

/mlp/'s Fanmade Gen Pitch Bible
Version 0.1

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I will most likely trash this entire pitch bible and retry it again. I'm not happy with it. Ideas are repeated instead of summarized in 1 place. Some ideas aren't expanded upon such as the shadow ponies, Klugetown and natural selection. The index is a mess. Etc.

Luckily this should not take long, but LLMs are like a monkey paw if you don't know how to be systematic and step by step. Will change Horseria to Equestria(latin>puns), the ideas are too childish and generic. They have their place, but not when it comes to morality and standards, some even mimicking real life adult problems such as coffee addiction as opposed to cigarette addiction. A fun concept but only if it's fun and devoid of real life lessons posturing about it.

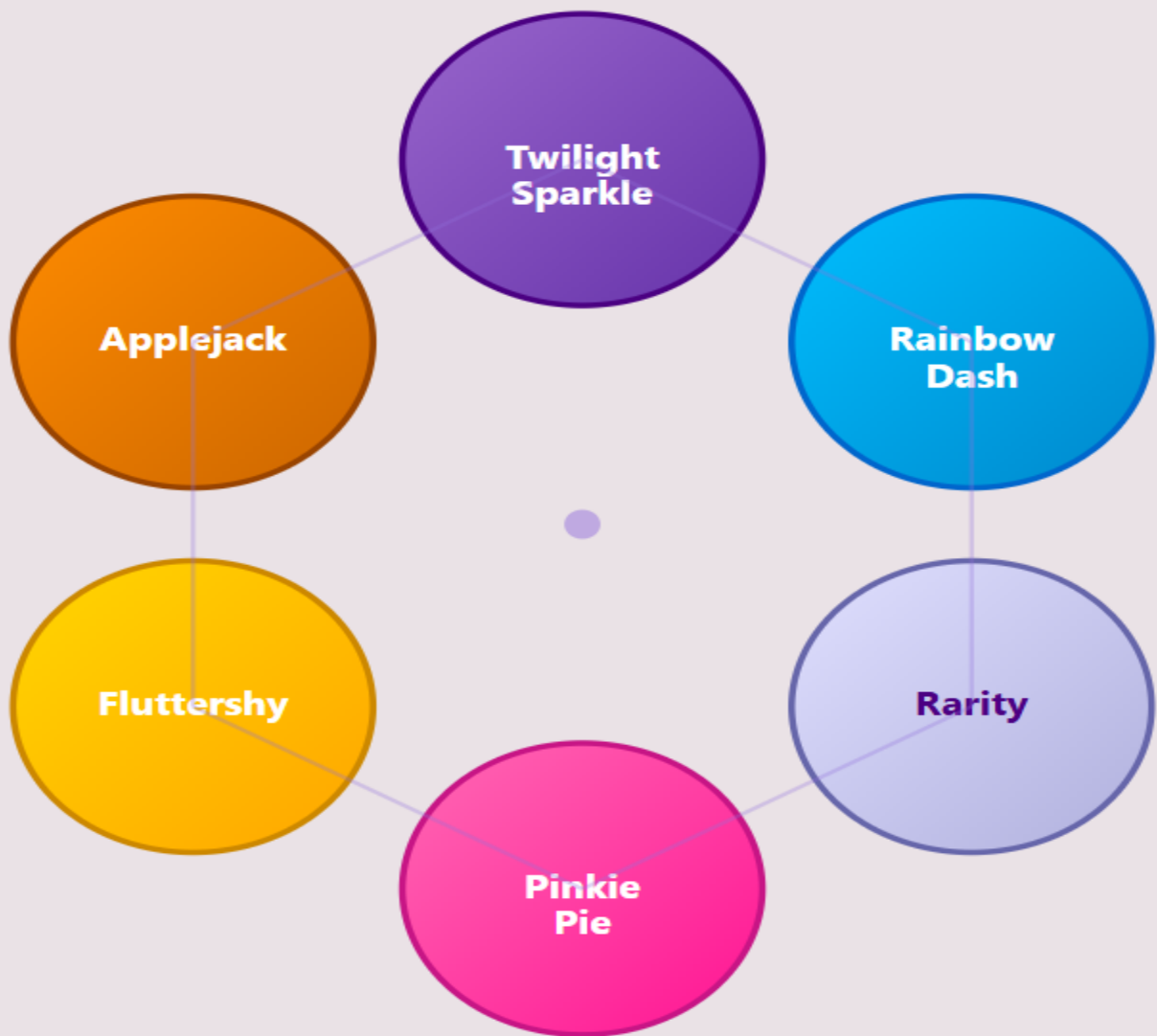
I. CORE PHILOSOPHY

What Makes This Different

This pitch bible explores a character structure rarely seen in animation: **true ensemble equality**. Most shows organize characters in a pyramid—one protagonist at the top, supporting characters below. This creates what we call a "pyramid hierarchy" where some characters drive plots while others simply react.

