

Fixing up Miss Smartypants, Part 2

by [Arkensaw Pinkerton](#)

Spike strained against the handle, slowly pulling his overstuffed red wagon through the streets of Ponyville. As a bolt of cloth rolled off the side and he had to run after it for the third time in as many minutes, he decided it was definitely a bad idea to have volunteered to collect all Rarity's stuff from the post office. At least, it was a bad idea to have tried to do it in one trip. He'd just not realised anypony could order so much at once! There were new fabrics, new magazines, an entire box of black opals from some country Spike couldn't even pronounce (he could practically smell them) and several jars of imported face mask stuff. At least one of which was now filled with plain old Ponyville mud after a particularly bad spill early on in Spike's journey had knocked the lid off, and he'd lost track of the contents. It's not like it really makes a difference, thought Spike. It's still mud, at least.

Finally, thought Spike, wheeling his wagon over the last rise and seeing Carousel Boutique down the road. Rarity was really pretty, and sweet to him too, but she wasn't worth this sort of effort. Well she probably wasn't, amended Spike, thinking about his gem-studded bow tie safe in his keepsakes box under the sink in the library. Well maybe she was a little bit worth it, if he considered how grateful she'd been when he'd helped her with the gem digging. As he pulled the wagon up to the door of the boutique and pushed it open, he thought about how radiant she'd looked when Hoity Toity had asked to feature her fashions. Okay, okay, Spike admitted to himself. She's completely worth it. She's so beautiful, and sophisticated, and refined.

None of these traits were in particular evidence at the moment, however. Spike opened the door and immediately ducked under a flying pair of scissors that stuck, quivering, in the door jam. He looked up to see Rarity wide-eyed and practically vibrating with rage, screaming at a tattered old doll.

"Why. Are. You. Being so DIFFICULT!" Rarity yelled, as the doll convulsed on the table and fired a loop of thread around Rarity's horn.

"Um, Rarity?" Spike offered, from behind his wagon. "I brought your stuff from the post office. What's going on?"

"Oh, hello, Spike," Rarity said, turning and attempting a smile that didn't quite reach her eyes. "I'm attempting a bit of a restoration of Twilight's old doll, and somepony has decided to enchant her with a spell that resists deliberate changes. I imagine that it was a youthful attempt to stave off the ravages of time, but that was clearly quite a miserable failure. As it is, whenever I deviate the tiniest amount from the basic design, the moment I try to change out old buttons for new or add a little glamour- well, see for yourself!"

Rarity levitated a sapphire from her gem chest and placed it in the lap of the recumbent Miss Smartypants. Spike cautiously walked over to the table, leaning up to see exactly what was

going on. After a few seconds, he turned to Rarity.

“I don’t think it’s-” the jewel catapulted away from Miss Smartypants at terrific speed, careening off Spike’s skull with a high-pitched ‘Ping!’ and sending him sprawling to the floor. Spike’s vision blurred for a couple of seconds before resolving into the very pleasant form of a worried looking Rarity leaning over him.

“Oh, you poor dear! I had simply no idea that a larger gem would be repelled with so much extra force. You lie there and I’ll go and get you a cold compress,” Rarity said kindly before trotting off to her kitchen.

Spike had no intention of going anywhere, at least for a moment or two. While his pressing concern was the lump he was going to have later, he still had questions, though. Why did Rarity even have Miss Smartypants in the first place? Twilight had looked for her doll for two weeks after she’d lost it, and she’d asked all her friends if they knew where it was. Spike knew she’d felt terrible about it- she’d been too old for it for years, but as soon as she couldn’t find it she felt like she’d lost a piece of her childhood. Why would Rarity hide it from her?

Rarity re-entered the room with a bag of crushed ice tied with a daring green ribbon and levitated it over to Spike.

“There you are, you poor thing. And after you went to so much trouble fetching all my mail, too!” Rarity said, walking over to the wagon at the door and delightedly rifling through the contents.

“Oh, the new edition of ‘Shod’! They keep asking for an interview, but I simply can’t find the time until I’ve finished my new line. My opals! Oh, you are a marvellous assistant, you know, I don’t know what Twilight ever did to deserve you. And my new face masks from Manehattan! Spike, you must come and sniff this, it smells so healthy and earthy,” Rarity bubbled over the contents as she unpacked them neatly around the room.

“Uh, I think I caught a whiff of that one already,” Spike said, careful not to catch Rarity’s eye. “Rarity, why do you have Miss Smartypants in the first place? I know Twilight’s been looking all over for it.”

