**ROAD TO FRIENDSHIP**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to Trixie’s stage, set up in a meadow outside Ponyville proper during the day. A trunk heavily wrapped in chains sits front and center, with Starlight Glimmer pacing back and forth around it. Among the spectators are Twilight Sparkle; Princess Cadence with Flurry Heart balanced on her head; and a tall, medium blue unicorn stallion with medium brown eyes, short untidy mane/tail in two shades of dark blue, and dark gray hoof tips. This one, Hoo’Far, wears a loose, short-sleeved robe patterned in shades of brown, a darker braided headband to keep his mane out of his face, a pair of saddlebags, and a travel-stained headdress of yellow cloth. Tinted goggles rest on the forehead above the eyes, whose pupils are shaped slightly differently from those of the locals.*)

(*Starlight addresses the crowd in a melodramatic fashion.*)

**Starlight:** I don’t know, folks. (*levitating a stopwatch*) She’s been in there a long time!

(*She puts an ear to the trunk, prompting a round of scared gasps; Flurry covers her face with her wings, but parts the feathers with a little whimper so one wide blue eye can look on.*)

**Starlight:** (*rearing up over trunk; watch gone*) Do you suppose the Terrifying Trunk Escape is too much for her? (*She steps out from around it.*) What if the Great and Powerful Trixie can’t—

(*A loud poof is heard from o.s., somewhere behind the audience, and the camera shifts to frame Trixie herself materializing within a burst of clearing blue smoke.*)

**Trixie:** —escape? (*Gasps and smiles; Flurry is looking her straight on again.*)

**Starlight:** (*addressing her*) But if you’re *there*— (*pointing to trunk*) —who’s in *here?*

(*Another blast, and the blue illusionist has joined her now-smiling assistant on the stage and loosed all the chains. During this sequence, the camera angle picks out a few smudges of road grime on the hem of Hoo’Far’s robe.*)

**Trixie:** (*opening lid*) Why, our volunteer, of course.

(*Said volunteer proves to be Granny Smith, who pokes her head up with a wheezing cough to refill her lungs.*)

**Granny:** Crabapple surprise! (*climbing out, hobbling away*) You should oughta tell a pony before you go a-poofin’ ’em around a stage!

(*Starlight and Trixie rise to their hind legs and give a beaming wave to the cheering crowd, Trixie throwing a foreleg around Starlight’s shoulders. A dissolve shifts the time to after the show; boxes, trunks, and containers of props are stacked on the stage and the grass, and Trixie has shed her wizard’s hat and is magically shifting items into her wagon parked nearby. Twilight, Cadence, and Flurry hang back as the rest of the onlookers disperse; Starlight reverts to her normal manner of speaking.*)

**Twilight:** Trixie, that was an amazing show.

**Cadence:** Flurry Heart and I loved it! I am so glad we decided to come. You two have a real chemistry.

**Trixie:** (*hamming it up, as Starlight floats a trunk to the wagon*) The Terrifying Trunk Escape does require a great and powerful assistant. (*Starlight offers her a grateful smile.*)

**Cadence:** The way you two work together, it’s like you’ve known each other as long as Twilight and I have.

**Starlight:** It was pretty fun. (*Twilight leans abruptly toward her.*)

**Twilight:** Of course it was! (*Back off.*) There’s nothing better than a bond with another pony. (*Turn to Cadence.*) You can share all kinds of things.

(*They go into their old greeting routine as first seen in Part One of “A Canterlot Wedding,” but Starlight and Trixie back away with a shared cringe.*)

**Twilight, Cadence:** Sunshine, sunshine, ladybugs awake!

Clap your hooves and do a little shake!

(*The second line is accompanied by a cut to the two onlookers, who can only stare in complete bewilderment as the two Princesses waggle their rumps into view and then pivot to face each other with a merry giggle.*)

**Starlight:** I think we’ll stick to the stage magic for now. (*Trixie nods.*)

**Trixie:** The Great and Powerful Trixie doesn’t chant.

(*They trade knowing smiles as the view fades to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to the unicorns at the wagon. Starlight continues rearranging the gear, and Trixie has shed her cape.*)

**Trixie:** (*sighing happily, crossing to her*) As much as I love my one-pony show, it’s always nice to come to Ponyville and perform with my great and powerful assistant. Cadence is right. We *do* work well together.

**Starlight:** (*floating up a bucket filled with wands*) Doing a show with you is almost as much fun as counseling students at Twilight’s school.

(*She cuts off her telekinesis with a sudden sharp gasp, letting the vessel and contents clatter to the ground.*)

**Starlight:** Which I’m supposed to be doing right now! (*She teleports away, then immediately returns.*) See you later.

(*And off she goes again, leaving Trixie to gather the wands and lift the bucket using her aura. She circles to the wagon’s rear door and extends her grip to its knob, but a bit of vigorous rattling and pulling gets her nowhere fast. Unicorn and bucket go flying in two different directions when she lets go; cut to her on the grass, sitting up to her haunches and aiming a foul look at the obstinate opening. The forelegs of Hoo’Far step into view as his Middle East-accented voice cuts in on her seething.*)

**Hoo’Far:** (*from o.s.*) Excuse me, Ms. Powerful?

(*A longer shot frames him, harnessed to a wagon whose front edge is the only portion in view.*)

**Trixie:** (*laughing*) Usually ponies just call me Trixie—but “Ms. Powerful” has a nice ring.

(*Delivered with a rolled R as she speaks her own name.*)

**Hoo’Far:** From here to Saddle Arabia, I have seen nothing that compares with your wondrous show.

(*Now a bit more of his wagon can be seen: intricately worked window, bunting strung from the end of the roof, brown end paneling, and of a somewhat larger size than Trixie’s home on wheels. She is now standing upright.*)

**Hoo’Far:** Would you consider blessing my homeland with it?

**Trixie:** (*trying doorknob again*) I *was* just about to set out on tour— (*Grunt.*) —but Saddle Arabia is much farther than my usual route.

