Swing your hooves!
Behind this QR code
you’ll find an
Oat Crew surprise.

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Stop pushing me, you chocolate bonehead!” Biscuit shouted from the right.

“It wasn’t me!” Choccie snorted back, trying to keep himself up on his tired legs while the horsebox took a sharp left turn. The two ponies barged into one another again.

Parp! A massive stink cloud came out of his friend’s black-and-white bum.

“Ugh! You’re always farting!” complained Choccie. “You smell as bad as ten piles of manure, Biscuit!”

“Same to you!” retorted Biscuit grumpily, and snapped his jaws at him. Luckily, the tethering rope was too short, and he couldn’t reach him.

Ole put his large white head over the waist-height wooden wall that separated him from Biscuit and Choccie. “Stop arguing, you runts,” he murmured.

Choccie sighed. Ole was right. They had all
been standing in this van, which was taking them to their new home, for far too long. Just thinking about it made him grunt angrily. Even before they had left, he had already decided that he would NEVER like the new farmyard the boss had bought. He had loved his home in Dammbüll – and the sea, and the wind on his face – far too much for that.

“What are you grunting about?” Biscuit wanted to know.

But Choccie didn’t want to talk about it. The others would only laugh at him for already being homesick.

Biscuit bared his teeth at him and stuck his nose in the hay net that was bobbing about in front of him.

Choccie tried to scratch his right flank with his nose, but he couldn’t reach. He stamped angrily on the floor with his little back hooves. Boom, boom!

“Quiet!” shouted the driver from the front. Choccie jumped.

Not because the driver had shouted, but because Ole’s teeth had grabbed his left ear.

“Ow!” he squeaked, trying to free himself.

“Stop kicking up a stink,” threatened Ole.

“OK, OK,” mumbled Choccie as the powerful gelding finally let go. After all, Ole was the leader of the four-legs in the Flowers family and something very special, as the boss liked to say. The gelding’s breed was at risk of dying out. Not everyone needed a Schleswig Cold-blood anymore. In the olden days, Ole’s ancestors used to lug trees out of the forests or pull heavy carriages from breweries. But nowadays? Luckily Ole wasn’t big-headed about how rare he was. The Countess, on the other
hand, would have rubbed it in their faces from morning till night, she was that vain. Choccie yawned and stretched. Thankfully, there hadn’t been room for the mare in the transporter, and the boss had taken the Countess in the horse trailer. This had saved them from hours of whining about the bumpy journey, the bad hay, and the stuffy air.

“Where’ve all the uvvers got to, eh? Eh??” Choccie heard Toni ask.

“Everyone knows where the others are, you dozy mountain pony,” shouted Biscuit.

Choccie rolled his eyes. The Haflinger definitively wouldn’t stand for that.

“What yer say, eh, mini bikkie?” Toni’s response was instant and spiteful.

“Leave me alone,” Biscuit retorted, flattening his ears and sulking.

Typical Biscuit: first he teased, and then he got upset when the others returned fire.

To be fair, Biscuit was very small (even smaller than him), but he wasn’t a mini bikkie.

“Talk properly, Toni,” Choccie interjected. “No other horse can understand what you’re blabbering on about.”

“I talk how I wan’,” Toni raged back. “Yer all bloomin’ dimwits.”

“You’re the dimwit!” snorted Choccie angrily and thumped on the van wall with his back hooves again.

In response, the driver braked sharply, and Choccie bumped into Biscuit.

“That dopey two-legged dingbat up front,” Choccie spat. “He should learn to drive.”

“Eat something,” Biscuit suggested. “That’ll calm you down.”

Choccie pushed out his bottom lip. “I’m not as much of a pig as Toni. Besides, I’m in a bad mood,” he said a bit offended.

Biscuit opened his big dark eyes, his eyeballs wide as saucers.

“Because of the move? But it’s important! Otherwise the boss would have to sell us.”

“That’s not even true,” murmured Choccie, avoiding his friend’s gaze. “Everything was just fine.”