Rarity shuffled her hooves a little bit, looking at the ceiling for inspiration. It was, of course, absolutely imperative that Twilight not find out about Applejack’s feelings until Applejack was ready. But was it so terrible if she knew that somepony was interested in her? Rarity loved Twilight dearly, of course, but the poor mare was even more naive than Applejack when it came to romance. Perhaps, then, the right thing to do would be to clue Spike in that Miss Smartypants was being repaired as a romantic gesture, but not give away so much that Twilight would work out who it was? Oh yes, thought Rarity, that’s magnificent! I’ll give away just enough that Twilight knows I’m working on the doll for some shadowed suitor, but not so much that she’ll work out who it is!

Of course, thought Rarity as she wandered over to her drawing table, they'd need her assistance in planning everything for the inevitable wedding. It would be so perfect if they made it a double ceremony with Big Macintosh and Fluttershy! And the dresses would have to compliment each other just so while remaining absolutely, intrinsically tied to each pony's personality...

"Um, Rarity? The doll?" Spike broke Rarity's reverie halfway through a rough sketch for the perfect Apple family wedding gown.

"Oh! Yes, the doll. Well, Spike, I'm not sure I can tell you everything. You see, it's something of a secret, as 'twere," Rarity danced around the issue, keeping her back to Spike so he couldn't see the delighted grin playing across her features.

"It's a secret?" asked Spike, now genuinely confused. "You don't want Twilight to know you're working on it?"

"Well, it's probably best to keep my name out of it, Spike," Rarity said as she walked back to the doll. "You see, some pony who would rather remain anonymous found the doll recently, and they wanted to make a gift of returning it. You see, the pony that found the doll wanted to make sure Twilight was absolutely delighted with it when they returned it."

Rarity had a sudden flash of inspiration. Applejack may not know much about romance, but Rarity had been asked on dates by several very eligible mares and stallions, and they always seemed so nervous; why not do Applejack a favour and set the date up now, so that all Applejack had to do was show up clean and smart?

"They'll return it to Twilight Sparkle tonight. At the Maison de Lune, at 8pm. Make sure Twilight arrives in style, would you Spike? I'm sure she wouldn't want to disappoint her suitor," Rarity said as she turned to face Spike, her eyes sparkling with delight at her plan.

Spike looked at Rarity, seeing excited joy written across her face. The Maison de Lune was her favourite restaurant, he remembered. He looked at the doll on the table that had been frustrating Rarity so much, that she'd been working so hard on. And he felt his heart sink somewhere to the level of his tail as he came to a very understandable conclusion.

"Oh. Okay then. I'll tell Twilight. Eight o'clock and dress in style." he said, staring at his feet.

"Why, Spike, you seem disappointed!" Rarity said, looking at Spike and seeing his downcast expression. "Don't you think this is wonderful news for Twilight? After all this time with her nose stuck in a book she's finally going to learn about love! Oh, it's going to be the perfect first date, I just know it. That is, so long as Miss Crankypants over here decides to let me fix her properly."

Rarity turned back to the doll, threading a needle in midair. Spike looked at her as she did so, and made up his mind. He'd always tried to treat Rarity like a proper gentlecolt should, and now Twilight had the chance to go on a date with her and he was going to sulk about it like a hatchling? Huh, no way! Twilight Sparkle was the best pony he knew, the best big sister he could ever ask for, and she deserved to be dating somepony as good-looking and generous and hard-working as Rarity. So what if Spike had had a crush on Rarity? All that meant was he wanted her to be happy. Spike blinked rapidly a couple of times, cleared his throat, and put on his best smile.

"You're right, Rarity, I guess it is good news for Twilight. I'll make sure her best dress is pressed and ready! After all, we wouldn't want her *mystery date* to think she looked bad." he said with an exaggerated wink.

Rarity blinked back some faint confusion and carried on. It was important Spike was on board, even if it seemed like- oh, of course! It made perfect sense Spike had been a little reluctant at first. He was only a small child, after all, and he'd be worried about Twilight's attention transferring entirely to her new beau.

"Absolutely, Spike dear. Incidentally, I'm fairly sure that the dress that would make the best impression is her Gala gown? The one I designed?"

"No problem, Rarity! I'll go and let Twilight know that you'll be-"

Rarity's coy smile suddenly fell.

"Oh, Spike, no no no! It would be awful if Twilight knew I was involved in all this! Why, it would ruin the whole surprise of the gift, the magic of that first romantic gesture! If it doesn't go well, she'll feel like a complete foal, believe me," Rarity said, her eyes flickering to a storecupboard for a moment. She sighed at it, momentarily downcast, before composing herself, clearing her throat and continuing.