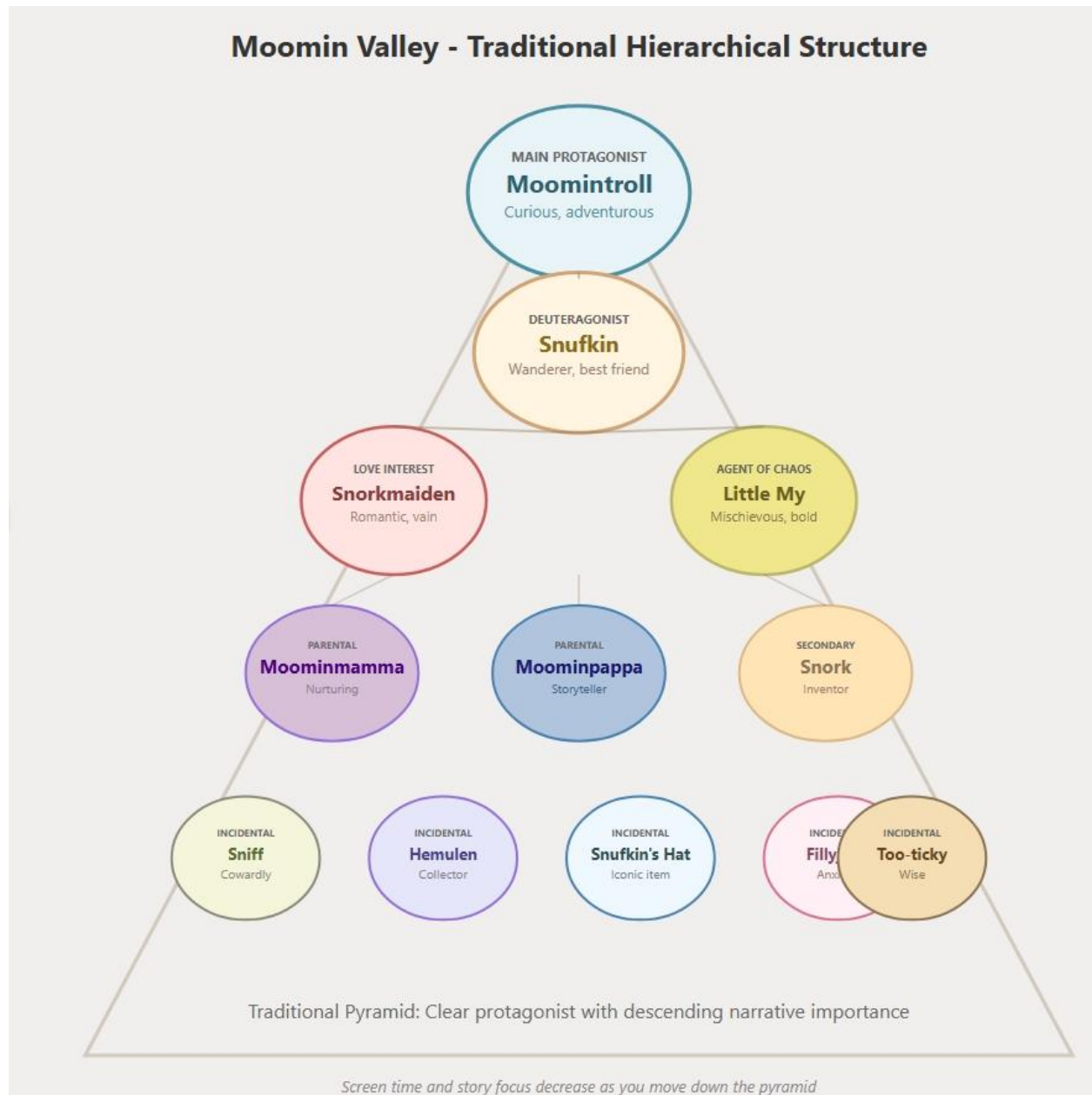
Our approach uses a **lateral matrix** instead. Think Power Rangers, but for slice-of-life storytelling. All six main characters have equal narrative weight, equal complexity, and equal capacity to drive stories. No character exists to service another character's arc. This is called **isomorphic protagonism**—they're protagonists with different flavors, not different ranks.

All core ensemble members operate at the same narrative altitude—they possess equal capacity for episode focus, moral agency, plot initiation, and character development. No member exists to service another member's arc.



Ensemble Cast: All six characters share equal narrative importance

The Challenge: Most writers default to pyramids because they're easier. One protagonist means one point of view, clearer storytelling, and simpler audience identification. Creating a lateral matrix requires rotating focus, distributed wisdom (no single character is "right" more often), and symmetric development where all characters grow at similar rates.



Inspirational DNA

MLP G4 (Friendship is Magic) - The gold standard for lateral matrix design in children's animation. Six ponies, all equally capable of protagonist episodes, moral agency, and character development. The show promised epic adventures but delivered intimate slice-of-life, and that contrast made both elements stronger.

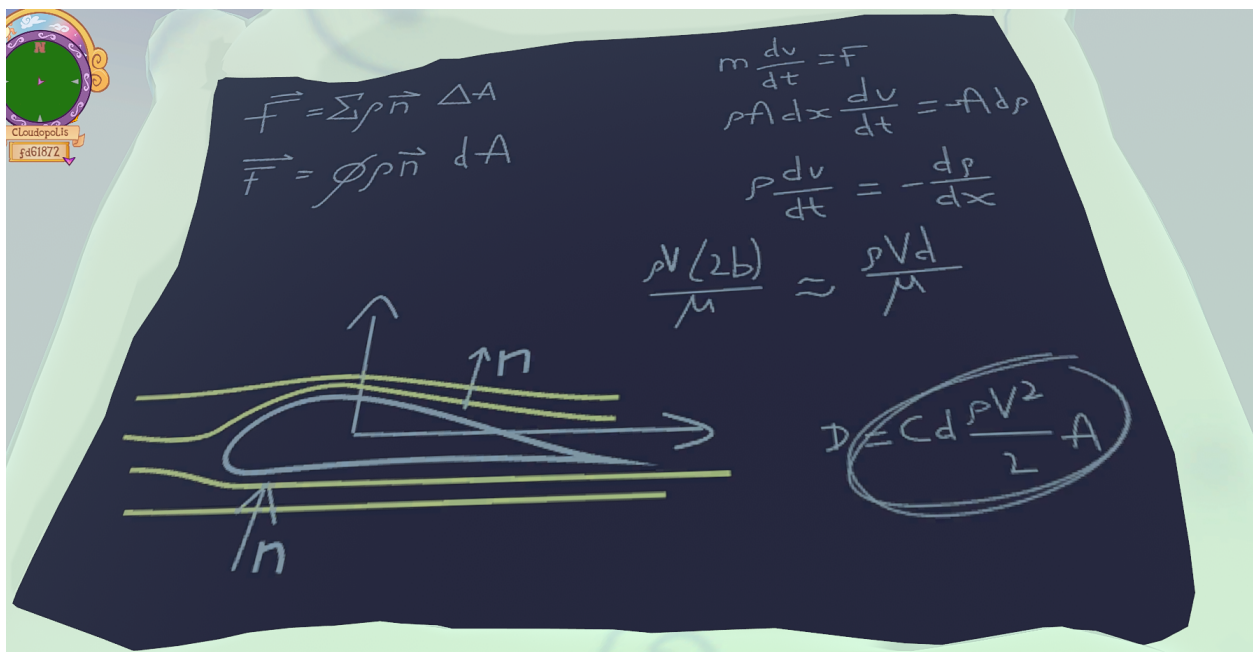
Moominvalley - Mastery of atmosphere and contrast. A cozy safe haven surrounded by vast, mysterious wilderness. Powerful beings (the Hobgoblin, the Groke) humbled or moved by simple mortal warmth. The show balances low-stakes comfort with genuine wonder and occasional danger.

