

THE CUTIE MARK CHRONICLES

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Notes: All lines marked with one asterisk (*) are delivered as a voice over by the characters at their current age.

“WD” = wavering dissolve.

Prologue

(Opening shot: fade in to the base of a tree and tilt up toward its top. A small, nervous gulp is heard from somewhere above.)

Sweetie Belle: *(from o.s.)* Are you sure about this, Scootaloo? I’ve never even heard of a pony zip-lining before.

(On the end of this, the camera stops on a small platform that has been attached to the trunk, just below the topmost branches. It is daytime. The Cutie Mark Crusaders stand here, wearing crash helmets and vests hooked to a rope that is tied off just above their heads. Before them, the line stretches down at an uncomfortably great height over a long stretch of woodland.)

Scootaloo: Neither have I, but Spike told me it was awesome!

(She jumps, dragging first Apple Bloom and then Sweetie with her—the cables hook them to each other as well as the line. As they gain speed, sparks fly from the friction between the hooks and the rope, causing both to heat up. Eventually, the rope sags far enough to leave them stuck at a low point; now the red-hot hooks set the rope smoldering and then burn through it, dropping three screaming fillies like rocks. They plummet and bounce through tree branches in three different directions, eventually landing as a battered, sap-smearred pile. Close-up of Bloom.)

Bloom: See anything? *(Pan to Scootaloo, who gets up and inspects her own haunch.)*

Scootaloo: Tree sap and pine needles, but no cutie mark. *(Cut to Sweetie on the end of this.)*

Sweetie: *(smiling)* Plan B?

Scootaloo: Yeah! You know where we can find a cannon at this hour?

(Bloom, the only one of the three still on the ground, and Sweetie are both taken aback at the mention of the word “cannon.” The little pegasus’ face shifts into sullen disappointment;

close-up of her helmet as it bounces off the ground.)

Scootaloo: *(stepping into view)* It's no use. *(Tilt up as she pulls at the sap.)* No matter what we try, we always end up without our cutie marks—and surprisingly often covered in tree sap.

(She has also done away with her vest in this shot. Cut to Sweetie, who has also removed her helmet and takes off her vest as she speaks.)

Sweetie: Maybe we should do something less dangerous, like pillow testing or flower sniffing.

(Buckets of water and washcloths are slid over to them from o.s.; cut to Bloom, scrubbing up in one of her own. Her vest and helmet are gone now.)

Bloom: This town is full of ponies who have their cutie marks. *(The others start cleaning up.)* Why don't we ask them how they did it?

Sweetie: That's a great, *safe* idea.

Scootaloo: Yeah! And we can start with the coolest pony in Ponyville.

Bloom: Applejack!

Sweetie: Rarity!

Scootaloo: Come on, guys, I said "cool." *(flapping wings, zipping up/down hills)* You know who I'm talking about. She's fast! *(returning, knocking bucket away)* She's tough! She's not afraid of anything!

Bloom, Sweetie: Pinkie Pie?

Scootaloo: No! The greatest flyer ever to come out of Cloudsdale!

Bloom, Sweetie: Fluttershy?

Scootaloo: No! Rainbow Dash!

Bloom: Oh, yeah! That makes much more sense.

Sweetie: Of course!

Scootaloo: Let's do it! Let's find out how Rainbow Dash earned her cutie mark!

Bloom, Sweetie: *(high-fiving her)* Yeah!

(The tree sap still on her front hooves glues the Crusaders together in a line, leaving her stuck in the middle. After a couple of yelps from Scootaloo and Sweetie and a hearty effort to pull loose, all three groan wearily, having found a way to make a free fall and tree crash even worse. Fade to black.)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(Opening shot: fade in to Scootaloo on her scooter, pulling Bloom and Sweetie in a wagon as she did during "The Show Stoppers." All three are clean, have their crash helmets back on, and are making good time through the meadows. The emergence of three apple-carrying rabbits on the

path prompts a triple gasp, and Scootaloo slams on the brakes to stop just short of the critters.)

Applejack: *(from o.s.)* Get back here, you thievin' varmints!

(The rabbits bail out, taking their ill-gotten produce with them.)

Bloom: Thievin' what, now?

(Applejack leaps out of the bushes toward the Crusaders to give chase; a gasp from them and a yell from her, and the ensuing crash leaves all four tumbled on the path. The scooter and wagon now lie flipped onto their side.)

Applejack: *(surprised/angry)* Apple Bloom?

(Her sister looks at the three red apples near the blond tail and gets an idea.)

Bloom: Hey, sis. How'd you get your cutie mark? *(Extreme close-up of Applejack's face.)*

Applejack: I never told you that story? *(Zoom out to frame Scootaloo and Sweetie, both upright.)*

Scootaloo: Hey! I thought we were gonna ask Rainbow Dash! *(Now Bloom is up as well; Applejack hides a calculating smile from the trio.)*

Bloom: We need all the help we can get.

Scootaloo: Ugh. Fine.

(The yellow filly falls in alongside the other two, prompting a grunt from Scootaloo when she gets sandwiched between the others.)

Applejack: Why, shoot. *(She gets up; zoom in.)* I was just a little filly, even littler than y'all.

(Wavering dissolve to Sweet Apple Acres during the day, panning from the barn to the main entrance. Filly AJ walks out along the path, a bindle slung on a stick over her shoulder, as young Big Macintosh and young(er) Granny Smith watch her go through misty eyes. Filly AJ does not wear her hat and has birdcatcher spots across the bridge of her nose, in addition to the ones at the outer corners of her eyes.)

* **Applejack:** I didn't want to spend my life on a muddy old apple farm. I wanted to live the sophisticated life, like my Aunt and Uncle Orange.

