the throne room in the Castle of Friendship and zoom in slowly. The central map table is bare except for a couple of books, and Twilight sits on her throne, reading a third one. A different angle frames her and the closed double doors, through which Pinkie’s silhouette can be seen galloping frantically back and forth.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from outside, through doors*) Twilight, Twilight! Where are you?

**Twilight:** (*closing/setting down book*) I’m in here, Pinkie! What is it?

(*Pinkie instantly zips into view to Twilight’s great surprise, since the doors remain untouched.*)

**Pinkie:** (*singsong, holding up a scroll*) You’ll never guess what I just got!

(*This one differs from the usual Canterlot missives in that its seal depicts the outline of a horned skull. Now one door flies open to admit the rest of their friends, Rarity having put herself fully in order.*)

**Applejack:** Is everythin’ okay? We heard a lotta “oh-my-gosh”-in’, and we weren’t sure if it was a good thing or a bad thing.

**Pinkie:** A good thing!

(*She tosses the scroll to Twilight, who catches it in her magic and brings it down to eye level.*)

**Twilight:** (*reading*) “To pink pony who lives with baked goods.” (*smiling, pulling seal off*) It’s from the yaks! (*Unroll; read again.*) “Yaks cordially invite pink pony to Yikslerbert Fest. Come. Now.” (*Pinkie darts in and slaps it down.*)

**Pinkie:** Prince Rutherford is officially inviting me to Yikslerbert Fest in Yakyakistan!

**Rarity:** What is Yikslerbert Fest?

**Twilight:** (*crossing to group*) It’s a sacred yak holiday. (*to Pinkie*) How did you get Prince Rutherford to invite you?

(*The invitee lounges casually against the table, propping one foreleg on the edge.*)

**Pinkie:** I subtly hinted for an invitation in my letters to him.

(*Wavering dissolve to a close-up of Prince Rutherford, the short-tempered ruler of Yakyakistan who visited Ponyville with his entourage in “Party Pooped.” He is on his home turf, and one of his subjects holds a pink scroll at eye level in his mouth.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over, dictating*) “May I please come to Yikslerbert Fest?” (*The attendant brings out another letter.*) “Pretty please?” (*Another.*) “Pretty please?” (*More and more.*) “Pretty please? Pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty please?”

(*Rutherford recoils in horror at the sheer volume of correspondence, and the camera zooms out just enough to frame the saddlebags stuffed with scrolls on the second yak’s back. He is delivering the mail, and the same mare has written every single piece of it. Another wavering dissolve shifts the scene back to the throne room.*)

**Pinkie:** After my seventeenth scroll, I think he picked up what I was putting down.

(*She drops to all fours with a giddy giggle and trots rapidly in place, while confused looks pass among four of the five spectators. Rainbow is the one exception with her humoring smile. Fade to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to Twilight, now seated on her throne and reading the invitation as Pinkie trots and giggles atop the table.*)

**Twilight:** (*setting it down*) You know, we still don’t know a lot about the yaks. So I think you should definitely go to Yikslerbert Fest, Pinkie. (*General agreement from the four at the door.*)

**Fluttershy:** Fostering friendships is what ponies do.

**Pinkie:** (*saluting, dropping to haunches*) I won’t let you down! It’s an honor to be the official friendship ambassador to the yaks!

**Twilight:** Um, that’s not an official position. (*Pinkie pops up next to her.*)

**Pinkie:** Yet. (*slyly*) You’re the Princess of Friendship. You can make it happen.

(*On the end of this, she backs away while waving her front hooves slowly and calculatingly in front of herself.*)

**Twilight:** (*rolling eyes, pushing scroll away*) Okay, you got it.

**Pinkie:** (*impatiently, clearing throat*) You have to make it official!

**Twilight:** (*sighing wearily*) Right.

(*Now she spreads her wings and stands up on the throne’s cushion.*)

**Twilight:** I hereby make Pinkie Pie the official friendship ambassador to the yaks.

(*Folding her wings in, she levitates a bookmark up from the table—a strip of gold ribbon with six shorter pieces attached at one end, each in the coat color of one of the six mares. These are swiftly tied together in a bow, and she floats the impromptu badge of office over and attaches it to Pinkie’s chest.*)

**Pinkie:** This is officially… (*jumping up*) …the most exciting day of my life!

(*Wipe to a long shot of the group’s hot-air balloon drifting through peaceful skies. Pinkie is running solo, but a tiny speck is visible on the basket’s rail. A close-up picks out her pet alligator Gummy along for the ride. The blue-violet eyes blink slowly and not quite in sync.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s,, waving a hoof in his face*) Yoo-hoo? Gummy? (*Cut to frame both.*) Pay attention! We’re in the middle of an official friendship ambassador road-trip game!

(*She is no longer wearing the badge, and she peers intently at Gummy, who responds with another out-of-rhythm blink.*)

**Pinkie:** That’s better. (*pulling badge from mane with forelock, holding it to one eye*) Okay. I spy, with my official friendship eye, something that is blue.