Hilda - Demonstrates the adventure side of the equation, though sometimes at the expense of slice-of-life balance. The wilderness between settlements feels alive and dangerous, making safety meaningful.

Power Rangers/Super Sentai - The blueprint for lateral matrices. Five (or six) color-coded warriors with equal transformation sequences, equal combat capability, and equal screen time. The leader is functionally indistinguishable from teammates. We're applying this structure to emotional labor and slice-of-life problems instead of monster fights.

Nordic Mythology & Ancient Folklore - Raw material for magic systems, creature design, and the sense that the world is older and stranger than the characters understand. Pegasus mythology ([hoofstrike springs](#)), [unicorn fierce untamability](#), and the idea that [nature operates on rules mortals don't fully comprehend](#).

Pegasus Magic



Similar to cloud building and cloud manipulation, pegasus magic also follows an intuitive logic for humans to comprehend.

When Pegasi fly at high speeds they create a natural egg-shaped wind tunnel/worm hole, but a more advanced one that allows them to move like a UFO defying gravity that will not break their bones on decompression changes when doing sudden U turns.

Their advanced wind tunnel makes them ignore the downsides of inertia, weight, momentum. Their egg-shaped wind tunnel acts like a shield protecting them from external factors.

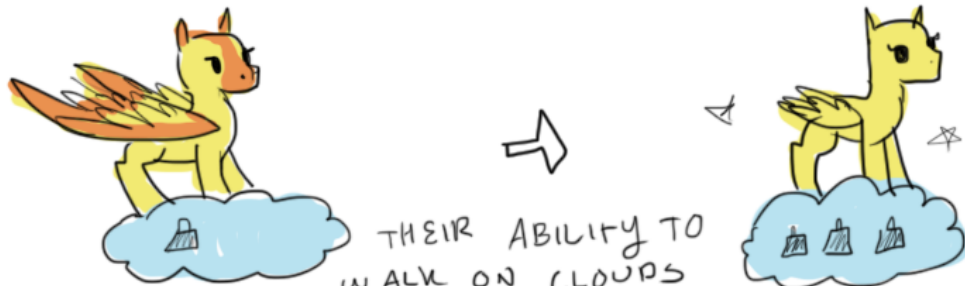
AS PEGASI BEGAN TO BREED WITH OTHER RACES OF PONIES, THEY PICKED UP MAGICAL TENDENCIES AND GAINED THE ABILITY TO FLY USING MAGIC-IMBUED WINGS.



BROAD, STRONG WINGS BECAME SMALLER AND PHYSICALLY WEAKER, AS THEY WERE AIDED BY MAGIC. ONLY THE WINGSPAN OF MODERN ALICORNS REFLECTS HISTORICAL PEGASI'S WINGS.



PEGASUS BONES ALSO STRENGTHENED AND BECAME SOLID, RATHER THAN HOLLOW. AS A RESULT, THEY BECAME HEAVIER AND STRONGER.



THEIR ABILITY TO WALK ON CLOUDS WENT FROM BEING CAUSED BY LIGHTNESS AND TRACE AMOUNTS OF MAGIC TO MOSTLY MAGIC.

THANKFULLY, THE NEW PHYSICAL PROWESS THAT PEGASI GAINED CAME AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR NATURAL AGGRESSION, WHICH WAS DIMINISHED AS TIME WENT ON.



Ancient Languages

Ponies could speak their own language such as [Old Ponish](#) like The Moomins and it's just [translated](#) for the [English audiences](#).

Note:

Ancient languages and their speakers have a very obvious problem of lacking proper pronunciation and every vocal and consonant is turned into a garbled mess when spoken quickly. A modern language requires a very crisp consonant and a very long-winded vowel which are clearly separated and heard distinctively. You require this in to create a smooth but clear pronunciation instead of literally barking and hissing like most old languages do. British rednecks to this day still cannot speak their own language worth a shit despite being such an easy language.

[Germans can't pronounce their own old language](#) worth a shit.

<https://oldponish.netlify.app/>

Cutie marks are not magical tattoos or job assignments. They're visual manifestations of a pony's inner nature—their genetic code, their signature made visible. A pony's childhood experiences can influence how their cutie mark manifests visually, but the mark represents who they are, not what they must do.

Social systems among ponies emphasize cooperation as survival necessity. The threat of Windigos (creatures that feed on disharmony and bring killing cold) or shadow beast transformations means ponies must maintain an **eusocial utopia** or face extinction. This isn't just philosophy—it's natural selection.

Ponies who cooperate survive. Those who don't freeze or transform into monsters.

Rewritten episode: The **Iron Will episode concept** explores this: A charismatic speaker comes to town teaching aggressive self-interest. Initially, market ponies are polite and communal. After the seminar, Ponyville descends into selfish chaos. The main characters must explain why this behavior is literally dangerous—not just rude, but existentially threatening to ponies as a species. Celestia arrives with guards to exile Iron Will, and the main cast holds their own seminar to reteach cooperative behavior.

III. CHARACTERS

The Five: Design Requirements

Our main cast consists of six ponies who meet these criteria:

1. **Equal cognitive complexity** - All six think at the same level. All can reflect on friendship as a concept, make ethically complex choices, and learn from mistakes.
2. **Equal narrative initiative** - Any of the six can start a plot. They're not waiting for the "main" character to have a problem they react to.
3. **Rotating protagonist focus** - Over the course of a season, each character gets roughly equal episode counts where they're the emotional center.
4. **Distributed wisdom** - No single character is "right" more often than others. The smart one can be wrong. The impulsive one can have the correct insight.