(*Her next effort proves a bit much, yanking the knob clean off, and both she and it end up flat on the turf. She sits up to her haunches and takes it in hoof with an embarrassed giggle.*)

**Trixie:** And, uh, my caravan might not be suited for an extended tour.

**Hoo’Far:** Mine is new and quite spacious.

(*The camera zooms out to frame both wagons in full for the first time. His is twice as tall and half again as long as hers, with wooden latticework over the windows and a cheery sunrise painted on the roof. Shades of blue dominate the paint job on the sides.*)

**Hoo’Far:** If it would help persuade you, I would happily trade it for yours.

**Trixie:** (*affronted*) Trade it? Heavens, no! (*gesturing to hers*) This is more than just some great and powerful wagon you see before you. (*caressing paneling*) It is shelter. (*backing around it on hind legs*) It is transportation. (*draping herself on roof, full ham mode*) It is my only friend in the long and lonely nights on the road.

**Hoo’Far:** Very well. Then I must see as many of your performances as I can. If I cannot convince you to bring your tour to Saddle Arabia— (*floating her down off the roof*) —I must be prepared to relate its magnificence to your many fans there.

(*On the second half of this last sentence, her field-fueled attempts to fit the wayward doorknob back into place prove fruitless. She finally lets it drop, aiming a sly smile at the out-of-towner.*)

**Trixie:** Many fans, you say? (*Giggle.*) Well, I suppose I *could* consider the trip.

**Hoo’Far:** Wonderful! I look forward to seeing you on the road. (*pivoting away*) And if you change your mind about the caravans, my offer remains open. (*He tows it off; close-up of a pensive Trixie.*)

**Trixie:** Hmmm…

(*Around her, the background dissolves to put her lying face-up on a couch, head propped against one armrest. Zoom out slightly to frame all of her.*)

**Trixie:** It’s just so far away. (*smiling*) Of course, I love visiting new and exciting places. (*She shifts to lie on one flank.*) I am a *traveling* magician, after all.

(*Longer shot: she is in Starlight’s office at the School of Friendship. The guidance counselor sits behind her desk, facing the mare on the couch.*)

**Starlight:** Hmmm. Sounds like your mind’s made up. (*Trixie sits up.*)

**Trixie:** Not quite. The road is a lonely place, and this trip even more so. (*full ham mode*) I was hoping I could convince my great and powerful assistant to come along?

(*She aims her best shiny-eyed grin across the desk.*)

**Starlight:** Really? (*Trixie steps up, propping forelegs on its edge.*)

**Trixie:** Of course! You’re not just my assistant and my counselor. (*foreleg across Starlight’s shoulders*) You’re also my friend. And what’s better than a road trip with friends?

**Starlight:** Nothing! (*Trixie claps her front hooves.*) This will be the best magical road trip ever!

(*Both step away from the desk; cut to just outside the closed office doors, which open under Starlight’s control to frame both of them just inside at the threshold. Their faces fall as the camera zooms out to frame a long line of students waiting for appointments.*)

**Starlight:** Uh, I should probably get somepony to cover my student counseling duties while we’re gone.

(*Dissolve to Trixie’s wagon, now parked outside the Castle of Friendship. It shakes violently due to a mighty rumpus from within as Starlight walks up, a couple of trunks floating alongside. She knocks on the rear door, whose knob has been replaced.*)

**Starlight:** Trixie, are you all right?

(*The blue unicorn flashes a smile out through the glass pane set in the door before opening it wide. Her mane/tail are visibly disheveled, and stacked boxes and trunks are visible behind her, taking up most of the interior space.*)

**Trixie:** (*gesturing to the cargo*) One caravan for two, all set! (*Her face falls.*) Oh. You brought luggage. (*Giggle.*) I mean…of course you brought luggage! (*Step out.*)

**Starlight:** You bet I did! Everything two ponies need for the road trip of their lives!

(*Her magic pops the lids on her trunks and extracts items as she names them.*)

**Starlight:** Three one-thousand-piece puzzles, one copy of Dragon Pit— (*Goofy laugh.*) —the best board game in the history of ponies—my famous collection of campfire spices, and an inflatable raft. (*She shifts everything away, suddenly concerned.*) Did I forget something? I-I can pop back to the Castle and grab it.

**Trixie:** Oh, no, it isn’t that.

(*Both mares regard the jam-packed interior of the wagon.*)

**Starlight:** Yeah, maybe we don’t need the raft.

(*Dissolve to a close-up of two hammocks strung up side by side as they settle down into these. A stack of items occupies the limited space between them, topped by an open box of marbles. Trixie’s mane/tail are back in order.*)

**Trixie:** (*sighing contentedly*) We just needed a little great and powerful reorganization.

(*A rolled R on this last word. She commences to stretching out, but the close quarters prove to be quite a hindrance.*)

**Trixie:** (*grunting/straining*) Now everything fits just fine!

(*Or not; her last effort knocks the supply of spare wands off a nearby stack and dumps them over her head. Bouquets of flowers instantly erupt from the ends, half-burying her in masses of vividly hued vegetation.*)

**Trixie:** (*sighing wearily*) Who am I kidding? My wagon is too small for us. I understand if you’re having second thoughts.