“Biscuit’s right, Choccie,” countered Ole from his side of the horsebox, waggling his upper lip. Uh oh, then he must really mean it. “Nothing was fine anymore, but apparently
you still don’t understand that. When the man boss left the boss, she had to find a new job. And only a school much further away needed a teacher.”

“What does the boss want with a school? She’s got us,” grumbled Choccie.

“But the boss can’t make any money from us!” Biscuit explained. “Unless you want to earn some money?”

Choccie stared at his friend, perplexed.

“How could I earn money?”

“Carrying around kids at a riding school, for example,” Ole suggested.

Biscuit grinned cheekily. “Or pulling people along in a carriage.”

Choccie gulped. His thoughts went round in circles, very fast. Carrying riding school students or pulling a carriage – ugh, how awful! That would be exhausting! No, making money wasn’t for him.

“You see,” Ole said. “That’s why we’re moving. So you can carry on living in the comfort you’re used to!”

Choccie wouldn’t have put it quite like that, but he let it be, and pulled a few bites of hay out of the net. Everyone munched quietly to themselves for a while.

The transporter bumped along a bendy road, and they all had their hooves full with staying upright.

All of a sudden, the driver honked the horn, turned right and stopped. The engine was turned off. Choccie and Biscuit looked at each other. That could only mean one thing: the journey was over.

“We’re here!” cheered Biscuit. Parp!

This time it didn’t bother Choccie. He had heard a loud barking from outside. “That’s Bruno,” he called out, scurrying this way and that. After Biscuit, Bruno was his second-best four-legged friend.

“Stop fidgeting,” Ole thundered at him. But now even Toni could barely be restrained. He whinnied and pulled on his rope.

“QUIEEEET!” yelled Ole, flattening his ears and baring his teeth at everyone. Choccie drew back his head. He better watch out, because the gelding was really mad. And his hooves, as big as soup dishes, were enough to convince anybody!
The tailboard slowly opened, and the familiar voice of the boss greeted them.
“Welcome to your new home!”

Pah, the new home could take a running jump! But Choccie still joined in with his four-legged friends’ excited neighing. Anything was better than being stuck in a horse transporter.
“How do we get the animals out of the van, Mrs Flowers?” he heard the driver ask.

Choccie twitched his nostrils. What a nitwit! He couldn’t drive the transporter properly, and obviously knew nothing about horses. They would march out on their own four hooves of course! How else would they get out?
“I’ll untie the tethers,” the boss explained to the man, “and then the ponies trot out all by themselves.”

“By themselves?” the driver’s voice trembled anxiously.

The boss laughed. “No need to worry, they won’t run away. My horses and ponies are well-trained.”

“Exactly,” snorted Choccie. “We’ll show him how well-trained we are.”
Biscuit whinnied merrily.

The blonde curly hair of the boss appeared next to them. Choccie snuffled at it happily. But her blue eyes looked at him seriously, and a raised finger danced back and forth before his eyes. “On your very best behaviour, if you please, gentlemen! Toni and Ole first, then you two follow.”

“Did you hear what the boss said?” Ole murmured in a warning tone down at Choccie’s head. “Best behaviour!”

“Got it,” chortled Choccie and drew air in through his nostrils. It smelled of grass and earth. Hopefully, they at least had a comfortable stable and a meadow to romp about in. He decided to investigate the area immediately. And he absolutely had to say hello to Lotte. Come to think of it, where was she?

His thoughts were interrupted by Ole’s and Toni’s clattering steps as they marched down the loading ramp. Then the boss slid the partition away, and Choccie could see a cobbled farmyard and several buildings.

“Come on!” the boss gave him an encouraging slap on his rounded behind.

Choccie trotted extra-slowly down the ramp,
absolute terror. Then he slammed the ramp back up, and whooshed out the farmyard with his transporter.

Choccie snorted deeply and yawned heartily. It would be so nice to drop right down where he was and take a nap.

"Woof!" said something in front of him. "How about a hello?" Bruno’s dark eyes looked at him accusingly.