5. **Character-defining moments within ensemble episodes** - Even in episodes focused on one character, the others get memorable scenes that showcase their personality. Rainbow Dash can have the least dialogue in an episode but the most memorable flying sequence.

Understanding the Mane6

Most have said that Faust's tomboys are indeed quite assholes compared to G5's characters that are far more calm and friendlier, albeit also lacking the extremes that makes the mane6 such colourful characters. Renzetti's XJ9 is quite balanced by comparison.

The Bookworm - Twilight Sparkle

Twilight works because she's actually competent—her sarcasm matches her abilities, she's proactive rather than passive, and her intelligence isn't fake. The problem is her tolerance gets weaponized against her. She lets idiots push her around because she confuses good manners with doormat behavior. Her niceness stems from class conditioning, not genuine warmth, which creates this weird ambiguity where you can't tell if she's being fake or real. Bad actors exploit this constantly.

Pony Life fixed this by letting her be openly selfish. When she stops pretending her tolerance is virtue, she stops being a target. The lesson here is simple: high tolerance taken for granted becomes weakness. She needs to explode outward instead of inward, and her calculated intelligence should extend to recognizing manipulation before it happens.

The Mischievous Hero - Rainbow Dash

Dash has the opposite problem—she's all bravado with the skills to back it up, but she's also a judgmental, ignorant bully who quits the moment nobody's watching. She's got that Peter Pan energy of treating everything like a game, but without Peter's charm of moving on when bored or his obliviousness to social consequences. She wallows instead.

The fix is either committing to full Peter Pan—stubborn, never learning lessons, treating rivals as playmates, dropping challenges when they bore her—or going the Zephyrina Storm route by adding actual brains to the daredevil act. A booksmarts detective daredevil with standards is infinitely more interesting than a lazy hypocrite who needs constant validation. Right now she's got the worst of both worlds: the asshole traits without the charisma or the detachment.

The Diva - Rarity

Rarity actually works because she's older and wiser than the typical spoiled brat archetype. She keeps her nastiness internal, handles jealousy with more sophistication, and her high standards create genuine contrast when she breaks down. The competitive underdog angle works for her because she has the observational skills to recognize what she's up against.

The only real issue is she promises more than she delivers, creating Trixie-style bravado moments. But unlike the others, this feels intentional—it's a character flaw that makes sense for someone trying to break into high society from nothing. She doesn't need fixing so much as leaning harder into what already

works: the tactical social intelligence, the mature restraint, the dramatic vulnerability that lands because it's rare.

The Agent of Chaos - Pinkie Pie

This is where the archetype falls apart completely. Pinkie isn't helping anyone—she's pursuing selfish fun while pretending it's for others. She has no profession, no quantifiable goal, no ability to change herself. The "idiot genius" schtick fails because there's no genius, just idiocy spread thin across multiple shallow interpretations: fake jester playing pretend, traumatized girl hiding behind smiles, mentally unstable patient, alien with incomprehensible logic, multiple personalities done poorly.

The problem with cloudbloomers is they're completely predictable because they can't change. Everyone rightfully ostracizes them because anti-charismatic chaos gets old fast.

The only real fix is giving her consistent internal logic—even if alien—and an actual purpose. Pinkie needs either genuine emotional intelligence that reads people correctly, or a concrete profession that channels her energy productively. Party planning is right there. Use it. Make her chaos purposeful, not random. Right now she's just village idiot with delusions of depth. She's no better than Discord, honestly. She'd be better off if we replaced her with Cadence with a personality.

The Humble Farmer - Applejack

Applejack is a disaster. She's supposed to embody honesty and humility but she's a stubborn, prideful liar who didn't even want to be a farmer. She's competitive, bossy, tries to overachieve past her limits, and is basically Donald Duck reincarnated as a horse—drunk, sleep-deprived, superstitious, cowardly, xenophobic, uneducated.

Occasionally she shows the actual archetype: wise mentor, logical straightman, protective henmother, voice of reason who stops hotheads from getting killed. But only when she feels like it.

The schizophrenia here is intentional but poorly executed. Either commit to the humble farmer—actually make her content with simple life, wise beyond her education, the stabilizing force—or commit to the working-class scrapper with rough edges who learns humility through failure. Right now she's the worst of both: claiming virtues she doesn't have while exhibiting flaws that undermine her completely. The "Element of Honesty" who lies to protect her pride is just bad writing.

The Sensitive Type - Fluttershy

Fluttershy is a baby taking care of babies 90% of the time. She's not bubbly, not mature, not experienced. The 10% where she becomes mama bear shows what she could be, but instead she's depressed, insecure, and the moment she gets confidence she turns into incompetent Rainbow Dash with bravado she can't back up.

Later seasons made it worse by turning her into a selfish opportunist throwing tantrums when ignored, copying other characters' traits to look "cool" instead of owning her strengths. The shy type is already disliked because selfishly shy people are usually hiding nasty personalities or projecting past abuse.

The fix is brutal: remove the depression and insecurity entirely, replace it with earned maturity. She's halfway to humble farmer already—finish the job. Make her genuinely experienced and quietly confident in her domain. The protective instinct should be primary, not occasional. She should be the calm parental figure who only seems shy because she's observing before acting, not because she's genuinely weak.

Stop having her try to be other characters. Stop the shallow confidence abuse cycles. Make her shyness tactical rather than pathological, and her kindness backed by genuine strength. Otherwise she's just another self-centered neurotic pretending vulnerability is virtue.

Supporting Characters

Despite the name “support” they don't really support the mains in anything, often acting as separate background characters disengaged from the story. Autumn Blaze is one of the few characters in a garbage story that managed to pull her own weight in an equal amount without overshadowing or feeling like she's stealing credit for others' work.

Celestia & Luna Equivalent (If Present)

Several options to avoid the Superman problem:

- **Younger rulers learning the job:** Celestia is lax and trusts others to handle problems until she must intervene. Luna is uptight and hypervigilant about her duties. Neither has centuries of experience yet.
- **Depowered advisors:** Trapped in spirit forms, glass prisons, or as talking statues. They can offer wisdom but cannot act directly.
- **Distant and rare:** Alicorns exist but live elsewhere, intervening only for catastrophic threats ([Godzilla/The Golden Bat](#) model—one dramatic rescue, then gone).
- **Absent entirely:** The world operates without god-monarchs. Local leaders govern towns and regions.