**Starlight:** (*brightly*) Second thoughts? Pfft! Are you kidding? This wagon isn’t small, it’s…uh…cozy! And there’s no such thing as too cozy.

**Trixie:** (*smiling*) Well, all right, then! I guess it’s time to hit the road!

(*As she tries to climb out of her hammock, she braces herself against the stack of gear and inadvertently mashes Starlight between it and the wall.*)

**Trixie:** (*grunting, with effort*) I’ll just…start us off…

(*She drops out of sight, a thud marking her contact with the floor as props fly everywhere, and Starlight hurriedly catches a marble from the top box before it can cause any more havoc. Cut briefly to the exterior of the wagon as Trixie emerges from the rear door and kicks it shut, then back to Starlight. This jolt sends the ball tumbling from her hoof and o.s.; a tinkle of breaking glass is accompanied by an upwelling of blue smoke—these marbles are Trixie’s smoke bombs. Outside, the mare in charge winces at the sight of the haze issuing from the door and is treated to the sight of her soot-streaked assistant opening the side window to cough her lungs clear.*)

**Starlight:** Okay. Maybe there *is* such a thing as too cozy.

(*Trixie offers a sheepish grin as the view fades to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to Starlight and Trixie on the move, the latter in harness and pulling the wagon as the now-clean former keeps pace.*)

**Trixie:** You’re sure you wouldn’t rather ride?

(*One wheel jounces heavily over a stone, setting off a clatter inside that triggers a belch of blue smoke from the swing-out windows on the front end—another smoke bomb gone boom.*)

**Starlight:** I’m sure.

**Trixie:** And you’re not backing out. The two of us sleeping in that cozy caravan could get tricky.

**Starlight:** (*levitating/opening a map; several spots marked*) Trixie, there’s plenty of high-quality inns to stay at on the way. Don’t worry about it. (*folding/stowing it*) I’m not backing out of the greatest and most powerful road-trip bonding experience two ponies could ever have.

**Trixie:** Well, when you put it like that, I’m actually kind of excited!

**Starlight:** Me too! (*Profile close-up; she sighs.*) Thank goodness we’re not like Twilight or the others. They’d probably sing a song about it.

***Bouncy, brassy Dixieland-style melody, fast 4 (B major)***

(*They hurry ahead, the view wiping behind the wagon’s trailing edge to frame a longer shot of them on the way out of town. Starlight is now riding on the roof.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re off on the road to friendship

(*Starlight peeks in.*) Our ride might be tiny and small

**Starlight:** Beats walking, though, eh, Trix?

**Trixie:** I *am* walking.

(*Starlight hops down and pulls ahead to face her down while trotting backwards.*)

But road trips are a great way, we’ve been told, to get along

(*They tap hooves.*)

**Starlight:** I’m glad we’re sticking to it, we’ve already got a song

(*Now they ease the wagon along a narrow trail that hugs one wall of Ghastly Gorge. The harness has been removed, both are riding inside with the front windows open for visibility, and Starlight is keeping the wagon horizontal with her magic as the trail is too narrow to accommodate all four wheels.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re off on the road to friendship

(*Trixie hugs Starlight, who cuts her spell and lets the wagon tip over the edge.*)

Side by side, just like peas in a pod

(*It splashes into a river coursing through the gorge floor, soaking them both, and begins to sink slowly; the current carries them past Hoo’Far and his wagon on the shore.*)

**Trixie:** Our bond of friendship is stronger than this tour’s demands

**Hoo’Far:** My offer to trade caravans still stands!

(*Starlight pulls out the inflatable raft she brought in Act One.*)

**Starlight:** (*to Trixie*) Wait, what did he say?

**Trixie:** (*floating it from her, pulling the string*) Nothing.

(*The rubber boat instantly swells to full size, forcing front windows and rear door open and buoying it up to the surface.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re so tight, we can’t move around

(*They force their heads out the front end, jammed cheek to cheek and with manes now dry.*)

I guess we’re stuck together, ’cause we’re friendship-bound

**Trixie:** Sure is great traveling with you, buddy!

**Starlight:** You too, buddy!

(*They drift onward as a lick of flame washes up over the screen. When this subsides, they are now walking side by side through a swamp whose few spots of dry ground emit random fire spurts, one of which Trixie deflects with a quick shield to protect Starlight. The raft has been stowed, and Starlight pulls the wagon.*)

***D flat major***

(*They dodge a few eruptions while singing.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re off on the road to friendship

**Trixie:** Yep, we are!

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’ve each got the other to blame

(*The view blacks out as they approach the camera, then snaps to them passing two disgruntled delivery mares in uniform and a wrecked cart of parcels between them. They push a broken-off wheel back and forth in a silent argument.*)

**Starlight:** Any trip can be exhausting if you make a fuss

(*Another incendiary burst destroys it, scaring the pair.*)

**Trixie:** But we get along so well that there’s no way that could be us

***E flat major***

(*A leaf drifts past the camera; behind it, wipe to the travelers and wagon standing on a ridge in a dense jungle. Zoom out to put a new, fetid swamp full of bubbling green water and wild plant growth before them.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re off on the road to friendship

(*Starlight spots a hanging vine and wraps a hoof around it; a moment later she is swinging over the sludgy expanse by herself, followed by Trixie and the vehicle.*)

And there’s nowhere that we’d rather be

**Trixie:** Was that off-key?

(*The background behind Starlight cycles rapidly through the seasons as she names them, after which she drops off her vine and uses a line of crocodiles as stepping stones. Each one snaps its jaws at her, but bites down on only air.*)

