**SHE TALKS TO ANGEL**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of a snake coiled up on a beach chair during the day, on the grounds of Sweet Feather Sanctuary. It voices a series of indignant hisses.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s., patiently*) Mmm-hmm?

(*A longer shot frames her sitting on a stool alongside. Behind her, a long checklist scroll and a ring of keys have been hung up on nails driven into a tree trunk. The snake continues to vent as her rabbit Angel hops into view behind her.*)

**Fluttershy:** Mmm-hmm? (*He tries to get her attention…*) Oh! (*…then sulks as she addresses herself across the clearing.*) Antoine believes what he eats is his business. Do other predators feel that way too?

(*Cut to a gathering of animals taking it easy on chairs, stools, and cushions—Antoine the snake, a wolf, three raccoons, and a rather large bear. All mumble vague assent as Fluttershy leans into view, addressing herself past them.*)

**Fluttershy:** Would any prey like to respond?

(*Across the way, families of koalas and mice offer very little in the way of rebuttal, as do a young female giraffe and elephant. The first of these two, Clementine, wears a neck brace; the second, Muriel, has a bandage wrapped around her head to immobilize the trunk. Angel’s next attempt to get Fluttershy to turn his way earns him a hoof waving him off.*)

**Fluttershy:** Muriel, does it bother you when Antoine tries to eat you?

(*The pachyderm nods and touches her wrapped trunk with a slight wince. On the next line, Angel crosses the grass and the camera cuts briefly to him as he pulls her tail, eliciting a surprised trumpet.*)

**Fluttershy:** Just because you’re on opposite ends of the food chain doesn’t mean you can’t work t—huh?

(*The troublemaker scurries for cover, but not fast enough to avoid a disapproving look from the yellow mare. However, she is quick to drop it in favor of a gentle smile.*)

**Fluttershy:** —it doesn’t mean you can’t—

(*She cuts herself off again; cut to Angel now pulling one of the bear’s ears and jumping out of reach as it voices an irritated growl. A pointed throat-clearing from the o.s. Fluttershy, and the camera cuts back to her and the ursine resident.*)

**Fluttershy:** —it doesn’t mean you can’t work togeth—

(*Now she spots him stepping on the wolf’s tail; it responds by snarling and lunging toward him.*)

**Fluttershy:** Oh!

(*He is carried over to her in the beast’s jaws—quite intact, except for the saliva soaking his fur—and spat into her forelegs.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*to him, groaning*) I’m sorry, but the more you distract everyone, the longer this will take.

(*Wiping himself clean, he delivers an angry tirade at close range.*)

**Fluttershy:** I *am* listening to you! But if you really want to be heard— (*gesturing around clearing*) —you should join our predator-prey support group.

(*Her perspective, holding him up; he fixes the group with a dirty look.*)

**Fluttershy:** Then you could talk to everyone here. (*Back to her; zoom in slowly.*) You could teach all these hungry predators the delights of a carrot-based cuisine. (*Angel grins deviously and hops down.*) Sorry, everyone. I think *somebunny* just wants a little attention. Now, since we all need to get along, what if all predators promise to only eat vegetables while staying at the sanctuary?

(*Muted agreement from both sides, with the wolf being the most reluctant.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*to it, gently*) Oh, Sandra, you can do it.

(*Sandra rubs her growling stomach and lies down with a petulant whimper, crossing her forelegs under her chin. Fluttershy offers an encouraging grin, an instant before Angel shows up to stuff a load of carrots into the lupine jaws. Sandra is up in an instant, shoveling them out of her mouth and racing after the fuzzball.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*gasping; they almost knock her over*) Angel! Sandra! Wait!

(*She vacates her stool to get after them, but not fast enough to head off a chain reaction that degenerates into a brawling brouhaha and a cloud of dust. Zecora and local veterinarian Dr. Fauna make their way toward the stream that runs through the sanctuary, just in time to get an exceptionally clear view of the tumult. The zebra has an animal carrier balanced across her back.*)

**Fauna:** (*tittering softly*) It might look like chaos, but Fluttershy makes it work— (*Cut to the fight; she continues o.s.*) —even with Angel running around. (*Back to the pair.*)

**Zecora:** (*thoughtfully*) Ooh, perhaps I can help those two get along,

Before something here can go terribly wrong.

(*They venture ahead as the view fades to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of the sanctuary, whose residents have calmed down and fanned out across the area, and pan to the clearing in which the support group meeting took place. The various seats have been put away, and a visibly frazzled Fluttershy flies down from checking the koalas on an elevated platform to land before Fauna and Zecora, the latter now toting her carrier by a handle in her teeth.*)

**Fluttershy:** Zecora found this little guy and brought him to my office— (*Set it down; Angel crosses to it.*) —but I thought he might do better at the sanctuary.

(*A peek through the gate at one end informs him that the inhabitant is a small red lizard with orange stripes on back and tail and bulbous black eyes, chewing placidly on a leaf and nestling in a bed of straw. Once he finishes his mouthful, he exhales a cloud of thick gray smoke that leaves Angel sooty-faced and coughing.*)

**Zecora:** Bringing him here seemed the right thing to do.

I’ve never seen geckos breathe smoke, though. (*He keels over.*) Have you?