Recurring Characters

Characters like town residents, visiting ponies, and representatives of other species appear multiple times but usually don't join the main cast or else we go into the pyramid dynamic. They need to be set apart in a separate show just like how the CMC were supposed to have their own TV Show or how G1 horses had over 36 characters, barely with any recognizable personality and basically acted as tools for Meghan and others to use to drive the plot to the end. They acted as Donald Ducks but with less personality than TinTin and an average DnD character.

IV. STORYTELLING

Episode Types: Adventure vs. Slice-of-Life

Characters like Gandalf often come from a different alien world that's interesting to explore as long as it's approachable for the viewer without making it mundane.

Adventure Episodes take characters beyond Equestria

- Visiting native deer communities in the deep forest
- Underwater expeditions with seaponies
- Resolving problems that affect ecosystems or seasons (a dragon's anger disrupts weather, a curse freezes a lake)

Relationship/Slice-of-Life Episodes

- Town events (festivals, competitions, construction projects)
- Individual character challenges (overcoming a fear, breaking a bad habit, learning a new skill)

The risk with slice-of-life is becoming "talking heads"—characters standing in one room discussing their feelings for eleven minutes. Combine this with:

- Quality dialogue, voice acting, facial expressions, subject matter.

The Separation Debate

One approach: Make two shows. One is **Equestria Art of Magic** (exploration, culture, excitement). One is **Equestria Valley** (relationships, growth, comfort). Viewers can watch both or choose the tone they prefer.

The challenge with combining them: Adventure plots can strangle character development. When every episode must advance the story-related plot, characters become tools rather than characters. Conversely, too much slice-of-life makes the world feel small and stakes feel meaningless.

The **Wakfu model** offers a compromise: 13 episodes of slice-of-life with adventure elements, then 13 episodes of high-stakes adventure season finale. Or structure seasons by location: Season 1 in Ponyville, Season 2 in Canterlot equivalent, Season 3 exploring the forest and mountains.

Pacing & Structure

Episode Length Variations:

MLP FIM originally was supposed to be only 10 minute episodes each, which can be helpful if you need to "explore" multiple different ideas, but it's painful if certain ideas take as much as 120 minutes to explore like 6 different backstories for each character.

Moominvalley has a similar pacing to The Simpsons with plots A,B,C,D except plots A,B,C aren't smaller and lead into D, instead it's 10 minutes of plot A that's 90% separated from plot B. Watching them feels like you're watching 2 distinct episodes since each episode happens in course of days and often times they skip entire weeks of what happened in between.

It's like the first 2 episodes of FIM but in 1 episode. Or like the Grand Galloping Gala 3 episode arc in 30 minutes.

- **22 minutes (standard)**: Most episodes. Barely enough time for setup, conflict, and resolution without rushing.
- 7-8 minute episodes; Dexter's Lab format where it's not 5 minutes only like Tell Your Tale that feels like there's too much content condensed and it doesn't have time to do it, meanwhile Dexter's Lab often repeats the same formula 3-5 times till the episode ends, other times it tells more nuanced and slower stories without wasting time, similar to TYT that told the finale episodes of Make Your Mark in just 5 minutes.
- **44 minutes ""(specials)""**: Character deep-dives or two-part adventures. Tintin model—every episode is a double-length episode.
44-66 minutes episodes. Modern stupid audiences use them sparingly for premieres, finales, or truly complex stories. Modern TV Show audiences use 40-60 minute episodes, but don't have anything interesting to use those 66 minute episodes on due to lack of talent and ideas.
- 1-99 minutes , doesn't matter what happens on screen , it could just be a nice soundtrack with a pretty background

Compilation Episodes:

Borrowed from Avatar's Ba Sing Se approach. Instead of following one plot thread, we see a day in the life of all six characters separately. The magic pony prepares for a difficult spell. The carpenter works on a secret project. The author interviews town residents. Their paths cross briefly, but each segment stands alone. This gives the ensemble breathing room and shows that the world continues even when the whole group isn't together.

Narrative Techniques

Danger vs Peace

Contrast as Storytelling Device:

Moominvalley and MLP G4 both understand this principle: Safety is only meaningful when danger exists nearby. Comfort is only precious when discomfort is possible. Ponyville is **scrappy but cozy**, surrounded by Everfree Forest with city-leveling threats like the Ursa Major (which canonically never gets used—it just looms as a possibility) and instead uses the smaller Ursa Minor in order to show just how lovecraftian things can get, how there's always something bigger.

Equestria should feel the same way. Life is good here. Ponies are kind. The town functions well. But the forest is right there. The river connects to a wider world. Travelers bring news of stranger, more dangerous places. This contrast makes both the safety and the adventure meaningful.

This creates a safe haven location away from eldritch abominations and plagues that can literally turn you into a mutated willow tree.



Limiting Exposure to Create Wonder:

Going from Ponyville to Cloudsdale felt magical in G4 because Cloudsdale was rare. We didn't spend nine episodes there which made it feel unexplored yet at the same time didn't leave any open ended questions about it. We visited briefly, saw something amazing, and left. The memory stayed special.

Do the same with Equestria wonders. The mountain goat city is breathtaking—marble architecture, fountains, impossible beauty above the clouds—but we visit maybe three times across a whole series. Each visit is an event. If characters lived there, it would become mundane.

Common horses enchanted or hiding qualities.

In a slice of life setting the unicorns and pegasi's strongest often don't get to fully show off their abilities, similar to Celestia which completely hides said abilities unlike Rainbow & Twilight that show you a glimpse of them. The other 4 by comparison seem completely SoL and would require an enchantment. However designing characters perfectly attuned to said adventure environment such as Nightmare Moon would be much more advisable.

Atmosphere Building:

Vertical environments matter. Use **Albert Bierstadt's paintings** as reference—towering mountains, tiny figures in vast landscapes, the sense that the world is older and larger than any individual. When characters travel, show the scale. When they're in town, show the intimate details.