**Starlight:** In summer, winter, spring, and fall, we’re friends

throughout the year

(*Both mares come to rest on a tree limb, standing on hind legs and each with a foreleg around the other’s shoulders.*)

**Trixie:** For untold seasons yet to come, our friendship will be here

**Starlight:** For nine, at least.

(*They are unceremoniously butted from their perch when the wagon swings through; they and it wind up dangling in a mass of vines.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re so tight, we can’t move around

(*The strands slowly stretch and break, dropping them o.s.; a crash drifts up from the jungle floor.*)

**Trixie:** (*rapid fire*) Like a race where you tie your hooves together and have to move in perfect synchronization to win…

(*A puff of dust wafts past the camera; behind it, wipe to them crossing an expanse of desert under a harsh brownish sky. They have stripped the vine fragments from the rig, and Trixie is pulling it.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re friendship-bound

***Music pauses***

(*Profile close-up of them, Starlight on Trixie’s left.*)

**Starlight:** Or like a buddy movie where the two protagonists can’t get away from each other because they’re wearing hoof-cuffs!

(*Her horn flares briefly as she says this, once she finishes, she lifts her right foreleg—now lashed to Trixie’s left one with a piece of vine.*)

***Music resumes***

(*They pause at the top of a hill, then charge laughing down a path into the village of Somnambula—introduced in “Daring Done?”*—*and the market stalls that line its streets.*)

**Starlight, Trixie:** We’re friendship-bound

***Song ends***

(*Starlight magically disintegrates the bindings.*)

**Trixie:** Oh! The marketplace! Perfect. (*Starlight trots off; close-up.*) I’ve learned the hard way— (*floating/opening a scroll*) —that life on the road requires very specific supplies, and we only have so many bits.

(*Zoom out slightly. Her traveling partner has returned and is munching on a newly acquired bit of foodstuff.*)

**Trixie:** So we’ll have to spend them wise…

(*She trails off into stunned silence upon noticing Starlight, who pauses mid-chew.*)

**Trixie:** …ly.

(*The snack is offered in a sheepish hoof, but the blue face sinks into a scowl at what she perceives as a poor use of fiscal resources. Wipe to them walking among the stalls; Trixie is out of the harness and without her list, and Starlight has disposed of the food.*)

**Starlight:** (*sighing*) Sorry about wasting bits on street food.

**Trixie:** Oh, it’s fine. Falafel bonding, right?

(*With a slightly forced giggle, she levitates up a sack, opens it, and brings out four coins.*)

**Trixie:** Besides, we still have enough for… (*Seeing the paltry total, she grimaces and drops them back in.*) …uh, hay cakes and juice.

(*A few trotting steps bring her to the end of a very long line. Starlight glances at it, then across the way to a stand selling these very treats and with no queue whatsoever.*)

**Starlight:** (*pointing to it*) Um, why don’t we go there?

**Trixie:** Oh, no, no, no. I always buy my hay cakes here.

(*Cut to the vendor on the last word; she gestures at him, emphasizing the fruits and grains he has on display in addition to hay cakes. The view then shifts back to her and an unconvinced Starlight.*)

**Starlight:** (*mildly irritated*) So we’re just going to wait in line for hours and… (*catching herself*) …uh, which is totally cool. Heh. Waiting-in-line bonding! Right?

(*Her impromptu reasoning does very little to put either equine mind at ease. Dissolve to a long shot of the Get On Inn that evening, as seen in “Daring Done?”*)

**Trixie:** (*voice over, pointedly*) After our falafel purchase…

(*Cut to a slow pan across the lobby; she and Starlight are in line to reach the front desk.*)

**Trixie:** …we weren’t able to get everything on my list. (*smiling*) But we are definitely set for breakfast.

**Starlight:** And I’m sure we’ll find out that waiting in that super-long line was worth it.

**Trixie:** A few hiccups always happen. (*stepping up to desk*) We’ll be back on the road to friendship after a good night’s sleep.

**Clerk 1:** We’re all full!

(*The two would-be guests voice a unison gasp of surprise and exchange worried looks.*)

**Starlight:** Uh, I’m sure we’ll find something.

(*Cut to a sequence of clerks at other establishments, one per line.*)

**Clerk 2:** Nope! (*Slam door.*)

**Clerk 3:** Sorry! (*Close a curtain.*)

**Clerk 4:** All full! (*Close gate.*)

(*The sky above Starlight and Trixie has deepened into night; the two can only trade looks of growing desperation as Hoo’Far pulls his wagon into view behind them.*)

**Hoo’Far:** Ah, the Glowpaz Festival.

(*Long shot of the village square, every one of whose buildings is festooned with the glowing green stones.*)

**Hoo’Far:** Somnambula is no doubt filled to the brim. Luckily, travelers such as ourselves have our caravans.

(*He rolls away, leaving two rather out-of-sorts unicorns in his wake.*)

**Trixie:** (*to Starlight, chuckling bitterly*) You said there’d be plenty of places to stay. “Don’t even worry about it,” you said. You might have thought to make a reservation.

**Starlight:** Um, *I’ve* been with *you*, singing and standing in line. When would I have done that?

**Trixie:** I don’t know, but I’m starting to think you aren’t as great and powerful an assistant as I thought.

**Starlight:** So you just brought me along to do your legwork? (*Trixie relents with a heavy sigh.*)

**Trixie:** No, of course not. I’m sorry. I’m just frustrated. I was really looking forward to a relaxing night in a nice room.

