

## **PUTTING YOUR HOOF DOWN**

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### **Prologue**

*(Opening shot: fade in to the exterior of Fluttershy's cottage during the day. Zoom in slowly to the sound of a bell ringing.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(from inside)* Lunchtime!

*(Birds and critters converge on the dwelling; cut to the upper reaches of the living room as others make their way down from the ceiling.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(from o.s.)* Who's hungry?

*(Ground level; she pours out a pile of feed from a box.)*

**Fluttershy:** Plenty for everypony.

*(An odd choice of words, perhaps, since she is the only pony in the place. The hungry animals hurry down, one squirrel using her head as a springboard; all chow down eagerly as she hovers over them. A gray rabbit gets body-checked away by a mouse.)*

**Fluttershy:** Slow down, sweetie.

*(All give her a puzzled look for the briefest moment, then resume their gorging; the mouse jumps up and knocks the box from her grasp. As it pours the food into its gullet, causing its entire body to swell up, she swoops over to snatch the box with a chuckle. A thumping noise prompts her into a 180-degree pivot; pan to frame Angel over here. He stands next to an empty bowl and is tapping his foot crossly on the floorboards.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(filling bowl)* Here you go, Angel bunny.

*(One kick flips the bowl into the air so that it lands upside down on her head, dumping the contents and causing her to lose hold of the box. More annoyed tapping greets her as she pulls the bowl off.)*

**Fluttershy:** Okay, Mr. Picky Pants, you win.

*(She picks up a bowl of salad from a table; close-up of him as it is set down alongside.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(from o.s.)* Carrots, lettuce, and apples. Yum-yum-yum!

*(This is flung away, surprising the pegasus greatly.)*

**Fluttershy:** What? But...

*(A nibble at a cucumber slice causes the white-furred face to turn green and its owner to pitch backward and down o.s.; there is a thud, followed by a flower popping up into view. A longer shot reveals that Angel is clasping the blossom over his chest as if dead.)*

**Fluttershy:** Well, then, what will you eat?

*(He comes to, zips away with a smile, and returns with an open cookbook. The page he points out depicts a salad piled high with fruit and topped with whipped cream and a cherry.)*

**Fluttershy:** I'm not sure I can even make that. *(Her perspective; he points angrily.)* Well...I don't want you to starve.

*(Back to her, now smiling pleadingly.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(holding up a lettuce leaf)* Oh, are you sure I can't tempt you with a nice crisp piece of—

*(She gets it knocked off her hoof, her face slapped, and the book thrust into her face.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(sighing heavily)* I'll make your special recipe.

*(Fade to black.)*

## OPENING THEME

### Act One

*(Opening shot: fade in to several produce stands set up in the town square and zoom out to frame Fluttershy looking on from a distance. Business is good. She has her saddlebags slung up and is holding a scroll.)*

**Fluttershy:** Hmmm...let's see.

*(Her perspective of the sheet, tilting down; radishes, carrots, and broccoli are checked off, but asparagus and tomatoes are not. She points at...)*

**Fluttershy:** Asparagus.

*(Cut to frame her as she walks over to an asparagus stand. Caramel collects a bunch and departs, as does the stallion behind him, leaving five on the counter. Before Fluttershy can step up, an orange-maned unicorn mare with reading glasses zips in and beats her to it. She appears identical to Lucy, the pegasus stage manager in “Sonic Rainboom,” with two immediate differences: the lack of a headset microphone and the fact that she is of a different race.)*

**Fluttershy:** Excuse me, um, I think you just stepped in front of me?

*(Lucy 2 pays no mind, levitating a coin onto the counter and floating a bunch away during this line with some annoyance.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(as she departs)* Excuse me, I think you made a mistake? *(hastily, following her)* You see, I was actually here first and— *(She stops.)*

**Lucy 2:** Sorry, didn’t notice you there!

**Fluttershy:** *(to herself)* I know.

*(Lucy 2’s departure reveals a third difference from her pegasus counterpart: her cutie mark shows a bunch of carrots, rather than three tornadoes. Behind her, an elderly earth pony stallion approaches; his laugh and mumble catch her off guard, and she comes up behind him. Khaki coat, green eyes, white/gray mane/tail with bushy eyebrows, light orange golf shirt with white collar/cuffs, cutie mark of a golf club and two balls.)*

**Fluttershy:** Oh, pardon me, sir.

**Old stallion:** *(mumbling, holding up ear trumpet)* Yes? What?

**Fluttershy:** I think you just cut in front of me.

**Old stallion:** A cut of celery? *(lowering trumpet; disdainful mutter)* This is the asparagus stand! *(Close-up of the device.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(circling around)* I said... *(speaking into it; reverberating)* ...I think you just cut in front of me!

*(On the end of this, zoom out to frame both ponies; he flips a coin onto the counter.)*

**Old stallion:** *(laughing)* No need, dearie. I’m already in front.

*(Grabbing a bunch in his teeth, he walks off; two earth pony mares stand up into view to take his place. The first is light blue, with a two-tone orange mane/tail secured by magenta bows; the other is light pink, her two-tone blue mane/tail held with light yellow bands, and has lightning-bolt earrings and orange sunglasses. Both are dressed in typical 1980s fashion and speak with a Valley Girl accent. Their cutie marks are a palm tree and surfboard, respectively.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(to herself, a bit annoyed)* I noticed.

**Mare 1 (orange mane):** ...and then I was like, “Uh, well...”

**Fluttershy:** Hey! *(Both roll their eyes at her.)*

**Mare 1:** Would you mind moving back? You’re in my personal space. *(Fluttershy eyes the wide empty area between herself and them.)*

**Fluttershy:** But—

**Mare 2 (sunglasses):** *(as Fluttershy slinks backward)* Seriously, do you need your asparagus so badly? Get a life!

*(Soft snickering as she retreats past Pinkie Pie and Rarity without noticing them.)*

**Fluttershy:** Oh, okay. There’s no rush.

**Rarity:** Fluttershy! *(Stop.)* You mustn’t let them treat you that way.

**Fluttershy:** *(turning away)* Oh, it’s—it’s really no big deal. *(One bunch of asparagus is left now.)*

**Pinkie:** It’s bigger than big! It’s double-big! You are a pony with a problem!

**Fluttershy:** What problem?

*(The other two trade a calculating glance and nod, after which Pinkie turns Fluttershy to face the stand and zips up to it so fast that the yellow pony gets spun in place and dumped flat.)*

**Fluttershy:** Oh, go right ahead, Pinkie Pie. You first. *(Pinkie leans down to her.)*

**Pinkie:** Right there! *(tapping Fluttershy’s forehead)* That’s the problem!

**Rarity:** You’ve got to stop being such a doormat. *(Fluttershy stands up.)*

**Fluttershy:** A doormat?

**Rarity:** A pushover, darling. *(Pinkie walks over.)* You’ve got to stand up for yourself! Promise us.

**Fluttershy:** *(uncertainly, walking to stand)* Okay. I promise. *(Her perspective of the last bunch, zooming in.)* Oh, good!