(Zoom in on the bindle; a photograph protrudes partway from it, depicting a cultured pony couple against a city backdrop with a crescent moon overhead. Dissolve to that same moon, hanging low in the starry night sky over the rooftops of an urban landscape, and tilt down/zoom in to ground level. Filly AJ is now making her way down a sidewalk.)

* **Applejack:** So I set out to try my luck in the big city.

(Head-on view of the young traveler, gazing at skyscrapers and even a pony version of the Statue of Liberty as she passes them.)

*** Applejack:** Manehattan! The most cosmopolitan city in all of Equestria.

(Her reverie is sharply broken upon encountering some oncoming ponies.)

Stallion: Hey! Out of the way, you rube!

*** Applejack:** I knew I'd find out who I was meant to be in Manehattan.

(She has reached an apartment building and starts for the front entrance as the camera tilts up to a lighted upper-story window. Dissolve to a closed door inside, displaying a picture of two oranges; she comes to this and knocks, and an earth pony couple answers—the ones in her picture. Aunt Orange has a pale off-white coat, bright blue eyes, and a dark blond mane styled and stacked high on her head; she also wears a gold necklace with various orange gems and has a beauty mark below one eye. Uncle Orange has a light brownish-yellow coat, a green mane, and blue-gray eyes. His cutie mark is an orange, while hers cannot yet be seen.)

Filly AJ: Aunt Orange! Uncle Orange!

(Cut to just inside the door; the apartment is quite well-furnished, and Aunt escorts Filly AJ in.)

Filly AJ: Thank y'all so much for lettin' me stay!

(Aunt closes the door. Both Oranges speak with a refined, urbane accent.)

Aunt: "Y'all." *(laughing)* Isn't she just the living end?

Uncle: *(chuckling)* How quaint. *(Cut to Filly AJ.)*

Aunt: *(from o.s., fluffing her mane)* Don't worry. We'll have you acting like a true Manehattanite in no time.

(Around the new arrival, the scene dissolves to put her at the dinner table, between Aunt and Uncle. Her mane has been done up in a style similar to Aunt's, and cups with flexible straws have been set out. Aunt's cutie mark can now be seen as three orange wedges. Soft murmurs of conversation are heard around Filly AJ, who smiles as charmingly as she can as the camera zooms out to frame all the formally attired dinner guests.)

Guest 1: And how are you finding good old Manehattan?

Filly AJ: *(sounding like Rarity)* Oh, it's simply divine.

Aunt: Very well said, my dear.

Filly AJ: Although I must admit, the city noise took some getting used to. *(Slow pan across the table, stopping on her.)* Where I'm from, nights are so quiet, you seldom hear a peep until the roosters wake you.

(General confusion around the table.)

Guest 2: The...what?

Guest 1: I say, my dear, what in the world is a rooster?

(Zoom in slowly on Filly AJ, whose smile contrasts sharply with the panic racing through her mind.)

Filly AJ: *(thinking, normal voice)* What's he talkin' about? *(Aunt brushes a strand of her mane back into place.)* What do I say? *(Hard swallow.)* I don't want to look like a fool.

(A small bell sounds off.)

Mare voice: Dinner is served.

(Two unicorn stallion servants enter the room, levitating a fleet of covered serving dishes and bringing them down in front of the guests. One of them is the unicorn counterpart of Horte Cuisine, the earth pony waiter who works at the Ponyville restaurant in the present time.)

Filly AJ: *(normal voice)* Thank goodness! Bein' a city pony's hard work.

(Her perspective; the cover is lifted as she continues, revealing a few morsels of food presented in the "nouvelle cuisine" style.)

Filly AJ: I'm so hungry, I could eat a...

(Back to her, disappointment settling itself firmly on her face as she gets an eyeful of much less than a mouthful. Dissolve to her at the window of her darkened bedroom; her mane is back to its usual style. As she looks out over the Manehattan skyline, the sun begins to rise over the hills in the far distance. Cut to just outside the window.)

Filly AJ: *(sadly)* Cock-a-doodle-doo. *(sighing)* I wonder what Granny Smith and Big Macintosh are up to. I bet they're applebuckin' their way through the Red Delicious trees. *(resting head on forelegs)* Oh, what I wouldn't give for just one bite.

(One tear slips out of the corner of her eye and works its way down her cheek.)

* **Applejack:** I never felt so homesick in all my days as I did right then.

(The distant sound of an explosion shakes the filly out of her deep blue funk, and she joyfully watches a vivid rainbow trace out an arc toward the horizon.)

* **Applejack:** It was amazin'! *(Filly AJ shifts her head, exposing its far end.)* A rainbow pointin' right back to home. In that moment, it all became clear.

(Dissolve to Filly AJ as she gallops through the homestead's fully loaded trees. She is not

carrying her things as she did on the way out.)

* **Applejack:** I knew right then just who I was supposed to be.

(She heads straight up the main road, where Granny and Colt Macintosh are waiting for her, and nuzzles happily against Granny's shoulder. The camera zooms in on her haunch, where a spot of light flashes briefly and disappears to make room for the three red apples that fade into view. A WD begins.)

* **Applejack:** That's when this here appeared.

(It ends back in the present; she lifts her hind leg to emphasize her cutie mark for the Crusaders.)

Applejack: I've been happily workin' the farm ever since.

(A loud Bronx cheer comes from o.s.; she glares off toward it, and the camera cuts to the three rabbits who stole the apples from the orchard. They peel out.)

Applejack: There they are! *(galloping after them)* Get back here, you thievin' varmints!