(*He offers no guesses whatsoever as the balloon continues its journey. Around it, the scenery dissolves to a range of cloudy, snowy mountain peaks and the sky darkens slightly to mark the passage of some hours. Pinkie gasps happily and leans over the side of the basket for a look toward ground level; cut to the great wooden yak totems that flank the closed gates of Yakyakistan as she and Gummy drift down.*)

**Pinkie:** We’re here! (*They come in for a landing just outside the gates.*) Oh, and by the way, the answer was “sky.” I win! (*Gummy sits stock-still.*) Yeah, I know. That was a hard one, Gummy.

(*She pulls the badge off her forelock and tucks it away on the end of this, then picks him up.*)

**Pinkie:** (*twirling him*) You’re the best official friendship travel companion ever!

(*A hug to the baby alligator, and she bounds over the side with him and splats into the snow. Placing him on her back, she hops toward the now-slightly-open gates, but a sudden tremor stops her short and shakes him loose.*)

**Pinkie:** What is going on?

(*They peek through the opening once the ruckus or fracas dies down. Cut to Rutherford on the other side, among a cluster of huts with straw roofs; some are decorated with strings of pennants.*)

**Rutherford:** Yaks destroy!

**Rutherford, Yaks:** (*stomping/kicking logs*) Yaks destroy!

**Pinkie:** Yikes!

(*The cause explained, then. They are gathered in a rough town square of packed dirt ringed by snow, and torches on tall poles blaze at the outer wall. Amid the hailstorm of kicked-up splinters, the massive ruler stops and laughs once he looks toward the gates.*)

**Rutherford:** (*crossing to them*) Pink pony! (*Pinkie and Gummy are now inside; she bows.*)

**Pinkie:** It’s an honor to— (*The tremors resume.*) —uh, be here, Prince! (*She falls to her belly…*) Uh, did something terrible happen? (*…then gets upright in a panic.*) Is Yikslerbert Fest canceled?

**Rutherford:** No! (*gesturing around*) *This* Yikslerbert Fest!

(*Cut to the other yaks, busily smashing up assorted wooden items.*)

**Rutherford:** (*from o.s., gesturing at them*) Where yaks get together to stomp!

**Pinkie:** Ohhhh! (*moving forward*) I didn’t know that was part of the sacred holiday. (*She and Rutherford walk side by side; Gummy no longer with her.*) So this angry display of destruction is part of the festivities! Huh. And here I thought you yaks were just in a bad mood. (*Both stop.*)

**Rutherford:** No! Stomping relaxes yaks.

(*He bounds ahead to a stray log, a yell rising in his throat, and smashes it to kindling with a few powerful blows from his front hooves. The last strike is a headbutt delivered into the ground; he stands up from it with fragments embedded in his shaggy mane.*)

**Rutherford:** Yak’s head never been so clear!

(*They move ahead through the frenzy of destruction, Pinkie hopping and Rutherford walking.*)

**Pinkie:** This is *awesome!*

(*She targets a loose branch and bashes at it with gusto, voicing her best savage yell to go along with it. Now Rutherford’s head is clean of debris.*)

**Rutherford:** STOOOOOP!! (*All do so; he looms over Pinkie.*) Pink pony better check self before wreck self!

(*Cut to Pinkie, hunkered down on the ground in his shadow with the branch she has broken.*)

**Rutherford:** (*from o.s., pointing at it*) That is century-old sacred yak twig— (*Pan to him.*) —passed down from generation to generation. (*She straightens partway up with a shocked gasp.*)

**Pinkie:** Oh, no! I’m so sorry! I was just trying to get into the spirit of Yikslerbert Fest! (*Shuddering with fear, she bends down to gather the pieces.*) Maybe I can fix it.

(*She works herself to the brink of hyperventilation as he scowls and snorts out steam—and then he voices a hefty laugh.*)

**Rutherford:** Yak kidding!

(*He roars and stomps the branch himself, showering her with bits, and does not stop until the pieces are down to approximately toothpick size.*)

**Rutherford:** Yak got pink pony good! HORN BUMP!!

(*He lunges toward the nearest yak and they bang their horns together.*)

**Pinkie:** (*wiping forehead; splinters fall from mane*) Phew! Oh, you sure did, Prince Rutherford! (*Laugh; she stands and turns to Gummy, now clamped on her tail.*) That was a close one, Gummy! This trip has to be perfect! After all, we’re not just visiting as friends. (*pulling badge from mane*) We’re on official friendship ambassador business!

(*Away it goes again as Rutherford addresses the gathering.*)

**Rutherford:** Less talking, more stomping! (*They do so, Pinkie included.*)

**Pinkie:** Yeah!

(*Long overhead shot, zooming out slowly; Gummy is out of sight again.*)

**Pinkie:** And stompy-stompy-stompy-stompy!

(*Wipe to her and Rutherford walking through the village.*)

**Rutherford:** Now I take pink pony on Yakyakistan tour.

**Pinkie:** Thanks, Prince Rutherford, but— (*Chuckle.*) —I’ve been to Yakyakistan before. (*Both stop.*)

**Rutherford:** Yak know, but thought pink pony might not recognize town since decorated for Yikslerbert Fest.

(*His perspective on the end of this; he gestures toward the huts and locals, a few of whom are sporting slightly more festive wear. Back to Pinkie, staring intently ahead before coming around to a smile.*)

**Pinkie:** You’re right! It’s so different now that you’ve pointed it out! (*Laugh.*)

**Rutherford:** Oh, yaks not just have eye for decorating. Yaks also amazing builders!

**Pinkie:** (*gasping deeply*) No way! (*She hops toward one hut and pokes at a wall.*) I thought you hired professional contractors!