*(Before she can lay her money down, a geeky earth pony stallion strolls past and nips the produce away, tossing a coin down in its place. Off-white coat, brown mane/tail, taped-together glasses in front of blue eyes, straggly mustache over pronounced buck teeth, very bad complexion. He carries saddlebags and wears a green bow tie with white cross-hatched stripes. Back to the dejected pegasus.)*

**Fluttershy:** Oh, that’s okay, I don’t mind. *(Rarity races over.)*

**Rarity:** Watch and learn. *(trotting toward the geek)* Hold it right there, Mr. Small and Handsome!

**Geek stallion:** Uh...who, me?

**Rarity:** *(seductively)* Well, of course, you. No pony ever called you handsome before? *(Cut to him on the end of this.)*

**Geek stallion:** Uh...that’d be a big no.

**Rarity:** Oh! Well, they should. *(lifting his foreleg)* How about flexing some of your muscles for

me?

*(The attention brings a dopey smile to his face and sets his bow tie spinning and tail waving, and he flexes that limb as tightly as he can. In close-up, one tiny bulge of muscle forms, accompanied by the o.s. Rarity's gasp.)*

**Rarity:** *(from o.s.)* Oh, my heavens! *(Cut to frame both.)* Do you think a strong, handsome stallion such as yourself... *(levitating his coin onto his nose, asparagus from his bags)* ...could give my friend the last asparagus?

*(He can only manage a goofy laugh as she trots back to Fluttershy; close-up of the latter as her bag is magically opened and the food dropped in.)*

**Rarity:** *(from o.s.)* See? That's not so hard, is it? *(Zoom out to frame both.)*

**Fluttershy:** Um...I guess not. *(The shopping list is floated out; bag closes.)*

**Rarity:** All right, then! What else is on your list? *(It is unrolled.)*

**Fluttershy:** Let's see. I also need tomatoes.

*(Wipe to a close-up of three tomatoes on a counter; one yellow wing sweeps them gently off, and she leans in to lay down a coin in her teeth.)*

**Fluttershy:** Here you go.

*(She backs off; cut to frame all of this stand and the slightly perplexed earth pony mare running it. Cream-colored coat, brown mane/tail, white paper cap, green apron, blue-green eyes. The signs on her bins indicate that two coins are needed to purchase three tomatoes.)*

**Tomato vendor:** *(clearing throat)* That'll be two bits... *(Fluttershy stops.)* ...not one.

**Fluttershy:** Oh, but last week it was only one bit.

**Tomato vendor:** That was then, this is now. *(Close-up of the counter.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(from o.s., laying another coin down)* Oh, okay. *(Cut to frame both.)* I don't want to argue about it.

*(As soon as she backs away, an indignant Pinkie takes her place. The vendor's cutie mark is now seen: three tomatoes.)*

**Pinkie:** What do you think you're doing?

**Tomato vendor:** Minding my own business. Maybe you should try it.

**Pinkie:** Two bits for tomatoes is outrageous. *(Close-up of the counter; she pulls one away and continues o.s.)* One bit is the right price.

**Tomato vendor:** *(from o.s., pulling it back)* I say it's two bits! *(Cut to frame both.)*

**Pinkie:** *(pulling it away)* One bit!

**Tomato vendor:** *(pointing to sign)* Two bits!

**Pinkie:** *(holding up her own)* One bit! *(Fluttershy peeks up over the counter's end.)*

**Tomato vendor:** *(pulling coin across)* Two bits!

**Pinkie:** *(banging counter; coin jumps to her)* One bit!

**Tomato vendor:** *(ditto)* Two bits!

*(Close-up of the counter; Pinkie shifts the second bit's position, but leaves it on her adversary's side of the counter.)*

**Pinkie:** *(from o.s.)* Two bits!

**Tomato vendor:** *(from o.s., pushing it toward Pinkie)* One bit!

**Pinkie:** *(pushing it back)* Two bits!

**Tomato vendor:** *(from o.s., ditto)* One bit!

**Pinkie:** *(ditto, leaning into view, shrilly)* I insist it's two bits or nothing!

*(Her perspective of the other mare's face—upside down, due to the positioning of her head.)*

**Tomato vendor:** One bit and that's my final offer! *(Cut to frame both; Pinkie straightens up with a smile.)*

**Pinkie:** *(whisking extra bit away)* Have it your way. One bit it is.

*(She and Fluttershy clear out at a full gallop, leaving the vendor smiling smugly to herself. Only when she ducks down to pick up the money does she realize the turnabout Pinkie has pulled; the latter shares a giggle with Rarity as the three friends walk off.)*

**Pinkie:** See? Asserting yourself can be fun!

**Fluttershy:** I guess you're right.

**Rarity:** So, Fluttershy, do you feel like giving it a try?

**Fluttershy:** Um, okay.

*(The other two keep walking as she stops with a pop-eyed stare; cut to a cherry vendor's stall and zoom in quickly. A single piece of fruit rests before the impassive, stubble-faced pegasus stallion on duty. Dark khaki coat, light blond mane/tail, blue eyes peering out from underneath the brim of a dark blue motorcycle cap, white apron, red bow tie, cutie mark hidden under his folded wing.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(from o.s.)* I need that cherry! *(Back to her; she races up and hovers.)* Boy, am I glad you have one cherry left. *(landing)* You see, I'm making this special meal for my bunny Angel—he's a very picky eater—*(opening saddlebag with a wing)*—and the recipe calls for a cherry on top.