(*Cut to Fluttershy.*)

**Fluttershy:** Oh! I certainly haven’t! (*She moves off just as Angel sits up, wiping himself clean.*)

**Fauna:** (*from o.s.*) I thought we could take a look at his diet—

(*Fluttershy reaches her and the carrier on the end of this and hunches down for a look at the little fellow.*)

**Fauna:** —plus, it’s about time for me to give all of the animals here a checkup.

**Fluttershy:** (*opening gate*) That’s a wonderful idea.

(*The gecko crawls onto a proffered hoof and is lifted, dropping the leaf he was eating and pressing a foot to his belly to indicate his continued hunger.*)

**Fluttershy:** If we really want to know what’s going on, we need to make sure the problem isn’t your food.

(*He grumbles, but allows Fauna to carry him away on her foreleg. Zecora, though, takes particular interest in the fact that Angel has climbed onto Fluttershy’s head and is imitating everything she says.*)

**Fluttershy:** I wouldn’t worry too much. It’s probably just something he’s been eating. (*She notices Angel.*) Oh! (*Wave him off; he slides down her mane, drawing a grunt.*) Um…is there anything else we can do for you?

**Zecora:** Ahhh, seeing what you two do,

The real question is, “Can *I* help *you?*”

(*The pegasus manages a grin as the rabbit jumps down and blows a sullen raspberry.*)

**Fluttershy:** You mean me and Angel?

**Zecora:** (*nodding*) Mmm-hmm.

**Fluttershy:** Oh, he’s fine! We’re fine. I…I just don’t always have time to indulge him. (*hastily, hugging/nuzzling him*) But we’re best friends.

**Zecora:** Even the best of friends need help from time to time.

(*closing carrier)* Come visit me in my hut, should you change your mind.

(*She clamps her teeth on the handle and departs.*)

**Fluttershy:** Okay, thanks! (*Stand; drop Angel.*) But Angel and I are great!

(*On the start of the next line, pan slightly to frame Fauna looking over the checklist attached to its tree trunk.*)

**Fauna:** Oh, goodness, Fluttershy! Is this the list of what you do every day? (*Incredulous little laugh.*) How do you find time for anything else?

**Fluttershy:** Between here and teaching at the School, I’m not sure I do.

(*Angel shoots her a withering look as she pulls the scroll down and rolls it up under a wing. In short order, she is easing the gecko into a grassy space under a wooden box lid propped up by sticks at each corner.*)

**Fluttershy:** You’re gonna love it here, little gecko. (*He looks up at her.*) What is it? Not fluffy enough? (*He points at his belly.*) Oh, I’m sorry. We need to see if your food is causing your issue.

(*He settles down after a soothing pat on the back, and the camera zooms out quickly. The impromptu terrarium has been set up among the tree platforms, and Angel has climbed up to Fluttershy’s level.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*shocked, noticing him*) Huh?

(*He hunches down and points at his own back—“my turn for a massage.”*)

**Fluttershy:** Mmm… (*firmly*) …not now, Angel.

(*She takes wing across the sanctuary. Wipe to Antoine hissing at Muriel, the two on opposite sides of the pool at the base of the waterfall. On the start of the next line, pan slightly to frame a cookie being held into view toward the fanged predator on a yellow hoof.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s., brightly*) They’re snake treats made to look like chocolate chip cookies!

(*He tries a bite, enjoys the taste, and readily crunches down the remainder; cut to frame both, a cookie jar resting behind Fluttershy.*)

**Fluttershy:** They’re vegan. Pinkie Pie made a whole jar of them. (*setting it down before Antoine*) They’re all yours if you promise— (*sternly*) —no more trying to eat Muriel the baby elephant.

(*The beady black eyes flick from said elephant to the jar…then back and forth again…and Antoine finally agrees with a smile and nod. Coiling himself around the container, he pulls it into a small cave under one rock ledge and is soon lost to sight. Fluttershy brings out her checklist and unrolls it for a quick read, but gasps sharply as her tail is pulled out straight behind her, its tip trailing off the left edge of the screen. Pan slightly in that direction to bring the cause into view—Angel, waving happily to get her attention.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*backing him off and pointing to list with a wing*) No, Angel. I have too much to do.

(*His face falls as she walks away. Wipe to Fluttershy and Fauna standing on a platform to get the height boost needed for an examination of Clementine As soon as they remove her neck brace, she goes into a spasm of barking coughs. Fluttershy has her list under a wing again.*)

**Fauna:** Oh, careful, girl. That neck is still pretty sore.

**Fluttershy:** (*calling o.s.*) Don’t forget to shift your weight, Scout!

(*Cut to the recipient of these words—a flamingo standing on one leg in a pond, head tucked under a wing as it naps. Scout switches legs without waking up; zoom out quickly to frame Fluttershy looking on.*)

**Fauna:** (*from o.s., sighing*) What does she want?

(*Cut to her and Clementine, the latter pointing at her own throat, and pan to frame Fluttershy on the next line.*)

**Fluttershy:** Her neck is feeling better, but a massage every day for the next week wouldn’t hurt. (*opening scroll*) I’ll add it to my list.