Sweetie: *(to Bloom)* Aww, that was such a sweet story. *(Scootaloo jumps on her scooter; it and the wagon are now upright.)*

Scootaloo: Sweet? Try sappy! Bleeah! *(Zoom out; the other two jump in the wagon.)* Come on. We've gotta find Rainbow Dash and hear the cool way to get a cutie mark!

(Once she gets rolling, the view wipes to a road leading through the groves. The Crusaders rocket along toward the camera; as they come up over a hill, Fluttershy lands squarely in their path. They have time for one terrified scream before Scootaloo swerves hard, capsizing the scooter and sending all three of them on a graceless flight to the dirt. They find themselves within touching distance of a flock of ducklings that are crossing the road; Fluttershy has taken it on herself to keep the path clear for them.)

Fluttershy: All right, little ones, this way, this way. *(The Crusaders stand up.)* You really should be more careful. *(Cut to them and the ducklings; she continues o.s.)* Somepony could get hurt.

(Cut back to all four as the last of the waterfowl get by.)

Fluttershy: Why are you in such a hurry anyway?

Scootaloo: We're trying to find Rainbow Dash so we can hear how she earned her cutie mark.

Fluttershy: Oh! That would be interesting. You know, I wouldn't have gotten my cutie mark if it weren't for her.

Scootaloo: Rainbow Dash? Really?

Fluttershy: Oh, yes. *(Zoom in slowly on her.)* It all started at summer flight camp.

(WD to a slow pan through a cloud setting that looks like a cross between a military airfield and an obstacle course. Pegasus colts and fillies fly everywhere; in the distance, Filly FS stands on

the roof of one hangar.)

*** Fluttershy:** You'd never guess, but when I was little, I was very shy.

(Close-up; the yellow filly has rather longer legs than the other young pegasi. She watches uncertainly as they fly through cloud rings hanging in midair.)

*** Fluttershy:** And a very weak flyer.

(Flapping with all her might, she tries several times to lift herself up and through the nearest ring, only to catch a hoof on the inside edge and go into a flailing slide off the hangar roof. She gets out one panicked gasp before a curve at the bottom launches her into the air as if from a ski slope. Her trajectory carries her directly into a pennant strung up on a pole, tearing it loose; filly and cloth tumble down, throwing wisps of cloud up to mark the impact. A cut to this spot frames her, flat on her face with the pennant draped over her body.)

(Overhead, two colts laugh long and hard over the wipeout: Colt Dumbbell and Colt Hoops. The latter has his three-basketball cutie mark, and at this point in his life, his mane is still short enough to leave his eyes exposed—light green. Cut to a close-up of Filly FS as she untangles herself.)

Colt Dumbbell: *(from o.s.)* Nice going, Klutzershy! *(He and Colt Hoops land.)* They oughta ground you permanently!

Colt Hoops: Hah! My baby brother can fly better than you!

(Back to the huddled Fluttershy, then to her perspective of the two as their laughter continues on the next line.)

*** Fluttershy:** It was the most humiliating moment of my life.

(High above the two heads in need of a trim, a familiar blue shape and rainbow streak slashes the sky.)

*** Fluttershy:** And then, out of nowhere...

(As the flyer's shadow passes over all three and they look up in astonishment, Filly RD swoops low behind the two colts and lands to face them.)

Filly RD: Leave her alone!

Colt Hoops: Oooh, what are you gonna do, Rainbow Crash?

Filly RD: Keep making fun of her and find out!

Colt Dumbbell: You think you're such a big shot? Why don't you prove it?

Filly RD: What do you have in mind?

(Dissolve to the three young pegasi crouched on a cloud at a starting line—a race is in order. An

overhead shot of the area shows them high above Ponyville. Clouds to either side are filled with spectators, and Filly FS stands by herself on one, facing the line with a checkered flag held by its pole in her teeth.)

Colt Hoops: *(to Filly RD)* You're goin' down!

Filly RD: In history, maybe! See you boys at the finish line!

(Filly FS raises the flag and brings it down; instantly the three racers take off and flash past her, so close that their wake whisks the flag away and sets her spinning. She slowly wobbles toward the edge of the cloud in a yellow/pink blur and goes over the edge, and an overhead shot frames her screaming, hoof-flailing descent toward Ponyville. Snap to black.)

Act Two

(Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of one freaked-out yellow pegasus, legs still turning at insane RPM's in search of anything solid. As she screams her way down, the camera cuts to her perspective—a large, colored swarm of something moving in to intercept. The next shot is a profile view of her in what she surely believes will be the last trip of her life. Just above ground level, she plunges o.s. and is immediately lifted back into view by the swarm, which proves to be composed of butterflies.)

Filly FS: Huh?

(She looks confusedly around herself and smiles as the insects carry her gently through the woods.)

* **Fluttershy:** I had never seen such beautiful creatures. Butterflies don't fly as high as my cloud home, and I had never been near the ground before.

Light piano/string melody, slow 4 (C major)

(One butterfly flits close enough to Filly FS's face to cast its reflection in her widened pupils. She slowly rises clear of the swarm as she begins to sing.)

Filly FS: What is this place filled with so many wonders?

Casting its spell that I am now under

(Critters pop out as she names them.)

Squirrels in the trees and the cute little bunnies

Birds flying free and bees with their honey, honey

(They gather around her as she lands and holds out the last word of this line.)

Percussion/horns in; swing feel, faster 4

(The butterfly swarm follows her as she flies around the woods.)

Filly FS: Oh, what a magical place

(Tilt up to the flight camp far above.)

And I owe it all to the pegasus race

(Back to ground level.)

If I knew the ground had so much up its sleeve

(Behind the butterflies, the view wipes to a line of happy woodland creatures and birds.)

I'd have come here sooner and never leave

(She rises into view behind them.)