(*The nudged spot cracks and falls away—mud—and she quickly scoops up the debris.*)

**Pinkie:** Here. Uh, let me help you with that.

(*The bit is packed back into the hole; once she hops away, though, it falls right back out into the snow. Wipe to a sizable fire ring stacked with wood and framed by tall poles for torches; around the perimeter are several onlookers, including Pinkie and Rutherford.*)

**Rutherford:** This ceremonial yak fire pit, where yaks tell stories.

**Pinkie:** Ooooh! (*jumping in place*) I have so much to officially tell the ponies when I get back!

(*Wipe to the interior of one hut. These two and several others sit on the floor, around the edges of a large square rug set with a four-layer cake for each of them. Gummy sits alongside Pinkie, and a stylized loaf of bread can be seen at the center of the rug’s design. A smaller copy is hung in the window, and a blanket is drawn across the entrance to close it off from the outside.*)

**Rutherford:** This yak eating hut, hut where yaks eat.

(*In close-up, the equine out-of-towner licks her chops and takes a large bite from the side of her cake. It seems to agree with her quite well as she swallows.*)

**Pinkie:** Mmmm! The perfect balance of vanilla extract! (*Pan to Rutherford.*)

**Rutherford:** Yaks grow own vanilla bean. Nothing imported.

(*He borrows a page from her playbook by slamming his entire face down onto his plate and making all four layers disappear in one swift instant. Once they go down the hatch, other yaks match the feat, prompting Pinkie to rub her hooves together in determination. Opening her mouth to its fullest possible extension, she gulps the remainder of her cake down and grins from ear to ear.*)

(*Wipe to the interior of another hut, whose floor displays a rug with a crescent-moon/star design. A smaller copy is hung at one window, and the doorway is closed with a blanket. Present in this dwelling are four hay bales to serve as beds, three side by side and occupied by snoozing yaks, and the fourth off to one side and is set with a pillow atop which Gummy sits. Pinkie and Rutherford stand at the door.*)

**Rutherford:** Yak sleeping hut, hut where yaks sleep.

(*She leaps toward the unoccupied bed, but halts herself in midair just short of its surface and glances over toward the other three. Once she satisfies herself that those yaks are blissfully conked out, she flips over to land on her back and follows suit, snoring loudly. Wipe to the interior of yet another hut; the floor and curtain here show an alpenhorn emitting musical notes, and a blanket secures this entry as well. Rutherford and five yaks stand, and Pinkie and Gummy sit, around a wind-up phonograph on the rug that is putting out a Russian-style folk melody.*)

**Rutherford:** Yak music hut, hut where yaks enjoy beautiful music. (*All sway in time; close-up of Pinkie.*)

**Pinkie:** This is beautiful and—

**Rutherford:** Shhh! Pink pony ruin with talking!

(*Even Gummy gets in on the vibe by waving his tail back and forth. Dissolve to a long shot of the mountains surrounding Yakyakistan and tilt down slowly to an overhead shot of the village. The motion brings Rutherford into view during the next line, gathered around the now-lit fire pit with Pinkie, Gummy, and a multitude of residents; the torches on the poles near the fire have also been ignited.*)

**Rutherford:** And that how yaks defeat evil and save world. (*Ground level; Pinkie claps.*)

**Pinkie:** (*imitating him*) Pink pony like yak story!

**Rutherford:** (*laughing*) Yak impressed! Pink pony can *almost* be honorary yak.

**Pinkie:** (*normal tone*) Official friendship ambassador *and* honorary yak? Ooh! Pink pony’s title card is full! (*Jump, then imitate Rutherford again, leaning toward him.*) Horn bump!

(*The lack of impact against her head perplexes her for a moment until she figures out the cause.*)

**Pinkie:** Oh, wait. I don’t have a horn! (*Gasp, then smile.*) Prince Rutherford, can I get some honorary yak horns?

**Rutherford:** No! Yak horn too heavy for small pony head!

(*The sustained blat of a low-pitched horn note cuts in right about here. Cut to the source, a yak blowing into a massive alpenhorn, then back to the fire.*)

**Rutherford:** Yikslerbert Fest stomp time!

(*The yaks return to the square and go to work smashing wood to flinders. Pinkie does the same, and Gummy just stands off to one side and lets the tremors shake him up and down.*)

**Rutherford:** Stomp harder! Yaks extra happy! Ponies and yaks, friends!

(*Hooves pummel hapless former tree parts, generating enough vibrations to shake all of Yakyakistan as seen in a long overhead shot. Pan from here to a nearby mountain, whose thick snowcap promptly thunders down as a mighty avalanche and throws up enough loose powder to fill the screen. The view clears to give an exceptionally good view of what would normally be the village, if not for the thick layer of snow now hiding its every feature from view. The heads of Pinkie and Rutherford break the surface, each topped by a plug of the cold stuff, and several other yaks quickly follow suit. Gummy is last to emerge.*)

**Pinkie:** (*uncertainly*) Is this part of the festival?

**Rutherford:** (*brusquely*) Pink pony ask too many questions.

(*The snow on said pony’s head collapses to bury her and Gummy again, but both pairs of eyes open to star confusedly through the mini-drift. Fade to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long overhead shot of Yakyakistan, with all involved parties now dug out and standing on top of the snow. The torches at the perimeter wall are extinguished and choked with snow.*)

**Pinkie:** Everything is buried in snow! (*Close-up; she stands with Gummy and trots in place, breathing fast.*) What are we gonna do?