**Fauna:** (*laughing, massaging Clementine’s neck*) Fluttershy, I’ve said it before, but I’ll say it again. This place would be a zoo without you!

(*She adds quotation marks with her front hooves on “zoo” and finishes with a snorty little giggle. Fluttershy, meanwhile, has tacked her list up on the tree next to the ring of keys and has a pencil in her teeth, ready to make a new entry. The impact of dropped acorn against equine cranium causes the writing tool to fall away, and she looks up to find Angel on a platform.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*crossly*) Angel! (*He gesticulates for a moment.*) Listen to you for once? Just what exactly is that supposed to mean? (*He jumps down and bounds away.*) Come back! I-I meant “tell me,” not… (*She trails off into a moan.*)

**Fauna:** Well, whatever it is, you’re the only one he can tell about it. Little fella just wants you all to himself.

**Fluttershy:** Unfortunately, that’s not an option.

**Fauna:** Oh, he’s not causing any real trouble.

(*A camera-shaking crash brings a scared yelp from the vet and spooks a flock of birds into flight.*)

**Fauna:** Other than that, possibly. (*Another one, accompanied by Muriel’s trumpeting.*) Or that. I’ll just stop talking.

(*She peels out to the sound of more panicked elephant noises, while Fluttershy scoops up her re-rolled list with a weary moan.*)

**Fluttershy:** I’ll take care of it.

(*She lifts off as if every single one of her bones were filled with lead shot. Cut to Angel at the edge of the waterfall’s pool, fidgeting before a closed wooden door emblazoned with a butterfly. Fluttershy comes in for a landing.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*testily*) I hope this is important, Angel. (*brandishing scroll*) I’ve barely made a dent in my to-do list for today.

(*She puts a hoof to the door handle; cut to the other side as it swings outward, framing one suddenly delighted little white rabbit. This area proves to a supply closet when both of them enter, every shelf stuffed with containers of all make and model. He stops at the base of a ladder placed to give access to the uppermost tiers and points beseechingly up along its length; tilt up quickly to a jar on the highest shelf—filled with orange liquid, its label showing a carrot. Fluttershy has put her scroll away now.*)

**Fluttershy:** Concentrated carrot extract? That’s for reviving energy-sapped herbivores. (*feeling his forehead*) Are you feeling rundown?

(*He shakes loose and squeaks urgently, pointing to his open mouth.*)

**Fluttershy:** You just like the taste?! (*hoof to forehead*) Ugh! Angel, that extract is in short supply! What’s gotten into you? Every day this week, you’ve been causing trouble when I have work to do! (*Angel chitters impatiently.*) Of course I know you can’t talk to anypony else, but that’s not *my* fault! I have responsibilities!

(*The white face settles into a snarl, the yellow one a silent answering grimace. After a few tense seconds, Angel lets his features melt into a deflated, shiny-eyed pout and helpless shrug that prod Fluttershy to relent as well.*)

**Fluttershy:** You’re right. We can’t go on like this. I guess we do need to see Zecora for help.

(*He jumps onto her extended foreleg, and she shifts him onto her back while turning toward the door. Wipe to the exterior of Zecora’s hut within the Everfree Forest and zoom in slowly.*)

**Zecora:** (*voice over*) No need to sit and silently stew.

(*Inside, she stirs a phosphorescent green brew in her caldron; Fluttershy and Angel sit facing her.*)

Tell each other what’s bothering you.

**Fluttershy:** He’s so impatient, even when he knows I have work to do.

(*Angel crosses his forelimbs over his chest and yanks them apart in a silent denial. He adds more gestures at each pause in the following line; meanwhile, Zecora continues stirring and adding a bit of this and that.*)

**Fluttershy:** Well, that’s not true. We talk all the time…Of course talking at the sanctuary counts. That’s where I am when I don’t have a class to teach…What do you mean, that’s the problem?…You feel like I’m the only pony you can talk to and all I do is ignore you. Well, *I* feel like you don’t care about my responsibilities!

(*The rabbit grumpily turns his back, and Fluttershy offers an apologetic chuckle to the potion-maker.*)

**Fluttershy:** Um, as you can see, we’re kind of at an impasse.

**Zecora:** Ahh, such luck your coming here, indeed.

(*holding up a full ladle; close-up as she continues*)

Behold the antidote you need.

**Fluttershy:** (*puzzled*) Is this what you meant by “help us”?

**Zecora:** (*from o.s., raising ladle*) When trouble brews between you two,

(*filling two vials*) Turning sister against brother,

True understanding is what’s due.

Each must come to know the other.

(*Both lean toward her with hopeful smiles, and she corks the vials and steps out from behind the caldron with them.*)

There’s no time to waste. Go directly home.

But you both must taste when you’re finally alone.