*(A quick dip of the head brings up a bit in her teeth; she tosses it down.)*

**Fluttershy:** Here you go.

**Cherry vendor:** *(shrewdly)* So, you say you need this cherry very badly.

**Fluttershy:** Oh, yes. I'm desperate for it.

**Cherry vendor:** Then it'll be ten bits!

**Fluttershy:** *(aghast)* Ten?!?

*(Pan to Pinkie and Rarity behind her; the former nods, the latter throws her an encouraging grin and gesture, and Fluttershy brings her eyebrows down over the blue-green irises. A second later they are up again, and she puts on her best attempt at Rarity's sweet-talking routine.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(nervously, speeding up)* Oh, hey, Mr. Handsome. I know you want to do the right thing because you're handsome and...and strong, and big handsome strong guys are always nice to everypony, right?

*(Batting the eyelashes and grinning hugely have no effect whatsoever on the stolid unshaven countenance.)*

**Cherry vendor:** Ten bits for the cherry!

*(Now Pinkie grins and gestures while Rarity nods; taking the hint, Fluttershy turns away and puts on an appropriately fed-up air.)*

**Fluttershy:** Ten bits for one cherry's outrageous! *(Close-up of him; she continues o.s.)* I insist on paying you... *(leaning into view)* ...eleven bits!

**Cherry vendor:** *(surprised)* Eleven bits?

**Fluttershy:** Um...I mean...nine bits! *(Cut to Pinkie and Rarity, trading a confused look.)*

**Cherry vendor:** *(from o.s.)* Uh, now wait a minute!

**Fluttershy:** *(from o.s.)* Okay, twelve bits— *(Rarity's jaw drops; Pinkie tries to bury her head in the dirt.)* —but that's my final offer!

*(The white unicorn ends up covering her mouth to keep from vomiting, followed by a tap on Pinkie's head.)*

**Cherry vendor:** *(from o.s.)* I think you're confused! *(Cut to the stall.)*

**Fluttershy:** It's twelve bits. Take it or leave it!

**Cherry vendor:** Okay, I'll take it!

*(The brief flash of a smile betrays his glee at having come out on top. Fluttershy leans over to drop a bag of money in front of him, but she gets yanked backwards as Rarity's magic grabs it out of her teeth and lifts away the single coin. She gets dragged after them.)*

**Pinkie:** *(from o.s.)* Don't give him your money!

*(Cut to all three; Rarity has Fluttershy's tail in her teeth to haul her away. The bag lands on Pinkie's head.)*

**Pinkie:** One cherry is not worth twelve bits!

**Fluttershy:** But...I was only doing what you did. *(Stop; Rarity lets go.)*

**Rarity:** It was a valiant effort, but you should refuse to give him your business and just walk away. *(Zoom in slowly on Fluttershy.)*

**Fluttershy:** But I can't let Angel starve! He won't eat it unless I make it just right! (*Zoom out quickly; she stands up.*) I need that cherry, no matter what it costs! (*Race back to the stand.*)

**Cherry vendor:** In that case... (*smiling nastily*) ...twenty bits! (*Close-up of Fluttershy.*)

**Fluttershy:** Twenty? (*Zoom out; she stops her flight.*) Oh, but...I don't have that much.

**Cherry vendor:** Then why are you wasting my time?

(*Lemon Hearts walks past, levitating two bits onto the counter.*)

**Lemon:** I'll give you two bits for that cherry.

**Cherry vendor:** Sold! (*She floats it away.*) Eh, tough break, kid. Next time don't be such a doormat.

(*Said doormat pouts, hangs her head, and plods away as her two friends stare with deep concern. Dissolve to the exterior of her cottage, whose mailbox is now stuffed with the day's deliveries. A dark gray goat, carrying a basket of envelopes or pamphlets in its teeth, walks away over the bridge spanning the brook. It wears a red necktie and a wireless headset microphone, and a laminate-style ID badge hangs around its neck.*)

(*Cut to a close-up of Angel inside, sitting at a table and tying a napkin around his neck; zoom out slightly to show a candle in a bottle across from him. Fluttershy reaches into view and sets down the piled-high salad from the cookbook—with everything but the cherry on top.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s.*) Ta-da! (*He opens his mouth to gulp it down.*) Here you go, Angel. (*Cut to her.*) Sorry there's no cherry on top, but—

(*His ears pop up in surprise; back to him, pulling out the cookbook for a read.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s.*) —the rest of it is exactly what you wanted.

(*After a couple of glances at the page and the food, he growls and his expression turns into the sort that a very small child might display before launching into a full-scale tantrum.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s.*) Angel?

(*Cut to just outside the front door, whose top half is open. The salad is flung out, followed by its maker, who crashes into the mailbox and tumbles down amid a shower of letters. She winds up flat on her face with a little moan as the mail flutters down; zoom in.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*sadly*) Look at me. I really *am* a doormat.

(*One item settles on her head—a pamphlet whose front cover shows the red silhouette of a bull's head. She pulls this free, her face registering mild surprise as she inspects it.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*reading*) “The incredible Iron Will turns doormats into dynamos.” (*She unfolds it; a little bull-headed figure pops out.*) “Assertiveness seminar today, hedge maze center.”



*(She lowers the pamphlet, eyebrows descending into a glare of sudden resolve as the camera zooms in slowly.)*

**Fluttershy:** As Celestia is my witness— *(Longer shot; she stands up.)* —I’m never gonna be a pushover again!

*(Snap to black.)*

## Act Two

*(Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of a meadow hedge maze, seen from the top of a nearby hill. It is not nearly as expansive as the one seen in “The Return of Harmony,” and the large open area at the center can easily be seen. Quite a few ponies are on their way in; the banner over the entrance, and the visible stage proscenium at the center, both carry the bull-head design from Fluttershy’s pamphlet. Zoom in slowly, then dissolve to just inside the entrance to the center as the crowd files in. A white goat, outfitted identically to the gray one that left Fluttershy’s house, stands here to keep an eye on things; the only difference is that this one’s tie is blue rather than red.)*

*(Well behind the others, Fluttershy peeks timidly around the corner and lets her eyes pop when she notices the goat, whose attention is directed elsewhere. She proceeds to slink in as if wishing she could cast an industrial-strength invisibility spell over herself. Cut to a head-on view of the stage and zoom out as she makes her way forward; speakers are set up at each end, along with a topiary carved to resemble a muscular minotaur—bull head, humanoid body. After a moment, Fluttershy begins to ease across the front row.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(amid occasional little yelps)* Oh!...Excuse me.