Soundtrack over visuals for atmosphere. Moominvalley, Courage the Cowardly Dog, and the best moments of MLP G4 understand this. Music creates the emotional foundation. Visuals support it. [A character walking through misty forest in silence with only ambient sounds and a distant flute melody can communicate more dread, wonder, or melancholy than any dialogue.](#) Some characters even receive their own musical motifs before they even appear on screen such as The Groke. Some characters receive their own call-response song such as Snufkin-Moomin.

V. THEMES

Core Themes

Natural Selection:

In this world, cooperation isn't just nice—it's necessary. Windigos (or equivalent threats) emerge when ponies fall into disharmony, bringing cold that kills crops and freezes towns. Shadow beast transformations happen to those who isolate themselves from community. This is **natural selection made narrative**. Ponies who work together survive. Those who don't, die or become monsters. Monsters such as Nightmare Moon/shadow ponies/time slips/silhouettes (see: Marequest, Story of the Blanks, Stygian, Sombra) or yaks, griffons, and Chernobyl-tier anthromorphic nightmares from the G4 movie.

By the laws of the MLP universe if your society sucks you get punished by becoming grey, disfigured and evil. If you keep sucking (and you will because your situation is worse so it snowballs), evil spirit forces form out of thin air and literally kill you. Equestria without harmony would be a frozen wasteland ravaged by windigos. Griffons and dragons and yaks live in bush africa-tier conditions because their society sucks. If you're nice and kind and neighborly you become cute and colorful and you get actual magic powers, and the nicer and more in tune you are with Friendship the more powerful you become to the point where you can turn the god of Chaos to stone with relatively little effort. Presumably if you could reform Klugetown top to bottom into being more Friendship-aligned they'd metamorphose into more colorful fishes like changelings did. You can probably Rainbow Roadtrip any society into being more pony-like. The message of this part of the show is that building and keeping civilization is an active endeavor. Being a cunt is easy and free but it degrades the societal fabric. Being kind to your neighbors is a thankless job and takes effort but you need to do it anyway. Earth ponies could've rightfully just walked away from the Hearth's Warming Eve meeting the moment they were accused of hoarding the food and everyone would've died.

Moral realism is real in MLP and the world cares how you behave and actively helps you be better, or punishes you if you're worse.

Equestria being one of the only, if not THE only place in the setting that doesn't fucking suck ass is excellent worldbuilding.

(see: Marequest, Story of the Blanks, Stygian, Sombra, Hearth's Warming Eve) Equestria society has a 1:1 parallel to northern folklore, high-trust society and societal problems of freezing to death and preparing for winter. Other species do not have these problems.

"All-Powerful Being Humbled by Mortals" Motif:

This is the [Hobgoblin from Moominvalley](#) and King Haggard from The Last Unicorn weeping at unicorn beauty. Powerful entities in this world are not threats to be defeated—they're lonely, curious, or weary. They respond to mortal warmth, creativity, and indomitable spirit with surprise and sometimes envy.

However you could do 1 better. High-functioning shadow creatures are still capable of functioning like a supervillain, but like King Haggard, The Hobgoblin, Oleander, The Witch, The Scrooge, etc. they haven't had friends in 89 years and their powers come at a cost such as a genie cannot make wishes for himself. Oleander is known as the scarlet witch, trading power for the inability to join her woodland unicorn society anymore to stop the end of the world.

Their standards and ideals are focused, obsessive and different. They are like a [samurai](#) on a quest to go back to the past for they do not belong in this alien world to them. They feel things like dying and rebirth when they get impressed by characters who are truly good in spite of the world surrounding them.

They get impressed by characters who [can offer them things](#) no other characters can and they themselves cannot.

They're old ideas as old as time, but just as effective and relatable no matter how much time passes.

Understanding Before Judging:

Power & Humility:

The strong are responsible for being gentle. The knowledgeable are responsible for teaching, not hoarding wisdom. The powerful should be humbled by the weak, not because the weak "win" in combat, but because the weak possess something the powerful lack—warmth, creativity, innocence, hope.

A mountain goat civilization has everything material but has lost purpose. Ponies arrive with nothing impressive—just candy, songs, and enthusiasm—and accidentally remind the goats what life is for. The goats weren't defeated. They were awakened.

A cosmic horror sleeps beneath the town. Ponies can't fight it. But they can make its waking gentle and pleasant, ensuring it wakes in a good mood. The monster wasn't destroyed. It was befriended.

This theme distinguishes the show from "heroes defeat villains" narratives. Sometimes there's no villain. Sometimes there's just a problem requiring empathy, creativity, and cooperation to solve.

Avoiding Common Pitfalls

Heavy-Handed Educational Content:

Early children's shows (and early MLP episodes) often strangle storytelling with moral lessons. Characters stop behaving like people and start delivering after-school special dialogue. "I learned that you should always tell the truth, even when it's hard!"

Our approach: Let lessons emerge from story, not the other way around. If a character lies and it causes problems, those problems should feel natural and specific to the situation, not generic "lying is bad" consequences. Some situations reward honesty. Some punish it. Context matters. Special circumstances matter. The goal is teaching critical thinking, not moral absolutism.

Plot Strangling Characters:

When every episode must advance the "defeat the big bad" arc, characters become tools. They stop having personal problems, personal growth, or moments of joy unrelated to the main quest. They talk about the plot constantly. Their entire existence serves the plot.

Combat this by giving characters permission to have episodes unrelated to any ongoing arc. The magic pony's caffeine addiction has nothing to do with saving the world. The carpenter's struggle to balance passion and duty doesn't advance a quest. These are personal, human (pony) problems. They make characters feel real.

Modern Technology Creep:

The moment you introduce a magic item that functions like a smartphone (instant communication, always accessible, vibrates/beeps with notifications), you've broken the world. Distance stops mattering. Waiting stops mattering. Misunderstandings that drive plots can be solved with a quick message.

Keep communication slow: Letters (delivered by dragon fire, courier, or mail pony), rare enchanted book-pairs that share pages (special one-of-a-kind items, not mass-produced), or face-to-face conversation. If a character needs to tell someone something, they must go find them or wait for a letter to arrive. This creates story opportunities instead of eliminating them.