**Rutherford:** (*stammering a bit*) Yaks fine! Snow fall from mountains all the time.

**Pinkie:** (*puzzled*) All the time?

**Rutherford:** (*thinking fast*) Every Yikslerbert Fest.

**Pinkie:** Okay. Avalanches like this completely bury all your homes every Yisklerbert Fest? Really?

**Rutherford:** (*trying to play it off*) This is…big avalanche. But not a problem, for yaks are tough! Yaks dig through snow! Won’t take long.

**Pinkie:** (*relieved, wiping forehead*) Oh, good. You have an emergency plan in place.

(*The yaks begin scraping assiduously at the snow with their front hooves.*)

**Pinkie:** Here, let me help.

(*She quickly styles her forelock into a corkscrew, sets it spinning, and dives headfirst into the snow to tunnel in. For his part, Gummy extends his tongue, scoops up a tiny bit, and swallows it. Clock wipe to the grumbling yaks, several of whom have excavated a broad pit roughly shoulder-deep. As they half-collapse from fatigue, a spatter of the white stuff flies up from below the surface and Pinkie puts her head above it in close-up. She catches her breath and shakes her head to restore her forelock to its usual curly state.*)

**Pinkie:** (*wiping forehead*) I’m tired. We must be almost done.

(*She looks around, her merry expression shifting to popeyed disbelief.*)

**Pinkie:** There’s still snow everywhere?!?

(*As she says this, the camera zooms out quickly to a long overhead shot of the village. The fire pit has been partly dug out, as have the roofs of a few huts and the uppermost portion of the wall, but everything else is still under several feet of drifts.*)

**Rutherford:** Yaks, keep digging!

(*They get back to it, grousing and complaining with every motion of their hooves, and a few get to stomping the snow down. Sure enough, here come the tremors again, enough to shake loose the remnants of the nearby mountain’s snow and bring it down as a second avalanche that only deepens the remaining expanse of drifts. Powder boils up and clears to give a close-up of Pinkie and Gummy caught up in the mess. She moans quietly.*)

**Rutherford:** Yaks, stop digging! (*They do so.*) Make situation worse! (*Pinkie hops to him, with Gummy biting her tail.*)

**Pinkie:** Okay. Don’t worry, Prince Rutherford. I’ll go back to Ponyville and ask for help. Twilight and the others will be happy to come dig the snow away. After all, many hooves make light work. Right, Gummy?

**Rutherford:** Yaks no need pony help! (*Various agreement from them.*)

**Pinkie:** Oh. Well, I’m sure it’ll be okay ’cause you probably have a Plan B.

**Rutherford:** Yes. Yaks wait for snow to melt.

**Pinkie:** (*incredulously, gesturing around*) All this snow? (*Long overhead shot of the area.*) It’ll take a thousand moons before it melts!

(*Ground level again.*)

**Rutherford:** Yaks known for their patience. (*Pinkie straightens up, Gummy not on her tail.*)

**Pinkie:** Well, be that as it may, in the meantime, what will you eat? Where will you sleep?

**Rutherford:** (*scoffing*) Yaks can make this work! Hardship make yaks the strong yaks that yaks are! If pink pony disagrees, then she can leave Yakyakistan and never return! (*Pinkie yelps at this.*)

**Pinkie:** Uh… (*forcing a smile*) …of course pink pony agrees with you! (*Laugh.*) Hey, let’s try out some snow recipes!

(*Within seconds, she has darted away, scooped up a pile, and shaped a three-layer cake from it.*)

**Pinkie:** Snow cakes! (*Three plates of…*) Snow spaghetti! (*A specimen of…*) Snow sandwiches!

(*Offering the most nonchalant chuckle she can, she bites down on this one.*)

**Pinkie:** (*mouth full, holding it up for Rutherford*) Mmm-mmm! Yaks can make this work!

(*The great hairy Prince smiles at her agreement with his grand plan. Dissolve to a long overhead shot of Yakyakistan, zooming in slowly on the yaks that have bedded down in the snow, then cut to these two. Night has fallen, and Rutherford yawns expansively; Pinkie has ditched the remains of her sandwich.*)

**Rutherford:** Yak tired. (*walking off with Pinkie*) Yak retire to new sleeping hut.

(*It proves to be nothing more than a flat spot at the base of a snowdrift, with several already lying and shivering atop roughly carved bunks. He jumps onto the last available one, leaving Pinkie to find a decent berth for herself in the frozen expanse and watch as loose snow tumbles down on the sleepers. Taking a liberal hit of her own, she groans softly and lies down.*)