(*A firm double nod precedes a wipe to a street in Ponyville proper. Fluttershy emerges onto the scene, saddlebags on back and mane/tail/face still careworn. Angel pops up from one pouch, cheerfully holding up both vials.*)

**Fluttershy:** Not yet, Angel. Zecora told us to take it together when we got home.

(*The hopper stows them away, then tugs at her mane to bring her to a stop. His energetic pointing draws her eye to the sight of Bon Bon and Lyra Heartstrings, who have set up a roadside picnic for themselves.*)

**Fluttershy:** Oh! I suppose we could dust off the old picnic blanket. It’ll be just like old times. (*Angel approves.*) We’ll drink the potion and settle in for a nice tea party. I can barely remember the last time we did that. I’ve been so busy at the sanctuary. (*becoming increasingly fretful*) Though I really need to keep an eye on Zecora’s gecko, and I haven’t finished any of today’s chores. If I don’t, the animals won’t get the care they need. Oh, maybe we should just save the potion until af—

(*On the end of this, Angel decides he has had quite enough and hops out of the bags, taking both potion doses with him.*)

**Fluttershy:** Angel! Zecora said to go home first!

(*He responds by setting one down, pulling the cork from the other, and gulping the contents. The empty is thrown aside with a little bunny burp, and he hurls the full one across to his owner so hard that she very nearly fails to catch it.*)

**Fluttershy:** I know she said we have to take it together, so…I guess I have to now.

(*Pulling the cork with her teeth and spitting it away, she glugs down her shot and voices a sound somewhere between a belch and a gasp as the vial hits the cobbles.*)

**Fluttershy:** I wonder what it’s gonna dooooOOOOO!

(*The cause of her alarm is a white glow that envelops both bodies and smears each into the other’s position before subsiding. Fluttershy winds up on her haunches and without her bags, while Angel finds himself hunkered down between their strap—they have landed on the ground where Fluttershy was standing. As he hops clear, she bonks her chin on the roadbed and quickly straightens up. When she speaks next, her voice has lost its demure tone and taken on a faster, slightly panicked quality. Her mane/tail are back in order, and the fatigued lines are gone from her face.*)

**Fluttershy:** Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, hang on, hold up. Am I a pony? *Why am I a pony?!?*

(*Down below, Angel looks himself over with a measure of real fear and voices a tiny bunny scream of sudden anguish. Based on Fluttershy’s words and the light show caused by drinking the potion, the two have switched bodies. Zoom out quickly to a long overhead shot and snap to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of the affected pair, seen from ground level, and zoom out to put the discarded vials in the fore. Fluttershy, in Angel’s body, hops over to inspect them as Angel stands up in Fluttershy’s, adopting a slightly snarky tone with the borrowed vocal cords.*)

\*\*\* *Until further notice, “Pony AN” and “Rabbit FS” will be used to indicate these two in their body-swapped states.* \*\*\*

**Pony AN:** Question. Did we switch bodies?

(*Rabbit FS tries a few tentative hops to get used to her new physiology, but ends up tumbling to the ground among the passing ponies. Pony AN fares little better, yelping and stumbling his way across the road, and both consider their reflections in a fountain with great trepidation.*)

**Pony AN:** Seriously? I’m a pony? La-la-la-la. Talking’s so cool. Do you think this is what Zecora meant to happen?

(*Rabbit FS shakes her head emphatically, then gestures an inquiry.*)

**Pony AN:** (*incredulously*) “How are you gonna do your chores?” Really? That’s what you’re worried about?

(*The mare in a lagomorph’s body pistons her front paws back and forth in a “turnabout” sort of signal.*)

**Pony AN:** (*scornfully*) Pfft! Well, maybe I don’t want to switch back. I’ve only been able to talk to you since we met, and now I can talk to anypony I want!

(*As he trots away with a grin, she scowls and gets moving after him. It takes Pony AN only a moment to pop up from a flower stall run by Daisy and Rose and get on their nerves.*)

**Pony AN:** Roses are red, violets are blue.

(*to each in turn*) You sell flowers, and so do you!

(*And away he goes, peeking out from around the corner of a different stall to surprise a mother pushing a baby carriage.*)

**Pony AN:** Rubber baby buggy bumpers, rubber baby buggy bumpers!

(*The occupant of said carriage begins wailing up a storm as the unnerved mare clears out.*)

**Pony AN:** Toy boat, toy boat, toy bo—

(*He trails off into a yell due to being yanked to the ground by his tail.*)

**Pony AN:** (*pulling it out of Rabbit FS’s grip*) Oh, come on! (*Rabbit FS indicates her own ears.*) I am so too listening! Quit being so bossy because—

(*A popeyed gasp replaces whatever he was about to say next, and he stands up to full height and sniffs the air.*)

**Pony AN:** Are there carrots around here?

(*Cut to his perspective, zooming in quickly to a close-up of a bunch in a basket carried by Cherry Berry, then back to the pair. Rabbit FS scrambles ahead to cut off Pony AN’s approach and does a bit of bunny hand jive.*)

**Pony AN:** You think Zecora gave us the wrong potion, so you’re gonna go to her hut in the forest and get something to switch us back. (*Nod.*) All by yourself? You *really* don’t know what it’s like, being a bunny. (*Brush it off.*) Good luck with *that*. (*walking past her*) I’m gonna go find those carrots!