*(She shoehorns herself in between Daisy and Bon Bon, to the amusement of neither, and gives them the biggest “please don’t hurt me” grin she can muster. However, it fails to have any impact, judging from her short and graceless trajectory as she is flung over the crowd to land in its back row. Now the speakers blare a pounding rock beat as both goats get into position; White starts up a fog machine, while Gray switches on a spotlight on an elevated platform and aims it at the stage. The illuminated circle settles on the center of the hazy area as the camera zooms in and the music builds.)*

*(Through the fog, a caped figure rises into view, bearing the same horns as those seen around the area. One goat darts in to nip the cape away and fully expose the wearer’s silhouette: bull head, muscular humanoid arms and torso, standing upright on a deer’s hind legs, long slim tail. Fireworks burst around this figure, which punches at the air as the fog clears away to expose a few more details of Iron Will: black necktie, dark tuft on his tail and Mohawk-cut mane. The crowd cheers and stomps its approval; once the light show dies down, he can be seen to have dark grayish-blue legs and lighter hair over his upper body and tail. A close-up picks out the*

*wireless headset microphone plugged into his ear; the steel ring through his nose, his beady black eyes with yellowed whites and red-rimmed lower lids, and a short tuft of beard. The mane, tail tuft, and beard are the same shade as his lower body. He kisses his biceps before addressing the crowd and pacing the stage, with a demeanor lies somewhere between “motivational speaker” and “professional wrestler.” All of his lines during this scene are amplified by the sound system.)*

**Iron:** Welcome, friends! My name is Iron Will, and today is the first day of your new life! (*hand to ear*) I want to hear you stomp if you’re tired of being a pushover!

*(The crowd does exactly that while cheering wildly. Fluttershy jumps up and down, trying to get a good look at him from the back.)*

**Iron:** (*crossing stage*) Stomp if you’re tired of being a doormat! (*They do so; he crosses back.*) Stomp if you want to pay nothing for this seminar!

*(They do so again, but this response quickly gives way to confused murmurs and then laughter. A steely glare and huff from Iron stop them cold.)*

**Iron:** That’s no joke, friends. Iron Will is so confident that you will be one hundred percent satisfied with Iron Will’s assertiveness techniques— (*Both goats are now down in front of the stage.*) —that if you are *not* one hundred percent satisfied, *you pay nothing!*

*(On each of these last three words, the camera cuts in closer, ending with an extreme close-up of his face. He then leans over the edge and toward one stallion.)*

**Iron:** But I pity the fool who doubts Iron Will’s methods. (*getting in his face*) You don’t doubt me, do you?

**Audience stallion:** (*nervously, sweating*) Oh! Uh-uh, no, sir.

*(The rest of the audience voices their agreement. A longer shot reveals that Iron is now standing on the backs of his two goat assistants, who back up slightly.)*

**Iron:** That, my friends, is your first lesson. Don’t be shy— (*winking*) —look ’em in the eye.

*(Cut to Fluttershy, who smiles to herself as the crowd talks excitedly; on the next line, the view shifts to her perspective. He is back on the stage.)*

**Iron:** Now, to demonstrate that Iron Will’s techniques will work for anypony, I’m gonna need a volunteer.

*(Dozens of hooves instantly shoot up; back to Fluttershy, who sinks out of sight instead. Both goats move through the crowd, scoping out the prospects; White stops to bleat and point, and Gray returns to the stage to tell the boss.)*

**Iron:** (*pointing; crowd parts*) You in the back row!

(*A quick zoom in to the far end of the brand-new aisle puts the focus on Lily and Rose, who back off to either side to reveal a huddled Fluttershy trying to disappear behind her own mane.*)

**Fluttershy:** Who, me?

**Iron:** Yes, you! Iron Will wants you onstage! (*Extreme close-up: she swallows hard.*)

**Fluttershy:** Uh, well... (*His reflection appears in her pupils.*)

**Iron:** Now! (*Shudder; long shot of her.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*whispering*) Okay.

(*She trots behind the crowd and up onto one end of the stage, but White darts in to bar the way as soon as she arrives. Her dodge around the goat is met with a second interception.*)

**Iron:** Whoa, he's blocking your path! What are you gonna do about it?

**Fluttershy:** Um, politely walk around him?

**Iron:** No.

**Fluttershy:** Gingerly tiptoe around him?

**Iron:** (*a bit annoyed*) No.

**Fluttershy:** Go back home and try again tomorrow? (*He moves behind her.*)

**Iron:** No! When somepony tries to block, show them that you rock!

(*The end of this, aimed at the back of her head, is delivered with the intensity of a small gale. Now the self-help minotaur flicks an index finger into Fluttershy's rump, hard enough to propel her into White and knock him away. She gets knocked silly for a moment, while White tumbles down on his back.*)

**Fluttershy:** Oh! Sorry.

**Iron:** Don't be sorry! Be assertive! Never apologize when you can criticize!

(*Clearing his throat, he leans down over the supine White at close range.*)

**Iron:** (*full force*) Why don't you watch where you're going? (*He stands up and addresses Fluttershy at normal volume.*) Now, you try.

(*The soft-spoken pegasus glances down at White.*)

**Fluttershy:** Uh... (*She works up a little nerve.*) ...next time, get out of the way before I bump into you, 'cause I totally won't be sorry when I do!

(*She grimaces as if expecting a blow, but Iron just smiles as coins ring up in his eyes—money in the bank. Close-up of her.*)

**Iron:** (*from o.s., grabbing her foreleg*) You see, my friends? (*He hoists her up, cut to frame both.*) If my techniques can work for this shy little pony, then they can work for anypony!

*(Fireworks explode around them while the crowd cheers wildly, and a smile gradually settles on Fluttershy's face as the camera zooms in slowly on her. Dissolve to the exterior of her cottage, zooming in slowly again.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(from inside)* Okay.