(*Wipe to her, Rutherford, and a couple of others up and about the next morning. Each has a snow cake set out in front of him/herself; the three yaks wolf theirs down.*)

**Rutherford:** Snow cake good!

(*The master party planner eyes her own with great trepidation, wondering exactly what she has gotten herself into, and takes a big bite. Swallowing proves to be every bit as unpleasant as she has anticipated, and it sends her into a full-body shiver and causes frost to form on her mane/tail. Still, she puts on a brave face as Rutherford steps over to her.*)

**Pinkie:** Mmm! Just the right balance of cold and water.

(*Sound of eating from o.s. behind her; he lets off an alarmed shout. A longer shot frames another yak chewing on the nearest snowdrift.*)

**Rutherford:** Stop! Yak eating new eating hut!

(*This one cowers miserably away. Wipe to a thawed-out Pinkie and Rutherford among a semicircle of yaks swaying in time to no music whatsoever, with Gummy standing motionless before them. A snow replica of the phonograph from the music hut has been created.*)

**Pinkie:** (*whispering*) Psst! Prince Rutherford, what are we doing?

**Rutherford:** It’s obvious. This new music hut.

**Pinkie:** (*normal volume*) Oh! So we’re swaying to…?

**Rutherford:** Shhh! Pink pony ruin snow music with talking!

(*The “recording” continues as Pinkie begins to realize that this is not going to end well at all. After a few more sways, she hops out of her place and walks off, Gummy draped across her back. She comes up short at the sight of two calves and the sound of one rumbling stomach.*)

**Calf 1:** What was yak?

**Calf 2:** (*dropping to haunches, rubbing belly*) Yak’s stomach rumbles. Yak hungry.

**Calf 1:** Shhh! Prince yak will hear yak!

**Calf 2:** But snow worse than yak ever seen!

**Calf 1:** Yak know. Yak hungry too.

**Pinkie:** (*gasping*) Gummy, did you hear that? They can’t make it work.

(*He slithers to the frozen ground, landing on his back, and she glances back to Rutherford and company.*)

**Rutherford:** Yaks, stop swaying! (*They do so.*) Music over! (*Pinkie bends down to Gummy.*)

**Pinkie:** If Twilight and the others knew what was going on, they would be here to help in a pony’s heartbeat. I have to convince Prince Rutherford that asking for help is okay. Will you help me, Gummy? (*He grunts softly; she scoops him into a hug.*) Thank you! And see? Asking you to help wasn’t hard at all.

(*The long, thin tongue snakes out between his toothless lips and runs its tip up one of her cheeks. Dissolve to a close-up of the space between the two totems at the gate; she stands up into view on her hind legs, no longer holding him.*)

**Pinkie:** Pink pony has gathered you around the new ceremonial yak fire pit…

(*Cut to it on the end of this line: a small fire ring and crackling flames, built from snow. Rutherford and other yaks sit around it, and one of them bites a chunk from the heatless blaze as she pops up behind him.*)

**Pinkie:** …to tell you a story! (*Slide over next to Rutherford.*) A yak tradition, right? (*All mumble agreement.*) Yaaay! This is a story about a group of…

(*She ponders for a moment, the camera tilting up to put her out of view as a thought bubble forms overhead and expands to fill the screen. Two goats appear within it, one white and one gray, both with blankets on their backs. They are rendered in the sort of art style that might appear in a children’s book.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) …uh, goats!…who lived in the desert.

(*Overhead shot of a village on a sun-baked plain, populated with more of these creatures, on the end of this. Dark red-brown clouds move in to fill the sky and dump torrents of sand, filling the screen briefly and depositing a thick layer over the entire area.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over, ominously*) There was a sandstorm, and their entire village was buried in sand. (*Gasp; clouds part; goats’ heads pop up.*) There was nothing they could do.

(*The gray goat paws disconsolately at a spot, forms it into a sandwich, then watches it crumble before being able to take a bite.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) They knew they could not survive by only eating *sand-*wiches.

(*Giggle; the bubble bursts apart to expose her.*)

**Pinkie:** Get it?

(*If they do, they are either not amused or very good at keeping their reactions tightly buttoned down.*)

**Pinkie:** Okay. Anyway…

(*The children’s-book style resumes: Gray and White sag on their hooves.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) Finally, the goats’ brave, wise leader… (*A larger one appears; they brighten.*) …let’s just call him Prince, uh, Drutherford… (*Giggle; he bleats and gestures imperiously.*) …decides [*sic*] that they couldn’t do it by themselves.

(*Scribble a note with mouth-held quill and roll it up; it vanishes.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) So he asked the neighboring town of, uh, Bovineville to come help them. (*Giggle; cut to a very crude picture of three bedecked cows.*) Yeah, cows!

(*They appear in the goats’ village and cast spells from their horns to clear the accumulated sand and restore the sky to a cheerful blue.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) The magical cows helped the goats, everyone survived and lived happily ever after.