**Starlight:** (*sighing, touching Trixie’s shoulder*) Me too. But since there’s literally no room at the inns, I guess it’s lucky we’ve got the wagon.

(*Wipe to the interior of said wagon; they have tucked themselves into their hammocks and are not at all happy about it.*)

**Starlight:** (*sourly*) Sleeping-in-tight-quarters bonding.

**Starlight, Trixie:** Yaaaaay.

(*The assistant goes into a string of position shifts, knocking various body parts against the piles of equipment and letting off noises of pain/surprise/frustration to boot. She shoves one stack away from her hammock, mashing Trixie between it and a cabinet.*)

**Trixie:** (*very snippy*) Is there something I can do to make things more comfortable for you? (*Cut to Starlight.*)

**Starlight:** (*sitting up, batting at some hanging pots*) You could get rid of this junk.

(*A frying pan drops from the ceiling, dragging a long string of varicolored handkerchiefs tied to the handle.*)

**Trixie:** (*from o.s.*) Yes. (*Both again; her magic straightens a stack and lowers the box of smoke bombs.*) Well, before we throw away the magical items it’s taken me years to collect, we could try switching hammocks.

**Starlight:** Fine.

(*Only now does the fall of hankies stop, surprising them both by showing a second frying pan tied to the other end. A flock of birds flies up from the bottom center of the screen, scattering in all directions; behind them, the view wipes to an overhead close-up of them settling down again. They have traded places, but are in no better spirits than before. Fade to black as they pull up their blankets and doze off.*)

(*The quietude is disintegrated by a protracted, cavernous snorting sound, and the blackness splits horizontally as iif an eye were being opened. The line of light widens to show an extreme close-up of a crate of smiling-star props—the perspective of a pony being wakened from sleep—and the view cuts to reveal that pony as Trixie in close-up. Snapping to full consciousness, she pushes the crate away from herself with a soft gasp and looks fearfully around herself, finally settling sleep-bagged purple eyes in the direction of…*)

**Trixie:** (*whispering*) Starlight! Starlight! I think there’s a wild animal outside!

(*Here comes the noise again, scaring her into a fall from her hammock; now she pops up inches from her companion.*)

**Trixie:** (*louder*) Starlight!

(*She is not at all thrilled to find that the source is her bunky’s vigorous snoring.*)

**Trixie:** *STARLIGHT!!* (*Who wakes with a start and sits up.*)

**Starlight:** (*mumbling up to coherence*) What?

**Trixie:** I’m sorry. Your snoring is a bit, um— (*Cut to Starlight on the end of this.*)

**Starlight:** Loud? (*chuckling, scratching head*) Yeah, I do that. I had my village convinced we were being attacked by bears every night.

(*Trixie just sits there, glowering wordlessly with forelegs crossed, until she clears her throat.*)

**Starlight:** But we probably need a better solution here.

(*Only now does the blue unicorn shift position, turning away from her with a thoughtful smile. Dissolve to an overhead shot of Starlight lying back down in her hammock—with a star-patterned kerchief tied across her nose and mouth as a muzzle. The lowered-eyebrow glare above it tells just how badly she wants to incinerate both it and its owner. Almost as soon as she has pulled up her blanket and shut her eyes, Trixie’s mumbling, drowsy voice jolts her back to full consciousness. During the next line, cut to frame both, Trixie gesturing in her sleep.*)

**Trixie:** Ladies and gentle-ponies, the…Great and Powerful Trixie… can amaze and entrance ponies too… (*Starlight sits up, pulling the kerchief down.*)

**Starlight:** Seriously?! (*Flop back, snarling silently.*)

**Trixie:** …prepare to be amazed…

(*Dissolve to a close-up of a frying pan hovering over a campfire outside. It is in Starlight’s hold, as is the spatula that moves in to remove the hay cake cooking in it; the food is deposited on the plate she is holding out here at mouth level. Her eyes are now just as deeply ringed as Trixie’s, and the kerchief is gone from her face. She munches into a sullen mouthful as the wagon’s rear door flies open and Trixie glares out.*)

**Trixie:** (*icily*) Sleep well? (*She stalks down to ground level.*)

**Starlight:** (*ditto*) Sure did.

(*Longer shot. Starlight is sitting on one of four small rugs placed around the fire, and breakfast dishes and supplies have been set out on a barrel. Trixie uses her aura to upend a bag of hay cakes over a plate, but gets only a few crumbs for her trouble. It is now the following morning.*)

**Trixie:** (*smiling venomously*) Is, uh, that the last of the hay cakes?

(*Starlight proceeds to wolf down the very last bite from her own plate.*)

**Starlight:** Oh! Yeah. Sorry. (*Back to Trixie.*)

**Trixie:** It’s fine.

(*She proceeds to manipulate a pitcher and one of two glasses, pouring a drink and leaving only a tiny portion of liquid in the pitcher.*)

**Starlight:** (*crossing to her*) I don’t suppose there’s… (*scoffing softly*) …more juice?

(*Trixie’s counter is to tip the last few drops into the nearly-full glass, send the pitcher back to the barrel, and guzzle the whole thing.*)

**Trixie:** Ahhh! (*shaking it upside down*) Nah. I guess we’ll have to re-supply. (*Sound of a door opening.*)

**Hoo’Far:** (*from o.s.*) What a glorious morning!

(*Cut to frame him on the end of this—looking out from the rear double doors of his wagon, parked a short distance from Trixie’s. With a carefree toss of his head, he steps down and crosses the hardpan to face them.*)

**Hoo’Far:** I can’t tell you how much I am looking forward to the first show of your tour!

(*He continues on his way, entering a building and shutting its door, as Starlight glares daggers after him.*)