(*A stomp brings him up short, and he turns to find Rabbit FS pointing back the way they came.*)

**Pony AN:** I need to finish your chores? (*snickering*) I don’t work for you. And caring about other animals is a “you” thing.

(*She proceeds to hit him with…*)

**Pony AN:** (*gasping deeply*) The Stare? You can still do that? (*Loud, prolonged groan.*) No fair making me do your bidding against my will!

(*Rabbit FS proceeds to kick it up a notch, the camera shifting from one to the other and zooming in slowly on each pair of eyes. Only when Pony AN gives up the fight does it zoom out again.*)

**Pony AN:** (*unwillingly*) All right! I’ll go do your lame chores while you go see Zecora.

(*Mollified, Rabbit FS hops away and leaves Pony AN to plod toward his duties. Dissolve to a close-up of a length of bamboo being inserted into the stream that runs through the sanctuary and tilt up. Here stands Clementine with the other end in her mouth and using it as a drinking straw. Pony AN crosses the bridge over the stream.*)

**Pony AN:** Anypony know where that useless list of Fluttershy’s chores is?

(*This question sparks confused noises among the residents, as evidenced when the camera cuts here and there among them on the end of this line. Back to him after he finishes.*)

**Fauna:** (*from o.s.*) Hey, Fluttershy! (*Stop short; she is looking after raccoons and koalas on a platform.*) I was starting to wonder if you’d make it back.

**Pony AN:** (*hastily*) Fluttershy! Oh, yeah, uh, that’s me. Definitely Fluttershy, a hundred percent. (*Fauna and the raccoons are left very puzzled.*)

**Fauna:** Ooo-kay.

**Pony AN:** (*impersonating Fluttershy badly*) See how shy I am? (*Giggle.*) I talk to animals, I want to marry Discord—

**Fauna:** (*pointing to one side*) Your list is over there.

(*“Over there” being the tree on which it was originally tacked up, along with the keys.*)

**Pony AN:** (*sullenly, crossing to it*) Oh, yeah. There’s my good old list of chores that I will absolutely *not* rush through because I definitely do not have better things to do.

(*A sneaky smile plays over his face at the sight of one item. Cut to a close-up of Sandra, curled up and sleeping at the base of a tree; she wakes up on the next line as Pony AN’s shadow falls over her.*)

**Pony AN:** (*from o.s.*) Well, well, well. (*Cut to frame both, the yellow face splitting in an unsavory grin.*) Remember me?

(*The wolf on its receiving end can do little more than offer a shaky little whimper. Wipe to Twilight Sparkle and Spike walking through a tract of meadowland outside Ponyville proper.*)

**Spike:** (*shuddering happily*) I hope the gem tart stall is still there again. I could use a snack.

**Twilight:** You nearly bought every tart they had last time, Spike. I can’t imagine they wouldn’t show up when there’s a great customer like you.

(*Rabbit FS hops into view facing them, and they stop short.*)

**Twilight:** Oh, hi, Angel. What’s going on?

(*The pony in the wrong body pulls her ears forward and down in a rough approximation of her mane style, crosses her forelegs to indicate a switch, and tries in vain to form words.*)

**Twilight:** (*to Spike*) Do you know what he’s trying to say?

**Spike:** (*shaking head*) Nope.

**Twilight:** Sorry, Angel. You should probably find Fluttershy. If I see her, I’ll let her know you’re looking for her.

(*She and Spike continue on their way, taking no notice of the despair on the fuzzy white face. Rabbit FS tries to chase them down, but is badly winded and sweating by the time she tops the first rise in the path. A glance along a side trail tells her all she needs to know and would much rather not—that she is at the edge of the Everfree Forest.*)

(*Dissolve to a close-up of Sandra, asleep by a different tree and tethered to it by a leash that runs to a collar buckled around her neck. A carrot is thrown into view, plunking down in an empty food bowl; the noise startles Sandra awake, and she barks and pulls at the leash for a second before slumping dejectedly where she sits. Here comes Pony AN, toting another one of the root vegetables and enjoying the spectacle far too much.*)

**Pony AN:** And we’re gonna keep at it until you start to develop a taste for it!

(*Sandra whines as the second carrot is tossed into the bowl. Pony AN marks off an item on the checklist, then removes the pencil from his mouth.*)

**Pony AN:** Eh… (*reading*) “Check Muriel’s trunk…”

(*He crosses to the little elephant, pulls the bandage off her trunk with his teeth, and watches as one powerful inhalation sucks the ring of keys off its nail. The whole lot ends up lodged in her schnozz, leaving it swollen and inflamed.*)

**Pony AN:** (*walking off*) Eh, seems fine to me, as long as we don’t need those keys. Anyway, let’s see. (*reading*) “Massage Clementine’s neck…”

(*The young giraffe husks out a breath and paws at her throat as a ladder is set up alongside. Pony AN climbs up, thumps her roughly in the back of the neck a couple of times, and dismounts to look over the scroll once more.*)

**Pony AN:** (*reading*) “Get Scout to switch legs…”

(*Scout is snoring heartily away and balanced above the water on one leg, just as in Act One.*)

**Pony AN:** (*shrugging*) Eh, probably best not to wake him. (*skimming list*) Did the thing with the thing, yadda-yadda-yadda, animals, animals, animals, all that’s left is… (*reading*) “Monitor Zecora’s gecko until bedtime”?