(*All celebrate before the view dissolves to Pinkie and the yaks around the “fire pit.”*)

**Pinkie:** (*nudging Rutherford*) Because they asked for help. The end. (*Cheers from the audience; she cocks an eyebrow at him.*) So what is the moral of that story? Is it “A”… (*Zip over to one yak.*) …“asking for help is okay”? (*To Rutherford.*) “B”…“asking for help saves the day”? (*To another.*) Or “C”…“asking for help is good for everypony”?

**Rutherford:** “D”! Goats weak and horrible! Magic bovines need to stay out of goats’ business!

**Pinkie:** Um… (*Nervous laugh.*) …not quite. Any yak want to shout out another answer?

(*Apparently not. She moans disappointedly as the camera zooms in slowly on her, and the view then dissolves to a close-up of a patch of snow. Rutherford reaches into view to smooth it out a bit; cut to frame all of him.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s.*) Hey, Prince Rutherford! (*walking to him*) I want to talk to you about something. (*seeing the snow patch*) Uh, what are you doing?

**Rutherford:** Uh, yak’s snow bed got a little melty last night.

**Pinkie:** Okay, yeah. That’s what I want to talk to you about. (*fluffing up snow*) You know, these yak snow beds are the fluffiest I’ve ever slept in. (*flopping onto it*) They’re so comfortable, you forget that it’s just a cold block of ice. (*Stand up.*) And the yak snow sandwiches? Mmm-mmm! I hate it when food burns your mouth or overwhelms it with flavor.

**Rutherford:** Ah! Yak hates that too!

**Pinkie:** (*holding up a sandwich*) You know who would really, *really* enjoy these snow sandwiches? (*Toss it aside.*) Twilight Sparkle and the other ponies! Oh, hey! I have an idea! (*She climbs up on the broad back.*) Why don’t I go to Ponyville and bring them back here? (*Duck out of sight.*)

**Rutherford:** (*perplexed*) Ponies like snow sandwich?

(*Now Pinkie puts her head out from his other side.*)

**Pinkie:** Ah! Ponies *love* snow sandwiches! And hey, while they’re here, you can ask if they’ll clear the snow away. (*hopping in place*) Fun, right?

(*Rutherford turns his head solemnly toward the bright sun.*)

**Rutherford:** When prince was little yak, prince stomp on ground too hard. Made deep hole and fell into hole.

(*Cut to Pinkie, thoroughly baffled, then back to both as he continues.*)

**Rutherford:** Ice froze over hole. Prince waved to friends and family from inside frozen hole. Waited for spring thaw. Prince survived on own.

**Pinkie:** Wait a minute. You spent the whole winter in a hole?

**Rutherford:** Yes! And yak never asked for help!

(*He bashes horns with the nearest yak, then turns his attention back to her.*)

**Pinkie:** Okay. First of all, how did you make such a deep hole from stomping? And how did it freeze over so fast? (*Cut to Rutherford; others gathering around; she continues o.s.*) And how could you see your family and friends to wave to them from inside a frozen hole?

(*The hairy ruler’s grimace betrays his growing degree of information. Back to Pinkie.*)

**Pinkie:** Even if all that was possible, how did you breathe in there?

(*She breaks off her impromptu interrogation when one of his hooves slams down to the snow just in front of her, and he leans hard into her face.*)

**Rutherford:** *Yaks don’t ask for help!*

(*Those words come with enough force to blow her mane/tail straight back and propel her away. Two pink forelegs and two blue eyes appear from within a snowdrift to mark her graceless touchdown; she shakes herself clean in a blur and ends up sitting on her haunches.*)

**Pinkie:** But the yaks are hungry! (*standing up*) And who knows when the snow will melt? I just don’t understand why— (*Back to Rutherford on the end of this.*)

**Rutherford:** Ah, yes. Is clear now that pink pony does not understand yaks. (*Cut to her; he continues o.s., pointing at her.*) Honorary yak status rescinded!

(*Those same blue eyes constrict in shock, then widen dejectedly as he steps away to his new “bed."*)

**Rutherford:** Bang! Pretend there is door! I just slammed it. (*He flops face down.*)

**Pinkie:** Fine! Be stubborn!

(*She stalks away as the view fades to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of the hot-air balloon drifting through clear skies. As on the trip to Yakyakistan, Gummy is riding on the rail.*)

**Pinkie:** Ooh, those yaks are so stubborn! (*Close-up.*) They refuse to ask for help even though they need it! Well, this official friendship ambassador is gonna take matters into her own hooves! I’ll show them!

(*She cuts her eyes off to one side; cut to a close-up of Gummy, who stares impassively, then to both. Pink forelegs dangle over the side of the basket.*)

**Pinkie:** (*sighing*) You’re right, Gummy. I *am* too worked up. Road-trip game would officially calm me down. (*A moment’s thought.*) I know! Let’s play Twenty Million Questions! (*Close-up of him; she continues o.s.*) You think of something, then I’ll ask you twenty million questions until I can come up with what you’re thinking of. (*Both again.*) Let’s go!

(*She begins to zip here and there around the basket while firing off the following interrogatives, the camera zooming out slowly.*)

**Pinkie:** Is it blue? Is it green? Is it red? Is it greenish-red? Is it reddish-blue? Is it bigger than a breadbox? Is it smaller than a breadbox? Is it a breadbox? Is it bread?