**Starlight:** Is he gonna be following us for the whole time?

**Trixie:** I do not know.

(*Dissolve to a stage set up in the middle of Somnambula’s broad main street, the nearby pyramid standing tall and imposing over the village. Hoo’Far and several other locals have congregated in an eagerly chattering bunch, and Starlight stands facing them with the chained trunk from Trixie’s Terrifying Trunk Escape front and center.*)

**Starlight:** (*woodenly*) She’s been in there a long time. (*pacing, with growing rancor*) Do you suppose the Terrifying Trunk Escape is too much for a pony who drinks all the juice and talks nonstop in her sleep?! What if the Great and Powerful Trixie can’t—

(*Just as in the prologue, a loud poof is heard from somewhere near the back of the crowd and all puzzled eyes turn to it. The burst of blue smoke clears to present an irate Trixie in hat and cape.*)

**Trixie:** —sleep, because her roommate snores like an Ursa Major? (*Confused murmuring.*)

**Starlight:** (*woodenly, sitting by trunk*) But if you’re there, who’s in here?

(*Another, larger smoke blast consumes her and it—and clears to show them exactly as they were. Realizing that she has missed a cue, Trixie races onto the stage and sourly unchains/opens the trunk. A wrinkled tan hoof reaches tentatively up into view, accompanied by the voice of an elderly stallion.*)

**Old stallion voice:** There’s not much room in here.

**Trixie:** (*slamming lid shut*) At least you don’t have to sleep in it with another pony!

(*Starlight disgustedly stands up and leaves the stage during this line. Trixie offers her best “ta-da” grin to the audience, but they are having none of it—with the partial exception of Hoo’Far, who drops to his haunches and offers a few listless claps.*)

**Hoo’Far:** (*to crowd*) Uh, this show was much better in Ponyville.

(*They disperse amid disappointed grumblings. Dissolve to Starlight and Trixie sitting stonily back to back by their campfire that night, the latter no longer wearing her hat and cape. Their only food consists of one carrot resting on a plate in front of Trixie; she floats this up and moves it toward Starlight.*)

**Trixie:** Oh. Would *you* like the last carrot? I know how fond you are of eating the last of things.

**Starlight:** (*taking hold of it, chuckling nastily*) Oh, no. It might make me thirsty, and we don’t have anything to drink, so…

(*She shifts the vegetable back and lets it drop onto the plate. After a moment’s icy grimace, Trixie gets to all fours and turns to face her.*)

**Trixie:** The good news is, I’m so exhausted, I could sleep through a stampede of wild boars—which, you’ll be delighted to know, is only slightly louder than your snoring.

**Starlight:** (*standing, turning to her*) Well, *I’m* looking forward to rehearsing the act with you all night. So diligent of you to go over it and over it in your sleep.

**Trixie:** Practice makes perfect.

**Starlight:** Not today, it didn’t.

**Trixie:** Well, I’m sorry you’re so miserable!

**Starlight:** Really! (*igniting horn*) Because if you wanted to make things more comfortable, you could always pare down a bit!

(*Her magic promptly ejects most if not all of the wagon’s contents to form one giant pile, topped by the box of smoke bombs—one of which falls loose and detonates.*)

**Trixie:** Well, since you’re *so* concerned about space, you can have it all! I’ll sleep under the stars, where at least the wild animals will be QUIETER THAN YOU!

(*Seizing a pillow and rolled blanket in her field, she gallops away past Hoo’Far’s wagon; he opens one rear door and glances curiously out after her departure.*)

**Hoo’Far:** I do not mean to interrupt, but it seems there is trouble on the road to friendship.

**Starlight:** (*laughing crazily, stomping*) You think?

(*She stalks away, using her magic to flip the carrot into the fire; the flames blaze up for a moment as they consume it. Dissolve to the closed rear doors of Hoo’Far’s wagon the next morning as Trixie plods wearily into view from the surrounding underbrush. The general derangement of her mane/tail, the twigs matted into them, and the scuffs on her coat speak to just how restful her night was not. She casts a bleary, bewildered gaze around herself that turns into a neigh of sheer panic once her brain starts working. All the gear Starlight dumped out of her wagon is now lying near Hoo’Far’s.*)

**Trixie:** *WHERE’S MY WAGON?!?*

(*A longer shot of the parking area discloses the pair’s dead campfire, the rugs laid out around it, and no trace whatever of her rig. Now one of Hoo’Far’s rear doors opens—and out comes Starlight, clad in a robe similar to his and looking/sounding quite rested.*)

**Starlight:** I traded it to that pony from Saddle Arabia for his. He even threw in a pair of robes!

(*The traveling magician’s face skips all the middle gears and goes directly to an expression of popeyed panic in record time. Snap to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a pleased-as-punch Starlight, with Trixie in the background; zoom in quickly to a close-up of the latter on the next line.*)

**Trixie:** You *WHAT?!?*

**Starlight:** I traded the old, worn-out wagon that was too small for us— (*opening rear doors, floating a trunk in*) —for this nice, new, spacious one that we can both enjoy.