(*Lowering the parchment, he finds this selfsame critter on the grass right in front of him. The protruding black eyes blink slowly, each in its own rhythm.*)

**Pony AN:** All right, dude. How about we do bedtime now?

(*A bewildered grunt drifts up as yellow feathers roll up the scroll and slip it under a wing.*)

**Pony AN:** Yeah, eating makes me tired too. Which reminds me—there’s some carrot extract with my name on it.

(*Pan quickly to the closed door of the supply closet that contains the good stuff, then cut back to him.*)

**Pony AN:** Okay. Let’s get you fed and off to dreamland. What do you eat, anyway?

(*The gecko grumbles a bit and points off to one side; cut to Antoine sleeping on the rocks, his jar of cookie-styled treats resting securely within his coils. On the start of the next line, zoom out quickly to frame Pony AN and the gecko hunched down over him.*)

**Pony AN:** What do you say, snake? (*Antoine wakes up.*) Can you find something else to eat if I borrow those cookies for my friend here?

(*With an enthusiastic nod, the snake empties the jar in front of the gecko. A long sticky tongue lashes out to pull one into the mouth, then another, and he hops onto the remaining pile and lets off a smoky belch, which both Pony AN and Antoine wave away with mild revulsion.*)

**Pony AN:** Eh, sure that’s normal. There you go. Problem solved. (*crumpling up list*) I don’t see what’s so hard about this job. (*Toss it away; walk off.*) Fluttershy is such a whiner.

(*A sneaky little hiss marks Antoine’s slide into the water. Wipe to a close-up of Rabbit FS hopping frantically along a path in the Everfree Forest. A fallen log blocks her path, covered with moss and luminous mushrooms and with a diameter at least twice her height. A first attempt to climb over it comes up short, but she discovers a gap caused by the decay of the wood and easily slips through only to find a second log smack in her way. An experimental tap produces a solid thud—nothing rotten in this one—and Rabbit FS voices a frustrated little yell but cuts it off sharply upon noticing an eagle on a nearby tree branch. The bird of prey launches itself toward her with a keening cry, and Rabbit FS dives into the undergrowth a fraction of a second before the deadly sharp talons can snap shut on her. Scratched and disheveled from the plunge, she risks a peek skyward and sees/hears the eagle retreating into the distant sky.*)

(*Dissolve to a close-up of Zecora nipping up one of the glowing fungi with her teeth. It goes into a basket with others she has found, just before Rabbit FS collapses to the dirt in front of her, heaving for breath.*)

**Zecora:** Quite a day, my fuzzy friend.

Did things work out for you in the end?

(*The pony-turned-bunny heaves herself upright, coat back in order, and waves her forelegs frantically.*)

**Zecora:** I’m sorry, dear bunny, that things seem so grave,

But I don’t understand when you sign and wave.

(*Rabbit FS’s ears droop dejectedly as the zebra leans down to look her straight on.*)

A single link to all the world, only one in all the land.

How special she must be to you, the one who understands.

(*picking another mushroom; the two are just outside her hut*)

Perhaps if you explained what you wanted to somepony who understood,

If you truly felt heard and valued, all would return to good.

(*Surprise on Rabbit FS’s face as the words sink in.*)

*And* if you were to both apologize, having learned this little lesson,

I imagine that might bring an end to the friendship therapy session.

(*The whiskered white face breaks into a big smile, and the owner hops across to hug as much of Zecora’s foreleg as she can reach, earning a pat on the back in return. Dissolve to a close-up of the supply closet door’s handle; Pony AN wraps both front hooves around this and strains to get it open, without any luck.*)

**Fauna:** (*from o.s.*) Fluttershy? (*She descends a flight of steps to this level.*) Do you mind helping me look for Muriel the baby elephant?