Yes, I love everything

(She rises to treetop level and holds out the last note, the camera swiveling through 360 degrees to frame assorted animals and the flight camp before returning to her.)

Song ends

(Somewhere far beyond the trees, an explosion is heard, accompanied by a rainbow-hued blast wave that sends every forest denizen scrambling for cover by air, land, and water. As Filly FS watches the panic, her expression changes from hopeless confusion to single-minded determination—she suddenly knows what to do. Approaching a bush, she carefully lifts its leaves as if they were a cloth on a table and gently addresses the scared rabbits beneath.)

Filly FS: Shhhh. It's okay.

(They emerge and follow her away from the bush; next she flies up to a large opening in a tree trunk, knocks, and puts her head inside.)

Filly FS: You can come out.

(When she pulls her head out and turns away, a couple of squirrels peek placidly out. Cut to a point below the surface of a pond, the camera pointing up at Filly FS and the sky; she takes a deep breath and puts her face in the water.)

Filly FS: *(bubbly)* Everything's okay.

(Away she goes, leaving a group of frogs to look up toward the surface. Next, she flies among the clouds.)

Filly FS: There's nothing to be afraid of.

(Birds large and small peek out and follow her back to the ground; all the animals gather as she settles onto her belly in a clearing.)

* **Fluttershy:** Somehow, I had the ability to communicate with the animals on a different level.

(Close-up of her haunch, which receives the same brief flash of light that struck Applejack's before the three pink butterflies of her cutie mark fade in on it. A small white rabbit looks at them and her with a smile—either Angel or a close relative.)

*** Scootaloo:** Wait, wait, wait.

(Cut back to her in the present. The scooter and wagon are upright and hooked back together, and she is back behind the handlebars.)

Scootaloo: What happened to Rainbow Dash? What about the race? *(Longer shot of Fluttershy and the Crusaders.)*

Fluttershy: Oh! Well, I wasn't there, so I don't really know what happened.

Scootaloo: Come on, Crusaders! We've gotta find her! *(Bloom and Sweetie jump in the wagon.)* Besides, I can't take any more singing.

Sweetie: Maybe my sister knows where she is. *(as Scootaloo peels out)* Bye, Fluttershy!

Fluttershy: *(waving)* Bye, girls!

(Dissolve to a close-up a rather put-out Scootaloo, her helmet gone and a stretch of cloth draped over her body. The mannequin and wall design behind her indicate that she is in the upper-story workroom/living space of the Carousel Boutique. A measuring tape magically works its way around her and is followed by a pincushion, one of whose pins secures a spot. She has been pressed into dummy duty.)

Scootaloo: How did we get roped into *this*?

(A longer shot reveals that her two accomplices are similarly disposed, and that Rarity is hard at work.)

Scootaloo: *(sighing)* We'll never hear Rainbow Dash's story.

Rarity: Are you girls still obsessing over your cutie marks?

Sweetie: Of course! Most of the fillies at school already have theirs.

Rarity: Mmm—I know how you feel. *(Zoom in slowly.)* For the longest time, I couldn't figure out why I didn't have mine.

(On the end of this line, the view undergoes a WD to the Ponyville schoolhouse, where a banner for the school talent show has been set up as in "The Show Stoppers." A simple piano melody is heard as the camera pans to the stage, on which several costumed fillies are rehearsing a number. In a close-up and slow pan down the line, they are dressed as assorted items: fruit basket, dandelion, cake slice, hay bale, flower with bee. One of them is a young Cheerilee. Filly RA and the school's teacher at this time watch from the wings. Teacher: pale yellow-tan earth pony mare, brown mane/tail with mane in a bun; green eyes, three-pencil cutie mark, half-moon glasses on jeweled chain, white shirt collar with black necktie.)

Teacher: Well done, Rarity. Your costumes are very nice.

Filly RA: *(taken aback)* Nice? *(Sour note; music stops.)* They need to be spectacular! And the

performance is tomorrow!

(Dissolve to a pan across the cluttered upper-story room of the Carousel Boutique and stop on the young unicorn working at a sewing machine.)

* **Rarity:** I tried every trick I could think of, but nothing seemed to work. The costumes just weren't right— *(Stop; dissatisfied eye on the work.)* —and the play opened that night.

Filly RA: *(ears drooping)* Maybe I'm not meant to be a fashionista after all.

(The ears snap to attention, along with the rest of her, when a brilliant spark of light kindles at the end of her horn. She has time for one astonished yelp before the appendage whisks her away. Outside, she is dragged through the meadows outside Ponyville proper.)

Filly RA: What's going on?!

(She tries to dig in her hooves, then gives up and lets herself be pulled along. A dissolve puts her on the move through another stretch; now she appears to have gotten somewhat bored with this strange mode of transport.)

* **Rarity:** I had no idea where my horn was taking me. *(Cut to a desert; now she floats along, just clearing ground.)* But unicorn magic doesn't happen without a reason.

(A dissolve takes her into the night and over one rocky hill after another.)

* **Rarity:** I knew this had to do with my love of fashion—

(Cut to a boulder-strewn waste the next day; the journey continues.)

* **Rarity:** —and maybe even my cutie mark!

(The trip ends very suddenly when she runs flat into a rock wall; she flops onto her back and quickly sits up, rubbing her head.)

* **Rarity:** I knew that this was... *(Gape; cut to her perspective and tilt up.)* ...my destiny!

(She has hit a standing stone slab that is tall enough to partly block her view of the sun. A long shot reveals that it is perched on the edge of a large crag. Filly RA, seeing the object of her horn's magic, is ready to blow her top four times over.)