VI. VISUAL & AUDIO DESIGN

Character Design Evolution

Body Design:

G4's "bean pony" design is iconic but could be refined. Consider **deer and stag proportions**—slightly longer legs, more elegant neck curve, heads that reference Disney's Bambi designs (especially the skull shape). Celestia's G4 design already suggests this—she looks like an adult deer compared to the younger ponies' fawn proportions.

Eye Design:

Borrow from **Filly Funtasia's innovations**: Two-color irises, slight glow in certain lighting, eye shapes that change with expression (round when happy/surprised, almond when focused, sharper when angry).

G4's pupil dilation & contraction while maintaining iris size. Eyes are the most expressive part of a character-make them do more work. Eyebrows aren't expressive enough. Spiderman, Wolverine, Soul Reaver floating white orb masks due to their shape change can create lot more expression without the use of eyebrows and pupils.

Cutie Marks:

Not tattoos. Not job assignments. **Genetic code made visible**. The mark is part of the pony, manifesting during childhood when their nature becomes clear. Environmental factors influence the visual presentation, but the mark represents who they are fundamentally.

Example: Two ponies could both have "building" natures. One becomes a carpenter (mark shows a hammer and wood), the other becomes a relationship builder (mark shows ponies or a bridge). Same core trait, different expression based on what they valued as fillies.





Grand Maiden-
Bireh Dryad
of Whitetail Wood~



Also very thick outlines are very important. They highlight the silhouette. And silhouettes just like shapes are very important when it comes to following animation. Your eyes are much more focused on the shadow/silhouette/shape and colors moving around rather than the details/textures inside of it. Nightmare Moon has one of the best designs in the show, better than Celestia and S1 Luna. It has the head of the deer, but the good marshmallow and decently well proportioned shape of the horse



Environmental Design

Location Aesthetics:

Reference **Albert Bierstadt paintings**: Towering mountains with dramatic lighting, mist in valleys, tiny figures dwarfed by landscape. Environments should feel **vertical**—there's always something above (clouds, mountain peaks, tree canopy) and something below (valleys, caverns, roots).







Atmospheric Elements:

- **Lantern monsters** haunt caves and deep forests. They drop crystals that unicorns use for magical lanterns. Unconfirmed lore suggests they're wandering souls possessing lanterns as vessels. Some ponies whisper that pony souls might be inside them. This ambiguity makes them unsettling without being explicitly horrifying.
- **Crystal lighting** is common in magical areas. Crystals glow softly, each color having different properties (blue for calm focus, red for warmth, green for growth).
- **Weather extremes** in Zephyr Valley. Storm clouds form in minutes. Rain becomes snow becomes sleet. Pegasi struggle to control it. The landscape is beautiful but hostile—exactly what adventure episodes need.

Music Guidelines

Folk Foundation is Non-Negotiable:

Pop songs, Disney-style Broadway numbers, and hip-hop rhythms do not belong in this world. Music should feel **old**, **traditional**, and **earned**. Think lullabies, work songs, traveling minstrel ballads. Even upbeat songs should have folk instrumentation.

Required Elements:

- **Traditional instruments:** Flute, fiddle, acoustic guitar, dulcimer, hand drums, harp
- **Memorable melodies:** Viewers should be able to hum the tune after one listen
- **Sentimentality over energy:** Even happy songs should have emotional depth, not just loud excitement
- **Lullaby quality:** The best folk songs work as both celebration and comfort

Absolutely Avoid:

- **"Ain't" in lyrics** (grammatically lazy, breaks immersion)
- **Excessive clapping** (unless it's a work song where rhythm serves function)
- **Bathroom echo** (rarely helps, usually distracts)
- **Party song atmosphere** (country fair energy instead of country music energy)

Examples of Correct Tone:

(Not specific songs, but references for composers)

- Moominvalley soundtrack (atmospheric, contemplative)
 - Studio Ghibli walking music (calm, purposeful, hints of adventure)
 - Appalachian folk music (community, tradition, storytelling)
 - Celtic traveling songs (wanderlust, homecoming, bittersweet beauty)
-

VIII. PRODUCTION NOTES

Faust + Renzetti Combination:

Lauren Faust brought tomboyish irreverence, feminist themes, and "no one's going to talk down to my audience" energy. Rob Renzetti brought wholesome optimism, can-do spirit, and genuine warmth. The combination created a show that was **earnest without being saccharine**, and **confident without being cynical**.

What G5 Did Wrong (To Avoid)

1. Clear Protagonist Hierarchy:

Sunny Starscout is obviously the main character in G5's movie. She gets the transformation, the legacy connection, the moral dilemmas. The others feel like her supporting cast despite attempts to give them episodes.

The TV show tried to fix this by having Zipp and later Misty "steal" protagonist focus, but this just proved the structure was never lateral—it was a pyramid that kept reassigning who stood at the top.

Our approach: From episode one, establish that all six characters are co-equal. The author pony might be the audience surrogate initially, but by episode three, any of the six should be able to carry an episode alone.

2. Facetious world design

In G4 the ponies do "smaller" events such as "running of the leaves" to help the weather which ties into the pegasi weather control. It's lego brick in nature.

In G5 the horses literally created parties to celebrate nothing. They create parties and competitions out of thin air that celebrate nothing weather related.

Events such as preparing for the arrival of royalty or doing royal events does not tie into weather and whenever G4 did it it was almost parodied and shoved aside with celebrations such as Celestia arriving in Ponyville, The Grand Galloping Gala, nobody remembering Nightmare Moon, etc. The Summersun Celebration is interrupted by NMM's eternal night, etc. the only events that aren't parodied and are taken seriously are winter wrap up and other weather-related manners or magical beasts like the ursa major.

Why This Pitch Bible Matters

For Creators:

This document is an exercise in rigorous metabuilding for storytelling and worldbuilding. Whether or not a show gets made, the process of thinking through basic and advanced concepts, character structure, thematic consistency, what worked what didn't makes you a better creator. You can apply these principles to any project, since after all most of G4's ideas are taken from true and tested ideas. Subverting a cliché means doing a refreshing take on it, not completely ignoring it and driving blindly.