Choccie lowered his head and sank his nose into Bruno’s coat. The dog shook himself. "Stop it," he mumbled reluctantly, "How was the journey?"

"So-so," muttered Choccie. "What’s it like here then?"

Bruno turned his head this way and that way, as if he had to take in everything around him first.

"So-so," the dog answered, and trotted off. "Great answer! Everything’s fine then!"

Honestly confused, Choccie looked over to his four-legged friend. Bruno seemed to be heading towards the house. It looked quite rundown. One or two of the window shutters were wonky, and the paint was flaking off in a closely followed by Biscuit. The driver stood at one side, clutching a long rod to his chest.

"Does he think we bite?" Choccie asked.

Biscuit chortled joyfully. "Could be!" He whinnied loudly and bucked on the spot.

"Aaaaaahhh! Mrs Flowers, the horses are bolting!" The man stumbled backwards and landed on his behind. Right in the middle of a fresh pile of horse droppings. Choccie whinnied himself hoarse. Toni must have really needed to go, and dropped his load in exactly the right place!

The boss shooed them to one side and helped the driver up, laughing. "Don’t worry, they’re just a little boisterous."

Choccie reared up on his back legs and paddled in the air with his front legs. Exactly, just a little boisterous. Boy, was it good to be able to move again! He made a couple more leaps for pure joy. The driver stared at him in
lot of places. Choccie lifted his head, and turned his ears in all directions. Where were Biscuit and Toni? They couldn’t have gone far. Maybe he should take a look behind the old sheds? He set off without another moment’s thought.

Finally he was able to run around again! He chortled with joy and dashed around the next corner like a racehorse. No one was faster than him!

Argh! Choccie tried to stop dead, but to no avail. He’d already shoved right into Biscuit’s rear end.

“Hey, what are you doing, standing around like an idiot?”

Biscuit didn’t react at all. Choccie stared perplexedly at his back. Something had obviously left his friend speechless. He was staring at something, apparently spellbound.

“Louts!” a loud voice suddenly clucked. “Horrid pony oafs!”

Choccie lifted his nose over his friend’s bottom and snuffled. “Oh no! Hens!”

“What the heck did you think we were?” it squawked back snootily. “Are you the morons that were meant to be coming?”

“We’re not morons, you stupid clucking critters!” Choccie pushed past Biscuit. Three hens had arranged themselves in front of him. They must have been a bit older and looked very bedraggled. But they stretched their necks proudly into the air and clicked their beaks angrily. Choccie opened his mouth wide like a wild dragon-pony.

The hens screeched loudly and ran away wildly flapping. Brown feathers flew through the air. Choccie galloped after them. Unfortunately, the feathered battle-axes just about made it to their henhouse and up the ladder. Too bad!


“We’ll get them back,” Choccie grunted to his friend, who had come trotting up behind him. “When they least expect it!”
Biscuit nodded. Parp!
"You piglet!" Choccie nipped him on the shoulder with his teeth.

Biscuit grinned at him cheekily, shaking his black-and-white tousled mane, and raced off straight across the farmyard. "Catch me!" Parp!

But Choccie didn't want to play tag. Instead he stayed where he was and took a look around. Where on earth were the stables? They better not be in the old shed he'd just raced past? Behind the henhouse he discovered lush meadows. Well that was one thing at least: delicious grass to munch on! His eyes wandered further to the left, and he jumped. Was that a riding area next to the henhouse? It looked suspiciously like one, but Choccie wouldn't get worried just yet.

The house was at the edge of the riding area. A couple of windows were open, and brightly coloured curtains were floating out of them. The boss and Lotte had already settled in. Then the smell of carrots and apples snuck into his nostrils. Where was it coming from? Choccie ran past the riding area snuffling. The smell billowed over to him from a vegetable garden. Choccie's mouth was starting to water.

Biscuit reappeared next to him panting. "Don't you want to play tag?" he asked, disappointed.

Before Choccie could reply, Ole's voice sounded behind his back. "Looking for us?"