Filly RA: *A rock?!?* That's my destiny? What is your problem, horn? *(Long shot; her voice echoes at this distance.)* I followed you all the way out here for a *rock?!?* *(Close-up; she snarls.)* Dumb rock!

(The sound of a distant explosion startles a cry out of her and splits said dumb rock from bottom to top, as a rainbow blast wave identical to the one seen by Filly FS washes past. The two halves

fall apart to rest on the crag, giving Filly RA an eyeful of the trove of gems contained inside. Tilt up from them to her; she voices an ecstatic little gasp.)

(Cut to the schoolhouse and pan to the talent show stage and the crowd of ponies gathered before it. The students are performing their number, to the crowd's enjoyment, and a pan across the five clearly frames the sparkling gems that have been liberally added to every costume. Filly RA and the teacher watch from the wings, the elder pony smiling at the younger, and the camera cuts to the filly's perspective of the tableau. The gleam from the jewels washes over the crowd.)

Crowd: Ooooh...

(Close-up of Rarity, now smiling proudly; that white flash flares up from the vicinity of her o.s. haunch, and she and the camera focus on it as the three light blue jewels fade in.)

*** Scootaloo:** Ugh!

(Cut back to her in the present, shaking off the cloth draped on her.)

Scootaloo: These namby-pamby stories aren't getting us any closer to our cutie marks!

(Shift to frame Rarity and all three Crusaders; Sweetie is out of hers, and Bloom shakes loose too.)

Scootaloo: They're all about finding who you really are and boring stuff like that! *(Close-up of Rarity.)*

Rarity: Yes, Scootaloo. That's exactly—

Scootaloo: *(from o.s.)* Come on, girls! We need action! *(At the door, she bulldozes the others out.)* We need Rainbow Dash!

(The door slams. Cut to a close-up of one very bored orange pegasus filly sitting at a table outside the Ponyville restaurant. She is flanked by Bloom and Sweetie, both of whom are taking rather more interest in the new proceedings.)

Twilight: *(from o.s.)* As a young filly in Canterlot, I always wanted to go to the Summer Sun Celebration—

(On the end of this, Scootaloo groans and puts her head on the table, and the camera cuts to frame Twilight across from the trio. Zoom in on her.)

Twilight: —where Princess Celestia raises the sun.

(WD to a pan across a full-tilt carnival in Canterlot just before sunrise.)

*** Twilight:** And I saw the most amazing, most wonderful thing I've ever seen.

(Two squads of unicorn guards play a brass fanfare, standing on a stage to either side of a crescent-moon frame whose points are facing upward with sunburst flares around the outer edge. Filly TS nudges her way up through the crowd for a better view, and Princess Celestia advances to stand before the frame, facing her subjects. She is the only character whose past and present appearances match exactly. As the little unicorn watches with great anticipation, she warms up her horn and flies straight up, lifting her forelegs and wings, and raising the sun so that she and it line up with the frame to turn her form into a blazing red silhouette. The morning rays wash over the throng.)

Crowd: Ohhhh... *(Filly TS's eyes grow even larger.)* Ahhhh...

(The entire crowd breaks into cheers and stomping applause—all except Filly TS, who just stares in wide-eyed bliss as the camera zooms in on her. The view then dissolves to her, reading intently at a desk, and zooms out to frame stacks of books alongside. The furnishings suggest that this is a room in her home.)

* **Twilight:** I poured myself into learning everything I could about magic.

(The violet youngster concentrates as hard as she can and succeeds in turning a page without touching it. After a surprised smile and gasp, she goes back to her reading. In a series of dissolves, the window behind her gradually darkens from morning into night and the books shift to the other side of the desk—she has finished reading them. In addition, she grows somewhat in each new shot to mark the passage of time. After she closes the last book, cut to a unicorn stallion and mare walking in. The stallion is blue, with a darker blue mane/tail, golden brown eyes, and a cutie mark with one crescent moon nestled in another. The mare is light gray, with a violet/white-striped mane/tail, bright blue eyes, and a cutie mark of three blue stars.)

* **Twilight:** My parents decided to enroll me in Princess Celestia's School for Gifted Unicorns.

(On this line, Mr. Sparkle pulls out a document marked with a blue ribbon and a red check mark; cut to it and zoom out as Twilight looks it over and smiles broadly, jumping and bucking.)

* **Twilight:** It was a dream come true! Except for one thing.

(Clock wipe to the bug-eyed prospective student, who looks around with a fearful start.)

* **Twilight:** I had to pass an entrance exam!

(Zoom out quickly; she stands alone before a chalkboard, at the front of a lecture hall and facing four unicorn examiners in the seats. Mr. and Mrs. Sparkle, off to one side, prompt her to keep her head up and smile. In close-up, she does both as best she can before the sound of an o.s. door opening scares her all over again. At the other side of the hall, a stallion has entered and is pushing a cart filled with straw and one large, light violet egg with blue-violet spots. A sign on the cart's side depicts the egg hatching and a dragon popping out—instructions for the examinee.)

(One last push sends the cart over to Filly TS, who eyes it uncertainly as the delivery stallion backs out of the room.)

Examiner: Well, Miss Sparkle?

(Cut to a close-up of the picture and tilt up to the egg; Filly TS gives it a good close look, then giggles nervously and sighs as the camera zooms out slightly. Four clipboards and pencils are levitated by the examiners to take notes, prompting the young unicorn to grit her teeth and start sweating buckets. Snap to black.)

Act Three

(Opening shot: the lecture hall, seen from behind the four examiners' heads.)

Examiner: Well, Miss Sparkle?

(A cough from another member of the committee startles her slightly; she backs up and aims her horn at the egg. Several seconds of groaning concentration do no more than bring a little spark from the tip and a yawn from yet a third examiner.)