*(Inside, she regards herself in a large mirror that has one of Iron's pamphlets taped to either side of its frame; many of her animal friends are watching.)*

**Fluttershy:** I feel good. I feel ready to "attack the day," as Iron Will says.

*(She trots determinedly across the room on the end of this line. Cut to outside as she opens the front door; a streaming garden hose nozzle is being held in view near the camera. Fluttershy stops short upon seeing this, and the view shifts to just behind her. It is being held by Mr. Greenhooves, the elderly gardener on duty at Canterlot Castle in "The Best Night Ever." The elderly stallion hums to himself as he waters a rather swampy patch of flowers.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(galloping down to him)* Excuse me, Mr. Greenhooves, but I-I think you might be over-watering my petunias... *(He chuckles.)* ...again.

**Mr. Greenhooves:** *(scornfully)* Let the professional handle it.

*(She turns around to go back to the cottage, but snaps fully upright after only a step or two. As he hums some more, she opens her mouth to speak, closes it, then finds her nerve.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(to herself)* "Treat me like a pushover and you'll get the once-over."

*(One yellow hoof comes down on the hose, pinching it off so that the water backs up and causes the tubing to bulge like an overinflated balloon. Mr. Greenhooves eyes the suddenly dry nozzle.)*

**Mr. Greenhooves:** Hm? *(shaking/peering into it)* Hmmm...

*(Cut to Fluttershy, who moves her hoof so that the backed-up water surges along the hose. There is a loud splash, and the soaked, spluttering gardener backs up into view.)*

**Mr. Greenhooves:** Well, perhaps that is enough water. *(Big sheepish grin.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(disdainfully)* Thank you.

*(She turns away, not noticing the frown that comes over the old face, and trots off. At the top of the bridge over the brook, on her way off the property, she rears up and lets off a giddy little squeal.)*

**Fluttershy:** I can't believe it worked!

*(She goes on with a giggle. Wipe to a close-up of Bon Bon and Cherry Berry, standing side by*

*side on a bridge and hooked up in harnesses.)*

**Cherry:** *(rolling eyes)* Showpony business is tough.

*(Longer shot: they stand on a bridge over the stream bordering Ponyville, each hauling a wagonload of garbage.)*

**Bon Bon:** Like, go ahead. Try one of your jokes out on me. I laugh at everything.

*(On the end of this, pan back in the direction they came to frame Fluttershy's approach.)*

**Cherry:** *(now o.s.)* Okay, okay, okay. A donkey and a mule are stuck on a desert island. *(Fluttershy clears her throat firmly, stepping on the bridge.)*

**Fluttershy:** Excuse me! Would you mind moving your carts so I can pass? *(Both glare back at her.)*

**Cherry:** Yeah, yeah, in a minute. I just want to finish up this story. *(They face front again.)* And so the donkey says to the mule—

**Fluttershy:** *(irritated)* A-hem! Can you move? You're blocking my path.

**Cherry:** Yeah, yeah, in a minute! *(to Bon Bon)* So the donkey says to the mule... *(Her words fade out under the next line as the camera cuts to Fluttershy.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(to herself)* "When somepony tries to block, show them that you rock."

**Cherry:** *(from o.s.)* And the mule says—

*(The punchline remains a mystery, as Fluttershy chooses this moment to buck the rear ends of both wagons at once. They flip up to vertical and back again, dumping torrents of refuse over the two conversing mares.)*

**Cherry:** Ugh! Easy does it, lady! *(She and Bon Bon pull the carts ahead.)* We're moving, okay?

**Fluttershy:** Good!

*(She walks on with a smirk. Wipe to her on the way toward Sugarcube Corner, then cut to just inside the front door as she steps in. Daisy is standing here, positioned so that Fluttershy can barely get through the entrance; the latter stares ahead with popping eyes.)*

**Pinkie:** *(from o.s.)* Who's next, please, and what can I get for you today?

*(During this line, the camera cuts to frame her at the counter, with a long line of ponies stretching back and Fluttershy at the end of it, then back to the pegasus. A light blue hoof taps her shoulder, and the mare attached to it nips in to cut ahead of her and bump her backwards.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(annoyed)* What do you think you're doing? Didn't you see me?

**Mare 3:** Uh, I—I guess, maybe.

**Fluttershy:** Maybe? "Maybe's are for babies!"

*(A flick of one foreleg against the interloper's shoulder spins her like a top; she comes out of it*

*half-hunched down and facing one irate customer.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(harshly)* Now go to the back of the line where you belong!

*(She does so—and, to avoid getting anything worse than a scathing grimace, all the other patrons gasp and hastily back up out the door. Fluttershy smirks over her shoulder in extreme close-up as the camera pans to frame Pinkie on the start of the next line.)*

**Pinkie:** Heeey! Look at you! *(Rarity zips up alongside with a laugh.)*

**Rarity:** *(as Pinkie nods)* Your attitude is so feisty, it's fabulous!

*(Cut back to Fluttershy on these last two words; she covers the gap between herself and the pair in one graceful, flapping leap.)*

**Pinkie:** Looks like that monster's workshop really paid off!

**Fluttershy:** *(normal tone)* Iron Will's not a monster, he's a minotaur, and a true inspiration. His techniques really work.

**Rarity:** Well, they've certainly made a difference in the way you carry yourself. You truly are a whole new Fluttershy. *(Cut to her on the end of this.)*

**Fluttershy:** Yes, I am. *(hovering briefly)* And New Fluttershy feels pretty stoked about New Fluttershy.

**Pinkie:** Well, Old Pinkie Pie feels really proud of New Fluttershy—proud as pink punch! *(She whips a bowlful onto the counter.)* Want some?