Choccie turned around. Poking out from a window in a building next to the shed was Ole's big head. "Sure!" That was the stable. He would finally be able to lie down in the soft straw in his box. Choccie marched up to the wooden door next to Ole's window and pushed it open. Biscuit rushed in after him.

The Countess stretched her dainty head towards them sullenly and wrinkled her nostrils. "What are you doing here?" she asked elegantly from above.

"So glad you're pleased to see us, your ladyship!" Choccie scratched against the floor with a front hoof, as if he were about to bow.

"The boss is looking for you," Ole grunted with a full mouth.

"Off you go then, quick, quick out of here," snorted the mare.
“Where are we going to live?” Choccie tried to look over the walls of the box, but he was too small. The Countess flattened her ears and snapped at him. He quickly got himself back to a safe distance.

“Not in here, thank goodness.” Her teeth flashed at him.

“Pfff!” Choccie turned around. “Ole, where are our boxes?”

“Ponies sleep outside,” the Countess sneered. “Nonsense!” raged Choccie angrily, “Ole, say something!”

Ole shook his head. “I don’t see any boxes for you here. There’s one next to mine, but it’s full of junk.”

Choccie had had enough. That was so unfair. “I want to go back to Dammbüll,” he shouted.

He didn’t get any further with his disappointment and his anger, because the boss called from outside: “Choccie, Biscuit, where are you?”

Determined, Choccie pressed his lips together. He would absolutely not answer. Let her keep looking.

The stable door opened, and Lotte came storming in. “There you are, you little runaways! You should be in your new home,” she chided lovingly.

“No one said,” Choccie grumbled. But he couldn’t grumble for long, as Lotte threw her arms around him and pressed a smacker on his forehead. Her long blonde hair fell around his face like a curtain.

“You’re finally here,” she cheered.

Choccie licked her hands. Lotte was his absolute favourite two-leg!

Biscuit pushed his head between them jealously, and, of course, he got a joyful hug, too.

“It’s one thing after another with these pig-headed ponies!” the boss appeared in front of them wheezing and grabbed Choccie by his tuft of hair. “You always have to go looking for them.” She pulled him over to a fenced-off paddock. “This is your new home!” The boss opened the gate.

Excuse me? When he’d run past the paddock earlier, he’d thought it must be for the hens! But there weren’t any chickens clucking around inside. Instead, his buddy Toni was
standing at a trough filled with hay and happily chewing. Choccie dug his hooves into the ground. Ten horses wouldn’t get him in there!

“I want to go in the stable like Ole and the Countess,” he whinnied angrily. “I want a box for my own, too.”

It took the broom, which the boss suddenly had in her hand, to persuade him. Ears flattened, Choccie ran into the paddock. He went to stand next to Toni and spluttered into the hay.

“We’ve got the worst stable of all again,” he moaned. “We haven’t even got one at all!”

“S’alright,” his Haflinger friend said and chuckled. “Least the grub’s OK.”

“Delicious!” Biscuit, who stood next to him, smacked his lips excitedly. Toni grunted in agreement.

Choccie didn’t say anything, but he had to agree with his friends. The hay wasn’t bad.

Soon Lotte brought apples, carrots and their evening serving of oats, and spread straw in a shelter that was apparently where they would be sleeping. It was something like a huge box, but with only three walls and a roof. One or two of the boards were wonky. Choccie took a deep breath and sighed. Toni and Biscuit whinnied a thank you, but he carried on sulking. Not even Lotte’s affectionate rubbing behind his ears, which he usually loved and could enjoy for hours, could soothe him.

Later on that day, he stood among his sleeping friends and stared into the darkness. What he wouldn’t give to be in Dammbüll! Choccie sighed his world-weariness into the night. He thought about his wild rides with Lotte along the beach and the snuggly stable that had been his home up to now. And then he swore to himself: he would ABSOLUTELY NOT and ABSOLUTELY NEVER feel good about this farmyard! The rain set in and made him sleepy. His eyes shut. It was all so stupid!