Examiner: *(checking her watch)* We don't have all day.

(Filly TS tries an assortment of angles and stances; still no good.)

* **Twilight:** I knew it was the most important day of my life, that my entire future would be affected by the outcome of this day—and I was about to blow it!

(One last spark from the horn above her screwed-up face fizzles out; she belly-flops to the lecture hall floor, then gets up to sit on her haunches.)

Filly TS: *(small voice)* I'm sorry I wasted your time.

(As the examiners jot down some more notes, a distant explosion shakes the room and a rainbow blast wave appears in the window, spreading over the sky. It is identical to the ones seen by Filly FS and Filly RA, and Filly TS's horn comes to life with a beam that lances toward the cart. The egg is hit squarely by the shot, levitating out of the straw and bursting open to expose hatchling Spike, who yawns and stretches. Now his entry into Equestria has been accounted for.)

(Filly TS's magic does not stop here, though. She lets off a panicked yelp, her eyes glowing pure white and growing as big as hockey pucks, and her power washes briefly over the whole room before enveloping her in a purple/white corona. The lightning bolts thrown off float the examiners clear of their seats, turn Mr. and Mrs. Sparkle into potted plants, and grow little Spike so large that his head and shoulders punch through the roof of the building.)

(This last shot is seen from outside, and bolts crackle out from the structure as Celestia takes notice. In the lecture hall, Filly TS floats helplessly, unable even to stop levitating herself, much less get her powers under control. A gold-shod white hoof on her shoulder brings her attention around to Celestia, who has entered the room and is smiling serenely down at her. Filly TS's eyes return to normal, the power breaks, and all of her accidental magic is undone in an instant. Spike drops onto the remains of the cart and starts sucking peacefully on the end of his tail. Back to Filly TS.)

Celestia: (*from o.s.*) Twilight Sparkle.

Filly TS: I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to— (*Cut to Celestia on the end of this.*)

Celestia: You have a very special gift. I don't think I've ever come across a unicorn with your raw abilities. *(Close-up of Filly TS as she finishes.)*

Filly TS: Huh?

Celestia: But you need to learn to tame these abilities through focused study.

Filly TS: (*louder*) Huh?

Celestia: Twilight Sparkle, I'd like to make you my own personal protégé here at the school.

Filly TS: (*even louder*) Huh?

Celestia: Well?

(The flabbergasted filly looks back at her parents, who nod and neigh enthusiastically, and then jumps to at least four times her own height to hang in midair.)

Filly TS: YEEEESSSSS!!

Celestia: *(from o.s., pointing at her)* One other thing, Twilight.

Filly TS: *More?!?*

(She hits the tiles on her gut, knocking herself silly for a moment between Celestia and her parents. Something has appeared on her haunch, and a zoom in on her reveals it as her star cutie mark. Another point from Celestia emphasizes it.)

[illegible]

(Dissolve to the present. Twilight, lost in the memory, is hopping around the Crusaders and the table and repeating “yes, yes, yes”—and getting more excited on every circuit.)

Bloom: Okay, okay!

Sweetie: We're happy for you, Twilight!

Scootaloo: Yeah, thrilled! *(to the others)* Let's get out of here while we still can!

(They make tracks, but Twilight does not notice or quiet down for some seconds. In close-up, she finally stops jumping with a sheepish little grimace; a longer shot frames the hopelessly confused crowd that has gathered outside the restaurant. Among them is the stallion who delivered the dragon egg to her during the entrance exam.)

Delivery stallion: Uh, you okay?

Twilight: *(laughing quietly)* Um, yes.

(Dissolve to the Crusaders as they motor through the streets of Ponyville, with Scootaloo pulling and the others riding in the wagon. All three are wearing their helmets. Close-up of Scootaloo.)

Scootaloo: Ugh! Why don't we ever smash into Rainbow Dash?

Pinkie Pie: *(from o.s.)* You're looking for Rainbow Dash?

(A longer shot shows that she is now in the wagon with Bloom and Sweetie; she has even procured her own crash helmet.)

Pinkie: If I was her, I'd be at Sugarcube Corner. Of course, if I was anyone, I'd be at Sugarcube Corner. Hey! I have an idea! Want to go to Sugarcube Corner?

(This idea excites her so much that she nearly falls off the back of the wagon; only a quick grab by Bloom keeps her on board.)

Sweetie: Well, we're sort of looking for Rainbow Dash so we can hear how she got her cutie mark. *(Close-up of Pinkie on the end of this.)*

Pinkie: *(smiling hugely)* Cutie mark? Come with me and I'll tell you how I got mine.

(The two Crusader passengers trade uncertain looks with their driver, who relents with a groan.)

Scootaloo: Why not?

Pinkie: All right!

(WD to a pan across a field full of rocks and withered, leafless trees under a sky filled with gloomy gray clouds. One sour-faced earth pony filly bucks rocks into a cart hitched to another; an elderly earth pony stallion makes his way toward a fenced-in yard that contains a farmhouse, windmill, and silo, and Filly PP nudges small slabs into a pile. Her mane and tail are completely straight instead of fluffy and curly, and her overall coloration is somewhat darker than in the present day. It is hard to tell whether this effect is due to the overcast sky or an actual color change.)

* **Pinkie:** My sisters and I were raised on a rock farm outside of Ponyville. We spent our days working the fields. There was no talking. There was no smiling. *(Sigh.)* There were only rocks.