*(The subsequent gale of snorting giggles sends her to the floor but ticks Fluttershy off quite a bit.)*

**Fluttershy:** “You laugh at me? I wrath at you!”

*(A shove, and the punchbowl tumbles off Pinkie's side of the counter. Rarity stares in mute disbelief as the assistant baker stands up with the thing on her head. However, Fluttershy does not notice, as she is on the way out with her usual sweet expression and tone.)*

**Fluttershy:** Bye, girls!

*(Outside, all the other would-be customers scatter as she exits and jumps off the step.)*

**Fluttershy:** What a day! *(waving)* Taxi!

*(She races off as Pinkie and Rarity emerge; the former no longer wears the bowl. A taxi carriage pulls up, its design and driver outfitted as the one seen in “Sisterhooves Social.” Fluttershy gallops over, but before she can jump aboard, a gray earth pony stallion beats her to it and ruins her mood.)*

**Fluttershy:** Oh, no, you don't. “Cut in line, I'll take what's mine!”

*(She hops on and instantly starts brawling with him.)*

**Passenger stallion:** Hey!

*(Cut to Pinkie and Rarity, watching dumbstruck and inclining their heads to mark his trajectory.)*

**Passenger stallion:** *(from o.s.)* Heeeeyyyy!

*(He crashes to the flagstones in front of the step.)*

**Passenger stallion:** *(weakly)* Owww... *(Close-up of Fluttershy on board.)*

**Fluttershy:** Nopony pushes New Fluttershy around! *(Zoom out.)* NOPONY!!

*(The camera shakes with the force of this word, and the driver stallion gallops off in a fright.)*

**Pinkie:** Old Pinkie Pie's not so sure New Fluttershy is such a good idea after all.

**Rarity:** Old Rarity agrees.

*(Snap to black.)*

### Act Three

*(Opening shot: fade in to Fluttershy at her mirror inside the cottage. The animal tenants cut her a very wide berth.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(fiercely)* You got this, New Fluttershy! This day is yours, and nopony's gonna take it away from you! *(leaning to a few animals)* Am I *RIGHT*?

*(That last word hits the group hard enough to send them over in a dead faint. Cut to outside the front door as she kicks it open and emerges.)*

**Fluttershy:** Right!

*(Stopping at the mailbox, she pulls out the contents and runs a disgusted eye over them.)*

**Fluttershy:** What?!? He's delivered the wrong mail, again!

*(“He” turns out to be a gray earth pony stallion in a postman's blue uniform, with saddlebags slung up; white mane/tail, thick glasses obscuring squinty eyes. Standing at a different mailbox, he retrieves a stack of letters from his bag—and proceeds to try and stuff them into a nearby birdhouse. As the correspondence drifts to the ground, an irate yellow pegasus inserts herself between the mail carrier and the ersatz receptacle. He gets off a panicked little yelp; she starts to back him up.)*

**Fluttershy:** And New Fluttershy does not want the wrong mail delivered to her cottage!

**Mail stallion:** Oh! Did I mix 'em up again? *(He pulls a letter from the bag with his teeth.)* Sorry about that.

*(Now she leans in so fast that the glasses go flying off, revealing scared light blue eyes.)*

**Fluttershy:** “You apologize, I penalize!”

*(Now plenty frightened, he races ahead and o.s.; a crash and groan drift back, along with a few letters, and she holds up a stamp on one hoof. A longer shot reveals that he has run flat into the mailbox, wedging himself partially inside and knocking himself out. She slaps the stamp on his protruding rump and snatches the letter from his mouth with her own. In less time than it takes to say “Acme Corporation Special Delivery,” a second postal employee pulling a cart whisks into view in front of the box and peels out. The offending stallion is now gone from sight, having presumably been picked up for shipment to parts unknown.)*

*(Fluttershy walks placidly along the road, letter in teeth, as a khaki earth pony stallion with a short, unruly two-tone brown mane/tail passes her going the other way. Blue eyes, thick brown mustache/brows, leaf-print sweater over a white shirt, red sun visor, guidebook in hoof, generally bewildered expression—definitely not from around these parts. Fluttershy approaches a puddle.)*

**Tourist stallion:** *(galloping over to her)* Excuse me, do you know how to get to the Ponyville Tower?

*(His approach exposes a camera slung around his neck. Close-up of her on the end of this line, letter still in teeth.)*

**Fluttershy:** Sure! You just—

*(She cuts herself off once it drops loose and lands in the water; a sharp gasp, and “New Fluttershy” gets ready to throw down all over again in close-up.)*

**Tourist stallion:** *(from o.s.)* Awww... *(Cut to frame both; Pinkie and Rarity come up over a hill.)* ...that’s a shame.

*(Her rising growl is followed by a close-up of the two incredulous new arrivals as they stop.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(from o.s.)* “You make me lose...” *(Cut to frame all four.)* “...I blow my fuse!” *(She grabs the camera in her teeth and pulls.)*

**Tourist stallion:** Hey!

*(Slinging him around herself as if warming up for a hammer throw, she lets fly toward the town’s clock tower. He lands in a haystack, while the camera comes loose and smacks into the bell; she smiles tranquilly at the sight as Pinkie and Rarity step up.)*



**Rarity:** Fluttershy, what *are* you doing? (*Fluttershy's face hardens.*) That's no way to behave!

**Fluttershy:** Didn't you see what he did to New Fluttershy? (*turning to them*) And he thought New Fluttershy was a pushover!

**Rarity:** (*calmly, but reprovably*) No, sweetie, he didn't. We saw the whole thing. (*Fluttershy hovers in their faces.*) We think that you've taken your assertiveness training a little too far.

**Fluttershy:** (*needled*) What? You just want New Fluttershy to be a doormat like Old Fluttershy—but Old Fluttershy is GONE!

**Pinkie:** (*really confused*) New Fluttershy? Old Fluttershy?

**Rarity:** What happened to Nice Fluttershy? We want that Fluttershy back.

**Fluttershy:** (*flying around them*) No! You want Wimp Fluttershy! You want Pushover Fluttershy! You want “do anything to her and she won't complain” Fluttershy!

(*Pinkie has kept turning her head to maintain eye contact with the ranting pegasus, leaving her neck twisted through at least one and a half circles. The head finally snaps back into its normal position as the mouth lets off a yelp and the eyes start jittering in their sockets.*)

**Pinkie:** Too many Fluttershys to keep track of! (*hooves to head*) Make it stop!

**Fluttershy:** (*tapping Pinkie's forehead, shoving her back*) Things getting too complicated for your simple little brain, Pinkie Pie? (*Rarity ducks in to catch her.*)

**Rarity:** Now stop right there! Let's not let things descend into petty insults.

**Fluttershy:** Why not? I thought petty was what you're all about, Rarity— (*Extreme close-up.*) —with your petty concerns about fashion!