**Pony AN:** Oh, she’s having dinner with Antoine. (*Pull at the door again.*)

**Fauna:** (*taken aback*) Antoine the python?

**Pony AN:** It was on the list. (*reciting*) “Remember, Antoine wants to have Muriel over for dinner.”

**Fauna:** (*darting to him*) Not *over* for dinner— (*shaking him*) —he wants to have her *for* dinner! (*She gallops away.*)

**Pony AN:** Wait. *What?!?*

(*Fade to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to Pony AN approaching the bridge across the stream. On the opposite lies Antoine, most of his length distended by a large bulge to mark a meal he has swallowed whole. A very worried Fauna is keeping watch over him, putting an ear to the bulge and hearing a muffled trumpet that tells her where Muriel has ended up.*)

**Fauna:** Bad snake! (*trying to force his jaws apart*) Open your mouth this instant, mister!

(*The mouse family swipes the last carrot from Sandra’s bowl; she snarls and charges after them, but her leash snaps taut and yanks her back so that her fall wipes out the house of cards being assembled by the bear. It adds its angry vocalizations to Sandra’s as Scout tries to run down the mice, but one of the flamingo’s legs goes rigid with a sudden cramp and sends it yelping in pain to the grass—the result of not shifting its balance in the water. A cough from Clementine startles the gecko into exhaling a burst of fire, from which an ember falls to cause a flare-up in the bushes. Fauna cries out in fear as a couple of birds go airborne to get away from the spreading mayhem, then races across to Pony AN.*)

**Fauna:** What is going on? You did all the chores on your list, huh? Didn’t you?

**Pony AN:** Well, technically, I did ’em, kind of, but more technically, it’s not *my* list.

**Fauna:** *You wrote it!*

**Pony AN:** Did I, though?

**Fauna:** (*shaking him*) WHAT’S GOTTEN INTO YOU?!?

**Pony AN:** (*pushing her back*) You do *not* want to know.

(*Turning away from the vet, he finds a bedraggled, utterly spent Rabbit FS crawling along the path toward him.*)

**Fauna:** (*horrified*) Huh?

(*She turns the little one face-up and sits for a closer look.*)

**Fauna:** Angel?

**Pony AN:** What’s wrong with her? (*catching herself*) H-Him? W-What happened? (*Close-up of the wiped-out bunny.*)

**Fauna:** (*from o.s., stroking her*) He’s exhausted.

(*Close-up of Rabbit FS’s thunderstruck features, mouth wobbling in a nearly inaudible whimper, and zoom out to frame Fauna.*)

**Fauna:** Fluttershy, I need a jar of concentrated carrot extract, stat!

**Pony AN:** (*gasping*) It’s locked in the supply room!

**Fauna:** Where are your keys?!

(*The connections fall together in the brain of the rabbit in a mare’s body, causing the blue-green eyes to pop wide open in unpleasant surprise.*)

**Pony AN:** (*hoof to forehead, slightly strangled tone*) Uhhhh…

(*Wipe to him pressing an ear to Antoine’s swollen hide and hearing panicked trumpets within.*)

**Pony AN:** (*addressing himself o.s.*) Any ideas how to get the keys out of the elephant that’s inside the snake?

(*Cut to just behind him. This question has been aimed at the other animals, every single one of which turns its back pointedly. Scout is upright and standing on both legs now. Long pause.*)

**Pony AN:** Okay, point taken, and I totally deserve it. I did not provide you with the care that Fluttershy would. (*angrily, stomping*) But now you know what it’s like not to get the level of attention to which you’ve become accustomed! (*A funny look from Sandra; she calms down.*) The point is, Fluttershy is trapped in my bunny body. If we don’t help her, maybe none of us will get her attention! I get that you don’t want to help *me*, but don’t you want to help *her?*

(*Grudging agreement from the gathered species. Dissolve to a close-up of Clementine walking up to a pair of crossed palm trees, the tree end of Sandra’s leash in her mouth. She drops it over the juncture for the gecko to bite on and drag away. This is quickly cinched around the end of Antoine’s tail, and a thumbs-up from the little fire-breather and a lifted wing from Scout are Sandra’s cues to stand ready. The other end of the leash is still clipped to her collar.*)

**Pony AN:** Here goes nothin’.

(*He flips a signal to Scout, who lowers the wing as a prompt for Sandra to run straight ahead. The leash goes taut, hauling Antoine up to the trees’ intersection by his tail and dragging foot after foot through the gap. The bulge of the engulfed Muriel is forced closer and closer to the head, and the raccoons have no time to jump clear before the elephant goes flying—trumpeting wildly, trunk still swollen with the keys she inhaled, the rest of her smeared with saliva. She tumbles gracelessly to the turf, and Pony AN gasps and hurries across to her.*)

**Pony AN:** (*raising her trunk*) Now we just need to get those keys outta there.

(*A looming shadow falls across both of them from behind, cast by a rearing, hissing Antoine and scaring Muriel into blatting the keys loose. Now liberally smeared with slime, they hurtle through the air and land neatly on their original nail.*)

**Pony AN:** (*laughing*) Nice one, snake!

(*He crosses to retrieve them as Muriel topples backward to the grass.*)

**Pony AN:** (*taking keys down*) I guess Fluttershy was right. Predators and prey *can* work together.

(*The leash has now been disconnected from Antoine’s tail and Sandra’s collar, and he gallops away over the bridge. Dissolve to a close-up of an unconscious Rabbit FS lying on a pillow; Fauna strokes her gently, concern etched onto every square inch of her face. It gives way to a flat look directed toward Pony AN, who heaves the jar of carrot extract from the supply closet up to the ledge with considerable effort.*)

**Pony AN:** (*out of breath*) This place is *so…much…work!* (*He flops onto his haunches.*)

**Fauna:** (*smiling, opening jar*) Oh, I know! I have no clue how you do it all— (*setting lid down, crossing to Rabbit FS; Pony AN hauls himself up*) —but we are so grateful.