**Trixie:** (*sputtering indignantly*) But…who said you could do that?!

**Starlight:** Nopony. I just did it.

(*Ignoring the mind blown stare that Trixie sends her way, she sighs contentedly and begins hovering other pieces of luggage into the vehicle.*)

**Starlight:** Now we both have plenty of room and you didn’t even have to give anything away.

(*Tears begin to spill from the purple eyes, which narrow in a sudden fit of rage.*)

**Trixie:** *Au contraire*. I *did* give something away. I gave away my wagon—and my best friend!

(*She drops to her haunches ,weeping silently; once the full meaning of these words hits Starlight, her eyes pop and she lets a box hit the ground, scattering props everywhere. Confusion turns to anger as the assistant rounds on Trixie.*)

**Starlight:** (*laughing disdainfully*) Oh, I’m sorry. (*Trixie stands up as she continues.*) I didn’t realize you were better friends with that beat-up old wagon than you are with me! (*Stomp for emphasis on “friends.”*)

**Trixie:** Well, it’s easy when the wagon is a better friend! It would have never traded *you* away!

**Starlight:** That’s ridiculous.

**Trixie:** Oh, it *is* ridiculous. In fact, this whole tour is ridiculous! I don’t even know why I invited you in the first place! (*Zoom in slowly.*)

**Starlight:** Oh, well, maybe I should just head home!

**Trixie:** I think that’s a very good idea, and you can take this horrible giant caravan with you! (*Close-up.*)

**Starlight:** Fine! (*Trixie leans into her face, nose to nose.*)

**Trixie:** Good!

(*They turn away. Dissolve to Trixie, who has wrapped ropes around all her gear and connected the free ends to a harness around her midsection. The embedded plant bits are gone from her mane/tail, but all the other signs of her rough night are still very much in evidence. She is slowly and laboriously dragging the lot along a desert trail, but it catches on a protruding rock.*)

**Trixie:** (*straining to pull free*) Oh, come on! (*Ropes snap; she tumbles forward.*) Whoooaaa!

(*A hard bounce and spreadeagle landing knock her out for a moment. Snap to black, which parts as if an eye were being opened—her perspective, framing her wagon parked a few yards ahead—then cut back to her. She comes to in a blink, mouth curving into an eager grin, and hurries to try the rear doorknob with her magic. Just as in Act One, it proves remarkably stubborn—that is, until the door swings inward and Hoo’Far steps to it. Trixie has shed the harness by this point.*)

**Hoo’Far:** Goodness! Oh, Ms. Powerful! (*He looks around himself; cut to her. He continues o.s.*) Eh, but where is your assistant? (*Both again.*) I had hoped providing you with a more comfortable means of conveyance would allow you to once more dazzle the crowds with mystifying feats of magic.

**Trixie:** Normally that sort of flattery would suffice. But today we must discuss your dishonest and unfair procurement of my wagon!

**Hoo’Far:** I desired your wagon and provided one of equal or better value in return. It seems like a perfectly honest and fair trade to me.

**Trixie:** Unfortunately, it is more nuanced than that.

**Hoo’Far:** I’m sure it is, but I am eager to set out. (*stepping out*) If you’ll excuse me.

(*Trixie grimaces in fear as his field settles the harness around his midsection. Before he can take even one step, though, a blue blur rockets into the dirt before him and throws up enough dust to fill the screen. When it clears, the mare rolls woozily to a stop and settles onto her back with forelegs grimly spread—directly in front of the Saddle Arabian to act as a living roadblock. He magically folds the harness up against the front end of the wagon and brings out a stool and a cup of tea. In short order he has seated himself and positioned the beverage within easy reach.*)

**Hoo’Far:** I am willing to wait as long as you are. (*Sip.*)

**Trixie:** Ha! We’ll just see about that!

(*The sky above them dissolves from day to sunset to night to sunrise, Hoo’Far calmly drinking his tea all the while. Finally he leans down to her.*)

**Hoo’Far:** You know, even if I was willing to reverse the trade, you don’t have my caravan to offer in return.

**Trixie:** (*snarling*) Details!

(*To which he responds with a puzzled frown and a sidewise “is this mare for real?” glance. Dissolve to Starlight in the jungle through which she and Trixie traveled in Act One; she is no longer wearing the robe she got as part of the trade. Her power pulls several lengths of vine down from the overhanging trees and wraps them around the wagon that used to be Hoo’Far’s. A mighty heave gets the thing only a few inches off the ground before all the tendrils snap and the wheels slam back to the dirt. She levitates one broken end and scowls mightily at it—her attempt to get home thwarted for the moment—then shifts her focus to the harness and gets it set in place around her midsection. Sighing heavily, she resigns herself to the task of muscling her way out of the jungle, only to get bogged down in a muddy patch almost immediately. Strains and heaves and grunts bring her to the edge of the crocodile-filled swamp that she and Trixie crossed; one of the inhabitants leaps out with a toothy roar, scaring her into a teleport up to the roof. All too soon she finds herself penned in by the beast and its buddies closing in from every direction; her only way out is to float herself and the wagon up with considerable effort.*)

**Starlight:** (*between heaves*) You all seemed…a lot less threatening when there were two of us!

(*Wipe to her navigating through the fiery swamp that preceded this obstacle. She is back in harness, and both her hooves and the wagon’s roof are clean of the mud she picked up in the jungle. Spurts of flame scare exclamations from her tongue as she bobs and weaves to avoid broiling either herself or the vehicle, but when several go off at once right in front of her, she has no choice but to stop.*)

**Starlight:** (*groaning*) This place is awful! How did I not see it before?

(*Wipe to her hauling the wagon along the bank of the river that runs along the floor of Ghastly Gorge. She stops and looks despondently up and ahead, the camera zooming out to frame a steep, unforgiving trail that winds along the rock face and up to ground level. The two delivery mares who had been quarreling with each other on their trip are on the riverbank as well. Back to Starlight, then cut to the pair—now in a most upbeat mood—on the start of the next line. They have reassembled and emptied the body of their broken cart, stripped off the harness/wheels/undercarriage, and strapped a bundled life raft to either side.*)