(*The elegant unicorn loses her composure with a gasp and an upwelling of tears. She turns away and covers her eyes with a foreleg as Pinkie rushes in to pick up the slack, standing on her hind legs to get closer to Fluttershy's eye level.*)

**Pinkie:** Hey, leave her alone! Fashion is her passion!

**Fluttershy:** Oh, and what are *you* passionate about? Birthday cake? Party hats? (*She backs away and o.s.; Pinkie sinks sadly out of frame.*) I can't believe that the two most frivolous ponies in Ponyville— (*Cut to her.*) —are trying to tell New Fluttershy how to live her life—

(*Back to Pinkie and Rarity, now both tearing up and trying not to lose it altogether.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s.*) —when they are throwing their own lives away on pointless pursuits that nopony else gives a flying feather about!

(*The earth pony's fluffy pink forelock sags a bit on the end of this, as if telegraphing the danger that the whole mane and tail will deflate as they did in “Party of One.” How and why they fail to do so is a genuine mystery; both mares sob a bit on the start of their respective lines.*)

**Pinkie:** Looks like Nasty Fluttershy is here to stay!

**Rarity:** I cannot believe what that monster Iron Will has done to you!

*(So much for trying to keep their cool; they gallop off, wailing.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(calling after them)* Iron Will's not a monster! *HE'S A MINOTAUR!!*

*(The raw intensity of this outburst ranks only a notch or two below her Grand Galloping Gala meltdown in "The Best Night Ever." Now she settles to the ground, front hooves splashing in the puddle where she dropped her letter, and huffs furiously above gritted teeth. A close-up of the water frames her reflection—distorted by both the rippling surface and her own half-crazed expression. After a long moment, the latter gives way to a look of wide-eyed shock; said eyes fill with tears as the water settles down and she voices a crushed little whimper. She hangs her head, allowing a couple of tears to drop into the puddle, and the full weight of her personality change hits her like an anvil and piano to the head.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(normal tone)* I'm the monster.

*(Dissolve to the exterior of her cottage as she trudges slowly toward the front door. A second dissolve shows it open and Fluttershy entering under a violet sky at sunset, and a third one shows the door and all windows boarded up. The various animal shelters have been sealed off as well, the sky is now a gloomy dark gray, and a bitter wind blows through the area, having already stripped the trees bare. One birdhouse falls from its branch as a wolf howls plaintively and Pinkie and Rarity venture up; the latter knocks once they are at the door.)*

**Rarity:** *(clearing throat)* Fluttershy, are you in there?

**Pinkie:** It's Pinkie Pie and Rarity!

**Fluttershy:** *(from inside, through door)* Go away! Go away before Nasty Fluttershy strikes again!

**Rarity:** Oh, sweetie, we all said things that we regret.

**Pinkie:** We did? *(Rarity claps a hoof over her mouth.)*

**Rarity:** Shhh!

**Fluttershy:** *(from inside, through door)* Pinkie's right. I'm the only one to blame!

*(Cut to inside, an overhead view; she sits alone, tied to a chair by the fireplace/stove. The only light comes from a few openings in the boarded windows.)*

**Fluttershy:** But don't worry. I'm never coming out of my house again!

*(The camera cuts to ground level and frames Angel securing the ropes. He has shed the napkin he had tied around his neck in preparation for his salad meal in Act One.)*

**Fluttershy:** Everypony will be a lot safer with me and my mean mouth locked away!

**Rarity:** *(from outside, through door)* Sweetie... *(Cut to her and Pinkie.)* ...Pinkie Pie doesn't blame you, nor do I. You just received some bad advice from that Iron Will character.

**Pinkie:** Yeah! *He's* the one that made you act super-duper-nasty! *(Rarity socks her in the chest.)* What I mean is, there are other ways to assert yourself besides yelling at everypony.

**Rarity:** Yes!

*(Close-up of Fluttershy's downcast face, the camera panning slightly to frame the barricaded door and re-focusing on it.)*

**Rarity:** *(from outside, through door)* You can stand up for yourself without being unpleasant about it. *(Focus back to Fluttershy.)*

**Fluttershy:** Uh...I'm not sure I can.

*(Cut to just behind her; she is facing her mirror, with the now-shredded remains of her Iron pamphlets still taped up on either side.)*

**Fluttershy:** I'm too far gone. Whenever I try to assert myself, I become a monster.

*(A lightning strike picks out the upper piece of one flyer, which shows only Iron's horns and is positioned to cover the top of her reflection's head. She starts in fright before the camera cuts to outside again.)*

**Rarity:** Oh, sweetie, you're not a monster.

**Pinkie:** *(pointing down the front walk)* No, but he is.

*(Iron, that is—standing atop Gray's back on the bridge over the brook, with White nearby. He jumps down as the two mares confront him.)*

**Iron:** *(giving thumbs-up to camera)* Iron Will's my name, training ponies is my game.

*(This gesture causes Pinkie and Rarity to throw a properly bewildered glance at the camera.)*

**Rarity:** What a darling little catchphrase!

**Iron:** Your friend Fluttershy loved Iron Will's catchphrases. *(getting them both in headlocks)* Word on the street is that she doesn't take no guff from nopony. *(letting go, walking past)* So, Iron Will is here to collect Iron Will's fee.

**Pinkie:** *(to Rarity)* Fluttershy's in no shape to deal with that creep!

*(This is Rarity's cue to gallop after the creep in question.)*

**Rarity:** *(forcing a laugh)* I'm sure a big, brave, powerful, and rich monster—I mean, minotaur—like you—*(Both stop.)*—doesn't need that money right away. You can afford to come back later.

**Iron:** Are you kidding? Fluttershy is overdue as it is. *(They have reached her door.)* Iron Will collects now!

*(On the end of this, decorum and chivalry get a boot to the head when he picks her up by the head and drops her bodily over the fence. She winds up in a bush near the brook, spitting out leaves as Pinkie gets an eyeful.)*

**Rarity:** Do something!

*(Pinkie turns to Iron, who starts tearing the boards loose, and plants herself in his way.)*

**Pinkie:** We're not even sure Fluttershy's home right now. *(He picks her up, mistaking her for a board.)* Uh, she might be off frolicking with some woodland creatures, uh...why don't you give us some time to track her down for you?