(*She brings out an eyedropper by the time Pony AN can make his way up and across. Close-up of Rabbit FS.*)

**Pony AN:** (*from o.s.*) I can’t believe she does this every day! (*Back to him and Fauna, the latter with dropper now full and in her teeth.*) I just wish I could tell her myself.

**Fauna:** (*shifting it to a hoof*) What?

(*The little mouth is gently pried open and the dose of extract squirted in, and both pairs of equine eyes stare down at Rabbit FS with deepest concern. Pony AN voices a terrified little whimper over the motionless form until black eyes flutter open to meet blue-green, and Rabbit FS sits up so quickly that Fauna lets the dropper fall from her mouth.*)

**Pony AN:** (*overjoyed*) You’re awake! (*Rabbit FS hops in place and gestures.*) It was so hard getting to Zecora’s hut, and impossible getting back? You can’t believe I survive like this? (*Rabbit FS nods solemnly.*) Well, *I* can’t believe *you* work here every day! These animals are crazy! No wonder you don’t have time for me.

(*One white paw points at the speaker.*)

**Pony AN:** *My* life is hard? No, *your* life is *hard.* (*Again.*) *You* never appreciated *me?* No. *I* never appreciated *you!*

(*The one-sided exchange leaves Fauna at such a loss that she chooses this moment to back slowly away from it.*)

**Pony AN:** You’re sorry? I’m sorry too! (*hugging Rabbit FS*) Come here, you little bunny-who’s-a-pony-who’s-a-bunny!

(*He coos over her as the magic glow that switched them in Act One kicks up and reverses their positions once more, restoring Angel to cleanliness and health. Fauna, for her part, busies herself replacing the lid on the jar of carrot extract. A glance at the pair prompts her to rub her eyes in order to make sure she is not seeing things, and Fluttershy and Angel stand up to look themselves over.*)

\*\*\* *The use of “Pony AN” and “Rabbit FS” ends here, since the two have been restored to their proper bodies.* \*\*\*

**Fluttershy:** Oh, my goodness! I’m back! (*jumping in place*) I’m a pony again!

(*Her pet goes up for an ecstatic leap of his own, clicking the heels of his hind paws together in midair, and finishes with a bit of running in place.*)

**Fluttershy:** Oh, Angel, I promise to always make time for you from now on. (*He waves her off with a grin.*) What do you mean, maybe I won’t have to? (*A gesture.*) You want to do *what?*

(*Wipe to a close-up of her on the grounds of the sanctuary.*)

**Fluttershy:** And that’s when I realized Fluttershy doesn’t have to be the only one I talk to.

(*The odd combination of first- and third-person speech is explained in a longer shot. A new meeting of the predator/prey support group has been called, with Angel sitting on a stool next to Fluttershy and letting her translate his gestures into words. A fresh copy of the checklist scroll has been tacked up on the tree behind them.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*speaking for him*) I can come here and talk to all of you.

(*A still-longer shot of the entire gathering. Muriel’s trunk is fully healed, all of Antoine’s digestive juices have been cleaned off her, and Sandra no longer wears her collar.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*speaking for Angel*) And now that I know how much work goes into this place— (*Close-up of him; she continues o.s.*) —I suppose I could kinda-sorta help out every now and then.

(*He finishes with a happy little blush and is met with a round of approving nods/chitters/grunts.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*wiping a tear from her eye*) Oh, Angel, that is so sweet. But now that I know what *you* go through every day— (*Close-up of him; she continues o.s.*) —I understand why your time with me is so important. (*Both again.*) I promise to always make time for you.

(*White and yellow cheeks tint pink as the fuzzy hellion jumps across to her stool for a hug, earning a round of applause from the group. Pan away from them across the stream, where Fauna is bringing Zecora’s animal carrier back to her with handle in teeth.*)

**Fauna:** (*setting it down, turning gate end toward Zecora; the gecko is inside*) Turns out your friend here doesn’t have a problem at all.

(*Close-up of the red/orange reptile.*)

**Fauna:** (*from o.s., opening gate*) He isn’t a gecko, he’s a fire lizard.

(*A cheerful little burst of flame greets these words.*)

**Fauna:** I forgot that before they get their flame, it’s hard to tell them apart. (*Sheepish chuckle.*)

**Zecora:** I’m glad to discover where the source of it lies,

Or the fire that he breathes would be quite the surprise.

**Fauna:** Speaking of surprises… (*glancing toward Fluttershy/Angel*) …can you please never do that again?

(*Cut to the pair on the end of this, a hank of pink mane draped over the fuzzy white noggin, then back. Zecora answers Fauna’s glare with a “who, me?” look followed by a knowing wink and smile. “Iris out” to black, the aperture centered on the striped face and pausing briefly before it closes altogether.*)