**Mare 1:** Hey! It’s one of those traveling ponies!

**Mare 2:** Your song really inspired us. We decided we need to head off on the road to friendship too.

**Mare 1:** It sure beats the road to deliveries. (*Mare 2 climbs in.*)

**Mare 2:** Yeah. Sometimes traveling together is hard.

**Mare 1:** You reminded us you can also make it fun. (*pushing rig toward water*) Thanks again!

(*Both laugh and whoop as it slips into the river and she hops aboard, but Starlight les her mind venture into morose self-reflection. Dissolve to just within the closed front windows of Trixie’s wagon; these open to present her still lying in the roadbed. A fresh cup of tea floats into view under Hoo’Far’s control; cut to frame him looking out at her.*)

**Hoo’Far:** Steaming hot beverage?

**Trixie:** Thank you, no.

(*She crosses her forelegs and goes into her best impression of a speed bump, leaving Hoo’Far as the first to notice the return of his wagon. Cut to an overhead close-up of the motionless mare as Starlight’s front hooves step up and her shadow extends itself.*)

**Starlight:** (*from o.s.*) What are you two doing?

(*Purple eyes glare up from the dirt, finding concerned blue ones staring down at her. Starlight is out of harness.*)

**Trixie:** Taking a stand by lying down! Not that you care, wagon trader-away-er! (*This catches Starlight off guard.*)

**Hoo’Far:** I’m afraid I’m still not interested, despite your assistant’s convenient appearance.

**Starlight:** Trixie, I came back to apologize. I should never have traded away the wagon. (*to Hoo’Far*) It wasn’t mine to trade. It belongs to my friend.

**Hoo’Far:** Hmmm…if you truly were friends, I suppose I’d be honor-bound to reverse the trade. (*Trixie stands up.*)

**Trixie:** Okay, fine! We’re friends! (*dragging Starlight into a near-headlock*) Best friends who share a deep bond, but weren’t prepared for the emotional challenges of traveling. Happy?

**Hoo’Far:** I’m still unconvinced. Uh, perhaps you could prove your friendship.

**Trixie:** (*dropping Starlight*) How?! (*Starlight hastily stands up.*)

**Starlight:** Uh, we could do our friendship chant!

(*Her big grin is met by a cocked eyebrow and a look of total bewilderment on Trixie’s part, but the pinkish-violet unicorn cuts off any verbal objection by means of a withering glare.*)

**Trixie:** (*catching on*) Oh, right! Our world-famous chant of friendship that we do all the time because we’re such great friends.

(*What follows is their slow, lumbering take on the greeting that Twilight and Cadence did together in the prologue. It is instantly and painfully obvious that they are making this up on the spot and trying desperately to pick up the other’s cues.*)

**Starlight,** **Trixie:** Magic, tra-magic, poof of smoke.

Wand—wave your hooves and tell a little joke!

(*First line: rise to hind legs; touch front hooves together, one’s left to the other’s right; balance on one hind leg. Second: break apart, wiggle hips and wave forelegs while standing on hind legs; whip up to wagon, each with a foreleg across the other’s shoulders. Hoo’Far’s reaction is to voice a strangled little cry of disbelief and duck inside the wagon; there follows a ruckus that releases blue smoke from every opening and briefly shakes the thing on its axles, and he emerges coughing from the rear door.*)

**Hoo’Far:** (*as Starlight/Trixie circle to him*) That was the worst friendship chant I have ever heard, and you two were clearly making it up as you went. (*smiling*) *But*…only true friends would be willing to act so ridiculous for one another.

**Trixie:** So you’ll give back the wagon?

**Hoo’Far:** Though I’d suggest heading back to Ponyville. I’m not sure Saddle Arabia is ready for…uh, this.

**Starlight:** That’s fair.

(*She and Trixie exchange half-smirking smiles. Dissolve to a long shot of the Castle and School of Friendship under a welcoming blue sky as they and the wagon make their way over the surrounding meadow toward home sweet home. Close-up: Trixie is hauling it, and both are fully groomed and rested.*)

**Starlight:** (*as they stop and Trixie magically lifts/folds up the harness*) I’m sorry your Saddle Arabian tour was ruined.

**Trixie:** Honestly, I don’t think I could have stood one more second on the road. (*circling to rear*) At a certain point, I don’t even like traveling with myself.

(*Starlight begins to follow her to that door; in nothing flat, Trixie’s field has pulled it open to let a flood of luggage spill out, surprising her greatly.*)

**Starlight:** (*laughing a bit*) It is a lot harder than I thought. Still, I’m glad we tried—mostly so we know not to do it again. (*Both laugh.*)

**Trixie:** I think it’s made our friendship greater and more powerful than ever.

(*At the top of the pile is the signature item for the Terrifying Trunk Escape. It is not wrapped in chains, and the lid flips open so two wrinkled tan forelegs can stretch upward. The same old stallion voice from the botched trick in Act Two speaks up from within, but this time the owner stands up and massages a hip as he speaks—the apple vendor who told the story of Somnambula the pegasus in “Daring Done?”*)

**Apple vendor:** Um, you know, there’s actually plenty of room in here for a one-pony nap.

(*Both mares are completely floored at the revelation that one or the other of them has been hauling a stowaway. Long pause.*)

**Apple vendor:** Is the show over?

(*Shrugging, he drops back into the trunk and pulls the lid shut. Trixie throws Starlight a tiny grin of supreme embarrassment before the view snaps to black.*)