(*Around the craft, the scenery dissolves to a slow cruise above Ponyville proper.*)

**Pinkie:** Is it teeth? Is it Granny Smith’s dentures? (*Slow descent.*) Is it you? Is it a rooster? Is it a red rooster? Is it a red rooster eating corn? (*Close-up.*) Ah! Used up all twenty million questions! Oh, well. (*They approach the Castle.*) We’re here anyway.

(*Dissolve to a long overhead shot of Yakyakistan. Several residents are gathered in a circle, and another walks up; cut to them, gathered around a spread of snow sandwiches. Rutherford glances at the newcomer.*)

**Rutherford:** Official pony balloon still here? (*Head shake.*) Pink pony gone because pink pony not tough like yaks! (*Pause.*) Horn bump in agreement! Now!

(*The yaks immediately to either side of him oblige the demand, and he proceeds to wolf down his frozen meal. It gets spat out as quickly as it went in, though.*)

**Rutherford:** Snow sandwich lose novelty! Snow couscous for dinner!

(*He gets only a chorus of half-hearted grunts. Dissolve to a long shot of the Castle and zoom in slowly.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) Then Prince Rutherford said…

(*Cut to her in the throne room, Rainbow visible behind her on the far side of the table.*)

**Pinkie:** (*imitating Rutherford*) “Bang! Pretend there is door! I just slammed it!” (*Cut to Twilight and Fluttershy.*)

**Twilight:** Pinkie Pie— (*Pinkie leans over to her.*)

**Pinkie:** (*normal tone*) So then pink pony said— (*leaning out over Twilight’s back*) “Fine! Be stubborn!” (*She paces indignantly.*)

**Twilight:** Pinkie Pie, we have to help the yaks. (*Applejack joins her.*)

**Pinkie:** So in conclusion— (*Zoom in on her.*) —we have to help the yaks!

**Twilight:** (*confused*) Hmm?

**Applejack:** (*touching Twilight’s wing*) Just go with it, hon.

**Twilight:** (*smiling*) Great idea, Pinkie. We’ll be happy to help the yaks. This is what friendship is all about.

**Applejack:** Hey! I’ll bring apples! This season’s batch are extra-juicy.

(*Across the table, Rarity sits on her throne with Rainbow hovering over her shoulder.*)

**Rarity:** And I shall provide the yaks with Equestria’s finest textiles. They’ll be silky and warm, with hints of gold to complement their horns and— (*Pinkie leans toward her.*)

**Pinkie:** STOOOOP!! (*She puts all four hooves on the table.*) We can’t bring the yaks any pony stuff!

**Fluttershy:** Why not?

**Pinkie:** The yaks are very proud. They won’t ask for help. You know what they say—you can lead a yak to water, but you better not let him know you’re doing it!

**Rainbow:** Nopony says that. (*to Rarity*) Do they? (*Helpless shrug.*)

**Twilight:** Okay, then. (*moving to table*) This will be an official covert friendship mission.

(*Sounds of assent from the rest of the gang. Dissolve to a long shot of the balloon moving through late-afternoon skies, this time loaded with all six mares.*)

**Pinkie:** Is it yellow? Is it slimy? Is it slimy yellow?

**Rainbow:** (*exasperated*) We’re not playing that!

(*Another dissolve puts them at the closed gates of Yakyakistan, the balloon parked off to one side under the deepening evening sky. All but Pinkie stand on the path leading to the realm; pan slowly across the area, then cut to a close-up of them. The missing mare pops up from a snowdrift, wearing the dark sweater/hood and night-vision goggles she used for not-so-covert surveillance in Part One of “The Crystal Empire.”*)

**Pinkie:** First, we have to infiltrate the yak compound.

(*She comes up with a grappling hook attached to a coil of rope on the end of this, then twirls it and lets fly. Her throw drops neatly over the top edge of one gate, and she tugs the line to confirm that it is secure. The other end is now tied around her midsection.*)

**Pinkie:** (*starting to climb*) These walls are high. Sneaking in will not be easy.

(*An “are you thinking what I’m thinking?” look passes between Twilight and Rainbow, and each face smiles shrewdly to respond in the affirmative. The blue pegasus takes off in a multicolored blur; cut to a close-up of Pinkie straining to hoist herself up the vertical wooden surface. After a few seconds, the camera shifts to a longer shot—framing her only a few feet off the ground—and the door she is trying to scale grinds slowly open. Rainbow emerges in midair, having gone over the top to solve the problem from the other side, and flies smugly up to the suspended pink pony.*)

**Rainbow:** Or it’s super-easy ’cause I’m awesome. (*She flies down.*)

**Pinkie:** (*calling after her*) Go ahead! I’ll catch up! (*The others file in.*) You all know what to do!

(*So does she, in the form of releasing herself from the line and plopping into the snow. Instead of standing up and walking in, she burrows after them like a gopher crossed with an Evinrude outboard motor. Cut to a close-up of a heavily snoring Rutherford, then to a longer shot that frames plenty of others bedded down around him. The five mares still above ground make their way stealthily past the bunch—Rainbow the only one airborne—and Pinkie tunnels into view after them and pops up, having shed her spy gear. She hangs in midair and flashes off in a pink/magenta blur.*)