(As she looks glumly back over her shoulder, the dinner-call ringing of an iron triangle catches her ear. At the farmhouse door, the other two fillies—her sisters—file in past the stallion. One is light gray with a straight, darker mane/tail and a forelock that half-hides one of her blue-violet eyes; the other is blue-gray with a short, light gray mane/tail and medium brown eyes. They are Marble and Limestone, respectively, and neither has a cutie mark. The stallion is Igneous Rock, the Pie patriarch, with a dark tan coat, a somewhat unkempt mane/tail striped in two shades of

gray with long sideburns, and light brown eyes. His cutie mark is a pickaxe, he chews a wheat stalk, and he wears a dark gray hat, light gray shirt collar, and dark gray necktie. On the next line, he waits for the other two sisters to come in, then pulls the door closed behind himself.)

*** Pinkie:** We were in the south field, preparing to rotate the rocks to the east field— *(Cut to Filly PP, dejected.)* —when all of a sudden...

(For the fifth time this episode, an explosion from parts unknown shakes everything up. For the fourth time, a rainbow blast wave washes across the sky; it has the effect of plowing away all the clouds in this area, leaving the sky clear and blue. It also turns the pink filly's mane and tail into a fluffy, frizzy mess. She looks up to find a rainbow arcing over the entire rock farm, with birds, rabbits, and butterflies flitting about, and it is reflected in her saucer-wide pupils in an extreme close-up. Zoom out to frame her entire face as the sunlight hits it, illuminating her normal bright pink coloration—the darker hue was only a trick of the light—and she smiles from ear to ear.)

*** Pinkie:** I'd never felt joy like that before! It felt so good, I just wanted to keep smiling forever! *(Cut to the sparkling rainbow.)* And I wanted everyone I knew to smile, too. But rainbows don't come along that often. *(It fades away; she thinks.)* I wondered, "How else could I create some smiles?"

(She gets an idea and races back toward home. A high-speed time lapse cycles the sky from day to night and back to morning, accompanied by a rooster's crowing. In an overhead shot, the farmhouse door opens and Igneous exits, accompanied by his wife and Limestone.)

Igneous: We better harvest the rocks from the south field.

(Ground-level close-up: all three stop short at the muffled sound of a lively oompah/polka-flavored tune in B flat major. It is the same tune that Pinkie used—or rather, will eventually use—to get the parasprites out of Ponyville during "Swarm of the Century." Igneous' wife, Cloudy Quartz, is a very light gray earth pony, her mane/tail dark gray with the former in a severe bun; light blue eyes; cutie mark of three rocks; gold-framed reading glasses on a chain; dark gray checked blouse collar with a jeweled brooch.)

Cloudy: Pinkamena Diane Pie! *(Camera shift; she is addressing the silo.)* Is that you?

(The door opens, a few bits of confetti drifting out, and Filly PP calls to them. Her mane and tail are still fluffed up.)

Filly PP: Mom! I need you and Dad and the sisters to come in here, quick!

(Marble walks up to join the other family members during this line. The door slams, Cloudy and Igneous trade a very worried look, and the camera cuts to an extreme close-up of the door as he pushes it open. Inside the silo, the place has been done out for a shindig of the sort that will later cement the pink filly's reputation as a master party planner. The music comes through loud and clear as the other four Pies enter and take a puzzled look around. Filly PP pops up next to the

cake/punch table.)

Filly PP: Surprise! You like it? (*Music stops.*) It's called a party!

[*Animation goof: She already has her cutie mark in this shot.*]

(The other four stare wordlessly as a noisemaker is blown o.s. They make an inarticulate sound of wonder, the wheat stalk dropping from Igneous' slack mouth, and the big grin evaporates from their daughter's face. Four mouths start to quiver as Filly PP hangs her head.)

Filly PP: Oh, you don't like it.

(And then, as abruptly as if a switch had been thrown in their brains, all four severe faces break out in gigantic smiles. A happy gasp from Filly PP as the music resumes.)

Filly PP: You like it! (*All five dance.*) I'm so happy!

(Right on cue comes the flash of white across her haunch, followed by the emergence of the familiar three balloons as the music ends. The view dissolves to a close-up of that mark in the present, then zooms out to frame her, Bloom, and Sweetie in the speeding wagon.)

Pinkie: And that's how Equestria was made!

(Total surprise from all three Crusaders; Scootaloo brings the rig to a screeching halt.)

Scootaloo: Wha—huh?

Bloom: Look, we're here!

(Long shot; they have arrived at the front door of Sugarcube Corner, and Pinkie has removed her helmet and left the wagon.)

Pinkie: (*trotting in*) Maybe on the way home I can tell you the story of how I got my cutie mark. It's a gem!

(Even more confused stares from the fillies.)

Sweetie: (*to Scootaloo*) Oh, come on. She's just being Pinkie Pie. (*She heads in.*)

Scootaloo: Ugh... (*She follows.*)

(Cut to just inside the front door; the Crusaders enter, having disposed of their helmets, and quickly brighten.)

Scootaloo: Rainbow Dash!

(Cut to their perspective; she is visible beyond Twilight, Applejack, and Pinkie, all of whom have

gathered in the shop.)

Scootaloo: You're here!

(The other three move aside, giving a clear view of the pegasus and exposing Fluttershy and Rarity still farther back.)

Rainbow: *(approaching)* I hear you're looking for my cutie mark story. *(Cut to her and the Crusaders on the end of this.)*

Scootaloo: *(sighing)* You have no idea what I've been through today to hear that story. *(She sits on her haunches.)*

Rainbow: It all happened during the race at flight camp...

(WD to her past self, crouching down and ready to hit the gas. Colt Dumbbell and Colt Hoops get into position she continues.)

* **Rainbow:** ...where I stood alone against all odds to defend Fluttershy's honor.