For Fan Projects:

This bible provides a foundation for fan animations, fanfiction, tabletop RPG campaigns, or any creative work set in this world. Take what you like, modify what you don't, and build something that makes you happy while understanding why it works.

For The Archive:

We're living in an era where institutional knowledge is being lost. Studios forget why things worked and refuse to work off an existing idea. New creators don't have access to old knowledge. Jews destroy books. Archiving this work means future creators can learn from it.

For The Hypothetical Future:

Maybe an executive producer finds this. Maybe a studio is greenlit for a pony show and needs direction. Maybe G6 development stumbles across this archive. Maybe a non Hasbro related entity needs it. Having quality blueprints available means there's a chance-however small-that good ideas survive to influence popular larger projects than in turn influence others.

But Mostly:

Because creating things makes you human. Because imagination needs exercise. Because we refuse to let the art of storytelling die from lack of blueprints. Because we are not like today's generation that haven't open a 1980s written physical book in their lives.

IX. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Isomorphic Protagonism: Six characters who are protagonists with different flavors, not different ranks. Equal narrative weight despite different personalities.

Lateral Matrix: Character structure where all main cast members operate at equal narrative altitude. Contrast with "pyramid hierarchy."

Pyramid Hierarchy: Traditional structure where characters are stratified by storytelling importance (protagonist, deuteragonist, supporting, background).

Cognitive Parity: All main characters think at the same level of complexity. No "dumb character" or "wise mentor" within the core ensemble.

Monocultural Cohesion: Main cast shares species and cultural background, avoiding "alien visitor explains customs" dynamics that create unintentional hierarchy.

The Load-Bearing Test: Could you remove this character and redistribute their traits without losing narrative function? In pyramids, yes. In lateral matrices, no.

Distributed Wisdom: No single character is "right" more often than others. The smart one can be wrong; the impulsive one can have correct insights.

Power Rangers Domestication: Applying team-combat ensemble structure (equal members, color-coded, equal capability) to slice-of-life emotional problems instead of monster fights.

Superman Problem: When an all-powerful character exists, viewers constantly ask "why don't they solve this?" Must be addressed through absence, depowerment, or distance.

Magitech: Magic-based technology with Industrial Revolution aesthetics. Must require manual labor and avoid smartphone-equivalent functionality.

Contrast Principle: Safety is only meaningful when danger exists nearby. Comfort is precious because discomfort is possible.

All-Powerful Being Humbled by Mortals: Thematic motif where powerful entities are moved, amused, or awakened by simple mortal warmth, creativity, or spirit. Power isn't ultimate value—connection is.

X. FINAL NOTES

On Implementation

This pitch bible is intentionally flexible. It provides structure without strangling creativity. Writers should feel free to:

- Develop the three undefined main characters in directions that serve their stories
- Create additional locations in Horseria as needed
- Introduce new species if they add value
- Modify episode concepts to fit their vision

The non-negotiables are:

1. Six co-equal protagonists (lateral matrix, not pyramid)
2. Monocultural cohesion (all six are ponies from same region)
3. Cognitive parity (all think at same complexity level)
4. Folk-based music (no pop, no modern genres)
5. Communication limits (no smartphone-equivalent magic)
6. Cooperation as survival necessity (Windigos or equivalent threat)

Everything else is negotiable.

On Tone

This show should feel **earnest but not naive**. Characters face real problems—addiction, failure, cultural misunderstanding, existential threats. But the world is fundamentally hopeful. Problems can be solved. Friendships endure. Growth is possible.

Balance Moominvalley's atmosphere (cozy but strange, safe but surrounded by mystery) with MLP G4's character warmth (flawed but trying, different but united).

Never condescend to the audience. Children understand more than adults give them credit for. Complexity is fine. Nuance is fine. Slow moments are fine. Trust viewers to stay engaged.

On Music

Cannot be overstated: **Folk foundation is mandatory**. The moment you introduce pop music, you break the world's timeless quality. This isn't a show set in the 2020s with smartphones and memes. It's a world that could exist in any era, where songs are passed down through generations, where music serves community and storytelling, not radio play.

Hire a composer who understands folk traditions. Reference Studio Ghibli soundtracks, Moominvalley's score, Celtic and Appalachian music. Let silence exist. Let moments breathe. Not every scene needs a song, and not every song needs to be a showstopper.

On The Creator's Responsibility

If you're adapting this pitch bible for any project:

Remember why lateral matrices work: Because viewers see themselves in different characters at different times. Because no one is left out. Because cooperation is modeled as strength, not weakness.

Remember why Equestria exists as separate from "the maneland": So characters can explore and discover without being weighed down by existing canon. So creativity isn't strangled by "but in G4 it worked this way."

Remember why communication is limited: Because distance creates story opportunities. Because misunderstandings drive plot. Because instant communication makes half your potential stories impossible.

Remember why the ensemble is six, not seven or eight: Because every additional character dilutes focus. Because six can be structured as a hexagon—equal distance from center, equal relationships. Because boundaries maintain quality.

Most importantly: Remember that this is fundamentally about **friendship as a choice and a practice, not a feeling**. The six main characters don't start as friends. They become friends through shared experience, through choosing to understand each other, through cooperation in the face of problems. Friendship is work. It's beautiful work, worthwhile work, but work.

That's the thesis. That's what makes it matter.

End of Pitch Bible

May this document find its way to someone who can build something beautiful from it.

May it be archived for future creators who need a blueprint.

May it serve as proof that rigorous worldbuilding and earnest storytelling still matter.

And may whoever reads this—whether fan creator, professional writer, or curious wanderer—feel inspired to build something that fights dullards and shares said ideas with the masses.

Ad astra per aspera. To the stars through difficulties.

Through friendship, through cooperation, through the stubborn insistence that stories matter and we will keep telling them.

*For questions, additions, or collaborative development, see community archives at [desuarchive.org/mlp/]
and shared documentation at [[collaborative Google Docs links](#)].*

This pitch bible is a living document. Contribute. Modify. Improve. Make it yours.