(*Cut to a roof-level view of two huts. Rarity’s magic lifts the snow away from one, and the camera tilts down to frame Applejack bucking the second to clean it off. This effort brings the mass down on top her, but the unicorn is quick to float it away and gets a laugh from the prone farmer. High above, Rainbow gets to work knocking the dense cloud cover apart so that the stars and crescent moon can shine brightly. Next a stretch of ground is cleared thanks to Twilight’s aura, exposing a barren field. It does not say that way for long, as she concentrates hard and causes rows of plants to sprout in very short order. Inside the fully excavated sleeping hut, Fluttershy puts the finishing touches on a new set of hay beds, and Pinkie tests them for softness by hopping from one to another. Outside, Rarity telekinetically re-strings the Yikslerbert Fest pennants onto a couple of rooftops. Inside the eating hut, the camera pans along a table set with very fresh, very real cakes and stops on Pinkie as she ices the last one of the bunch. After a furtive glance to make sure she is alone, she sneaks a taste off its top layer and is all too glad to let the sweet stuff hit her taste buds.*)

(*Above the mountain peaks, the moon slides smoothly below the horizon, and the sun pops up like a slice of bread fresh from the toaster to take its place. The sky instantly brightens into morning. Cut to Rutherford, who stirs from his sleep with a yawn and does not immediately notice that he is now resting on bare earth instead of his snow bed. In good time, he snaps upright with a shout of surprise, the camera zooming out quickly to frame other equally confounded yaks. Not only have the ponies dug out the major landmarks of Yakyakistan, they have also relit the pole-mounted torches.*)

**Rutherford:** What happened?

**Yak:** Snow melted! Prince Rutherford was right!

(*There follows a horn bump with the nearest neighbor, which in turn sets off a round of cheering and further bumps among the rest of the crowd. Rutherford mulls over this new development for a second, then laughs as it all starts to make sense to him.*)

**Rutherford:** Yaks tough! Yaks wait patiently! Yaks win!

(*But the distant sound of Pinkie’s hopping throws a monkey wrench into his mental gears, and he shifts the matted hair away from one eye just in time to see her exiting through the slightly open gates. Cut to a close-up of Applejack walking.*)

**Applejack:** Whoo-wee!

(*Longer shot; she is outside the wall and moving toward the balloon, where all others but Pinkie have gathered.*)

**Applejack:** Helpin’ to fix an entire yak village sure takes a lot outta you. (*Pinkie hops to them.*)

**Twilight:** Let’s get out of here before—

**Rutherford:** (*from o.s., with a rising snarl*) PINK PONY!!

(*Pan quickly to frame him emerging from the gates toward Pinkie, who has frozen in her tracks. She utters a wheezy little gasp and laugh.*)

**Pinkie:** Just play it cool.

(*Her teeth grit into a shaky, squeaky grin; an instant later she pivots to face him, all innocence.*)

**Pinkie:** *We* didn’t help fix Yakyakistan. (*laughing*) No, no. We’re just here for the snow sandwiches, but then we got here and the snow’s gone, so we thought we’d hit a diner on the way back to Ponyville. Bye-bye! (*She turns to leave.*)

**Rutherford:** (*holding out a hoof*) Wait! (*smiling*) Yak not mad at pink pony. (*Pinkie stops and turns to face him.*)

**Pinkie:** Yak not?

**Rutherford:** Pink pony help yaks without yaks’ asking. Means pink pony understand yaks.

**Pinkie:** I do? (*Gasp.*) I do!

**Rutherford:** (*throwing foreleg about her shoulders*) Pink pony the best kind of friend. (*loudly*) Officially honorary yak!

(*The scene is joined by a cheering delegation of adults and calves, the latter carrying a horned helmet decorated with a magenta topknot to match her mane.*)

**Pinkie:** Yippee! (*She dips her head low and comes up wearing it.*) My own honorary yak horns! Now I can officially horn-bump!

(*She proceeds to do one with Rutherford, but the impact sets it spinning on her head at insane RPM’s.*)

**Pinkie:** Whoa!

(*It also sends her stumbling back and o.s., a thud and spatter of snow marking her introduction to the ground. Cut to her sprawled out by the balloon and her friends, the helmet having slid forward over her eyes.*)

**Pinkie:** (*nudging it back*) Yeah, you know, this *is* a little heavy for my small pony head.

**Applejack:** (*chuckling*) Need some help with that, Pinkie Pie? (*Pinkie stands up.*)

**Pinkie:** (*imitating Rutherford*) Pink pony no need apple pony’s help!

(*Her comical grimace gives way to a fit of snorting laughter.*)

**Pinkie:** (*normal tone*) Just kidding! (*poking Applejack*) Pink pony got apple pony good.

(*The farmer joins in the mirth as the view “irises out” to black, centered on Pinkie’s face. An instant later, the aperture reopens just enough to frame her.*)

**Pinkie:** Seriously, this is heavy.

(*Gravity drags her back down to the snow, and the view “irises out” again.*)