(She throws them a taunting little nod and snorts out a puff of steam; as the spectators watch, Filly FS lifts the checkered flag and all three tense for a fast start. Filly RD licks her lips and narrows her eyes under her sweaty forehead and unruly striped mane, while Colt Dumbbell and Colt Hoops spread their wings as far as they will go. Down comes the flag, off go the racers, and Filly FS spins like a top off the edge of her cloud.)

(None of the youths has time to worry about a free-falling friend, though; they rocket through a series of cloud rings, with Filly RD in the lead. Colt Dumbbell misses a turn and crashes into a cloud, which evaporates to show him stuck firmly in a column—and out of the race. The camera focuses on Filly RD, now well in the lead, and shifts to frame her from various angles on the next line.)

* **Rainbow:** I'd never flown like *that* before! That freedom was unlike anything I've ever felt! The speed, the adrenalin, the wind in my mane—I liked it. A *lot*.

(She zooms on, an ear-to-ear grin fixed on her face, but gets bumped away by Colt Hoops.)

Filly RD: *(now o.s.)* Whoa!

Colt Hoops: *(saluting)* Heh. Later, Rainbow Crash! *(He dives; cut to Filly RD.)*

Filly RD: Hey!

(She drops after him and starts to close the gap with remarkable speed.)

* **Rainbow:** Turns out the only thing I liked more than flying fast...

(She streaks past and sends him tumbling with her wake; his yell fades out as he veers away.)

*** Rainbow:** ...was winning!

(A wave front forms ahead of her extended forelegs and elongates, sparks and hints of color playing along its length, as she zeroes in on a cloud ring floating just above ground. At the moment she sails through it and goes into an equally steep rise, the front erupts into a multi-hued blast and she begins to leave a sparkly rainbow contrail. She has just pulled off her first Sonic Rainboom. In a long overhead shot, she flies up and past the camera, out of the brilliant burst.)

*** Rainbow:** Most people thought that the Sonic Rainboom was just an old mares' tale. *(Profile close-up; she grins hugely behind herself.)* But that day, the day I discovered racing, I proved that the legends were true. *(Now she looks ahead.)* I made the impossible happen!

(Her trajectory takes her past the finish-line pegasus spectators, who cheer wildly at the rainbow she leaves behind her and over all of Cloudsdale. As she keeps flying with no drop in speed whatsoever, her haunch flashes white and receives its cloud/lightning bolt cutie mark. Dissolve to a close-up of it in the present day.)

Rainbow: *(from o.s.)* And that, little ones— *(Zoom out to frame all of her.)* —is how you earn a cutie mark.

(Cut to her and the awestruck Crusaders as she finishes.)

Crusaders: Whoa...

Fluttershy: *(from o.s.)* Wait a second. *(She approaches Rainbow.)* I heard that explosion, and I saw the rainbow too. *(Cut to the Crusaders, then back as she continues.)* Rainbow Dash, if you hadn't scared the animals, I never would've learned I could communicate with them and gotten my cutie mark!

Pinkie: *(from o.s.)* I heard that boom! *(Pan to her, on Rainbow's other side.)* And right afterwards, there was this amazing rainbow that taught me to smile!

Applejack: *(from o.s.)* When I got my cutie mark... *(Cut to her, standing by the door.)* ...I saw a rainbow that pointed me home. I bet it was your Sonic Rainboom! *(Cut to Rarity.)*

Rarity: There was an explosion I could never explain when I got my cutie mark! *(To Twilight.)*

Twilight: This is uncanny! If that explosion didn't happen when it did, I would've blown my entrance exam! Rainbow Dash, I think you helped me earn my cutie mark too! *(Pinkie gleefully tackles Rainbow.)*

Pinkie: We all owe our cutie marks to you! *(Fluttershy leans in.)*

Fluttershy: Do you realize what this means? All of us had a special connection before we even met! *(Rarity leans in.)*

Rarity: We've been BFF's forever and we didn't even know it!

Applejack: Come here, y'all.

(Rarity's comment is slightly redundant, since "BFF" = "best friend forever." All six mares share a group hug, laughing and talking at once. Cut to Bloom and Sweetie.)

Bloom, Sweetie: Awww... *(Zoom out to frame Scootaloo.)*

Scootaloo: Ewwww! Gimme a break! (*standing up*) Come on, Crusaders! Maybe we just need to try zip-lining again.

(*The idea gets put on hold when the other two sweep her up into a group hug; she sighs wearily as Fluttershy straightens up.*)

Fluttershy: Hey! How about a song?

(*Close-up of Scootaloo, whose face betrays her dislike of the idea even as a chatter of o.s. voices encourages it. Cut to the exterior of Sugarcube Corner and zoom out slowly.*)

Scootaloo: (*from inside*) NOOOOOOOOO!!

(*Dissolve to the exterior of the library.*)

Twilight: (*from inside, dictating*) “Dear Princess Celestia: Today I learned something amazing.”

(*Close-up of a scroll and ink bottle inside; Spike dips a quill to write the message. As Twilight continues, cut to frame her pacing behind him.*)

Twilight: “Everypony everywhere has a special magical connection with her friends, maybe even before she’s met them. If you’re feeling lonely and you’re still searching for your true friends—” (*Cut to just outside an open window; she looks out.*) “—just look up in the sky.”

(*Her perspective of the peaceful blue sky, seen between a couple of houses. Tilt up past the rooftops.*)

Twilight: “Who knows? Maybe you and your future best friends are all looking at the same rainbow.”

(*The camera stops on a bright, sparkly new rainbow strung between two clouds—a certain sky-blue pegasus has evidently been putting in a little overtime.*)

Spike: (*from o.s.*) Gross! (*Pan/tilt quickly back down to the pair.*) When did you get so cheesy?

Twilight: Just write it, Spike.

(*She resumes her gazing up into the sky as the view fades to black.*)