**Iron:** *(dropping her, pulling out a sheet)* Iron Will does have some grocery shopping to do. *(He whips out a small basket and starts off as Rarity climbs up.)* Iron Will will come back this afternoon.

**Pinkie:** But that's only half a day! *(He stops.)* We need one full day at least.

**Iron:** Iron Will will delay for half a day and no longer!

**Pinkie:** A full day!

**Iron:** Half day!

**Pinkie:** Full day!

**Iron:** Half day!

**Pinkie:** Half day!

**Iron:** Full day!

**Pinkie:** *(stretching neck upward to stare him in the face)* We need half a day and no more! *(Her body snaps up; Iron grabs her tail.)*

**Iron:** Well, you'll get a full day and no less!

*(She turns around brightly and walks away in midair, stretching the arm attached to the hand holding her tail.)*

**Pinkie:** Okey-dokey. See you tomorrow. *(He lowers her to the ground, confused.)*

**Iron:** Wait, what?

*(A tiny little sneeze is heard through the door; Iron walks back up to it.)*

**Iron:** Huh. Sounds like the search won't be necessary. *(Pinkie gasps.)* Iron Will collects now!

**Pinkie:** Uh...but...w-w-we had an agreement! *(She climbs up on his chest.)* You gotta come back tomorrow!

**Iron:** When somepony tries to block, show them that you rock!

*(She gets thrown over the fence with a scream and splashes into the brook. Rarity cries out in surprise as the mud-streaked mare spits out a mouthful. Looking toward her own hindquarters, Pinkie finds White chewing on her tail, having apparently mistaken it for cotton candy. Up at the door, the minotaur rips the rest of the boards away.)*

**Iron:** Your payment is overdue, Fluttershy!

*(He draws back one meaty arm, tenses for a punch that will surely reduce the door to splinters—and then knocks gently instead. The door opens as Rarity gallops up to help however she can, and Fluttershy—now untied from the chair—steps out. Her creditor stands up to full*

*height and huffs impatiently down at her, spooking Pinkie and Rarity but good. White is no longer chewing Pinkie's tail.)*

**Iron:** You were nothing but a doormat— (*striking poses*) —and Iron Will turned you into a lean, mean, assertive machine! (*He hits the last pose again, then gets back in her face.*) Now, pay Iron Will what you owe Iron Will!

**Fluttershy:** Um...no.

*(Pinkie and Rarity are so completely shocked by this declaration that the former topples over on her side, as if petrified from mane to tail. White and Gray cannot believe their ears either, and Gray utters a puzzled bleat as White munches on his tie.)*

**Iron:** What did you say?

**Fluttershy:** No.

**Iron:** Ooooooh! (*limbering up against the fence*) I'd hate to be you right now—because Iron Will is gonna rain down a world of hurt unless Iron Will gets his money, PRONTO!!

*(During this line, the camera cuts briefly to a horrified Pinkie and Rarity, the former upright after her fainting spell and all cleaned up, then back to Iron. He finishes by leaning against the fence, stretching it backwards as if it were a rope at the edge of a wrestling ring, and catapulting forward to bellow the last word directly into her ear.)*

*(A huff of steam from the ringed nostrils drops her out of sight, but a moment later she is back up and calmly pacing the front walk.)*

**Fluttershy:** As I recall, during your workshop you promised one hundred percent satisfaction guaranteed, or “you pay nothing.” Well, I'm not satisfied.

**Iron:** What do you mean, you're not satisfied?! Everypony has always been satisfied!

**Fluttershy:** Well, I guess I'm the first, then. (*moving toward him*) But since I'm not satisfied, I refuse to pay. It's as simple as that.

*(Neither of the other two ponies can find her power of speech, and Rarity has to close Pinkie's mouth to keep her jaw from scraping the ground. Iron, meanwhile, stares incredulously at Fluttershy as White and Gray peek out over his shoulders. One quick goat/minotaur huddle later, he straightens up with a resigned grunt.)*

**Iron:** (*hastily, nervously*) Are you...sure you're not just a little bit satisfied? (*adjusting tie*) Uh...uh, because maybe we could...cut a deal. I-I mean, we're both reasonable creatures, aren't we?

**Fluttershy:** (*firmly*) I'm sorry, but no means no.

**Iron:** No means no, huh? (*He climbs on Gray's back.*) No pony's ever said that to me before. (*Gray carries him away.*) Huh...I gotta remember that one. (*White hands him his grocery basket.*) That's a good catchphrase for my next workshop.

*(Pinkie and Rarity gallop up to Fluttershy.)*

**Pinkie:** You were amazing, Fluttershy! *(They hug her.)* You totally stood up to that monster!

**Rarity:** In fact, you didn't change at all! You were the same old Fluttershy that we've always loved.

**Pinkie:** The one we missed!

**Fluttershy:** Don't worry. Old Fluttershy's back for good. I'm sorry I took the whole assertiveness thing too far. Friends? *(She gets a pair of teary smiles.)*

**Pinkie, Rarity:** Friends!

*(All three laugh as the camera zooms out slowly.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(voice over, dictating)* "Dear Princess Celestia..."

*(Dissolve to a close-up of a bowl of animal feed on the cottage floor and zoom out. Normal light has been restored, and two squirrels eagerly chow down.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(voice over)* "Sometimes it can be hard for a shy pony like me to stand up for myself."

*(Overhead view of her in the center of the room on the end of this. The place is back to normal, and many other critters are enjoying their lunch as well. She looks worriedly off to one side.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(voice over)* "And when I first tried it..." *(Angel pushes his bowl of salad away.)* "...I didn't like the pony I became." *(She glares down at him; he stomps petulantly.)* "But I've learned that standing up for yourself isn't the same as changing who you are."

*(A short dose of her title ability exhibited in "Stare Master" cows the recalcitrant rabbit; he unwillingly pulls a cucumber slice from the bowl.)*

**Fluttershy:** *(voice over)* "Now I know how to put my hoof down without being unpleasant or mean."

*(He takes a nibble, fully expecting the vegetable to instantly strike him dead. It not only fails to do so, but seems to agree quite well with him; he proceeds to gobble down the rest of the salad. Fluttershy smiles gently as the camera zooms out slightly and the view fades to black.)*