"Spike, you must promise me that when you talk to Twilight Sparkle about this date that my name does not. Come. Up." Rarity leaned right into Spike, pushing her face up against his to punctuate the last few words. For a brief moment, Spike was reminded of the time he'd come face to face with a belligerent dragon.

"Okay, okay! Just the date! Mystery guest! No pony needs to hear any names!"

Rarity trotted back over to the work table, picked up the needle and started to reattach Miss Smartypants' loose eye.

"Exactly, Spike. Now run along and let Twilight know! I'm sure she'll want to spend the rest of the day preparing."

Spike watched Rarity get absorbed in her work again as he pushed his wagon out through the door, and made a promise to himself. If Rarity wouldn't be happy with him, but with Twilight Sparkle instead, then he was going to do everything in his power to make sure they had the best date possible. He strode into town with new purpose in his heart, thinking over exactly how to prepare Twilight for the date properly. She'd need to be dressed well, of course. And she'd want to read up about first dates to make sure she knew exactly what was going to happen. He'd have to check they'd not lent out any books on the subject... Spike picked up the pace. It was going to be a very busy afternoon.

Ditzy Doo breached the surface for a moment, drew a great lungful of air, and plunged back into the lake. Powerful wingbeats against the water propelled her towards the bottom, before a complex turn and spread of her wings brought her to a dead stop inches above the sucking mud of the lake bed. Looking up, she could see the blurred light of the surface, dancing around the bubbles that left her feathers as the water crept into them, displacing the air. With a grin, she started sweeping her wings through the water, gathering more and more momentum as she headed towards the surface, until suddenly she broke free.

Tucking into a tight ball, she span forward twice before flaring her wings and beating them once, backflipping into a lazy glide towards a grey unicorn filly with a blonde mane who was bouncing around with excitement beside a landing platform. She forced both her eyes to focus for a moment as she glided in, getting a distance on the platform for a fraction of a second. It was all she needed. All four of Ditzy's hooves landed at precisely the same time with a satisfying 'Clack'.

"Mom that was so great! You were totally perfect! You'll win a Marelympic gold for sure!" The little unicorn said, winding between Ditzy's legs.

"I-it wasn't p-p-p-" Ditzy said, feeling her stammer aggravated by her shortness of breath after that last dive. She stopped to take a quick breath before carrying on, shifting her weight to distract her voice like she'd been taught. "Wasn't p-perfect. I sh-shorted the forward spins."

Ditzy saw her daughter's face fall before deliberately grinning and leaning in towards her, winking with her good eye.

"It was still g-good, though, Dinky." she whispered conspiratorially. "Thanks for watching me practice." Dinky Doo looked at her mother with undisguised confusion.

"Mooom, you know I like watching you practice. It's totally my favourite thing to do!" she said, running and fetching a towel sat next to two mailbags that were piled next to the platform. "It's so cool that you're doing the training again! Grandpa said he thought you'd never do it again

because your physical responses looking after me take sorority, but I told him you'd find time."

Ditzzy looked at her daughter for a second before thinking through the sentence. Dinky was clever- precocious, even- but had a habit of trying to re-use words she'd only ever heard once, and often got the pronunciation and context completely wrong.

"Did you mean 'fiscal responsibilities take p-priority'?" She hazarded a guess.

"Yes! Exactly! But I told him you were going to be in the Marelympics again, just like before you had me."

"It's the Paramarelympics, remember? And we'll see, k-kiddo. I've got a lot of work to do," She smiled at her daughter as she towelled off- she'd never get all the water out of her feathers, so her afternoon's flight would be a bit heavy and clunky, but they'd be dry enough for basic flight at least.

Both of them were suddenly interrupted by three young fillies coming charging over the nearest hillside, abandoning a bucket of apples as they broke into a run. Dinky recognised them as Applebloom, Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo, from one of the other classes at school.

"See? See, I told you Miss Ditzzy went swimming before she delivered the mail! I told you!" Scootaloo shouted happily as they charged up to Ditzzy and Dinky.

"Ah never said you didn't know! Ah was askin' why you knew in the first place."

"I knew in the first place because of the pegasus swimming lessons. If you start drowning more than three times, then Miss Ditzzy picks you for her special weekend class, and I nearly drowned five times on the first day!" Scootaloo proudly announced, sticking her chest out and her head high.

"Five times on the first day? I guess you can't get a cutie mark for drowning, then, huh," Sweetie Belle said before nodding at Applebloom, who took a large, dog-eared list from one of her saddlebags, marked 'Things we know don't work'. Dinky watched with interest as Applebloom scribbled 'Drowning' in between 'Drooling' and 'Drum Catapulting'.

"What's drum catapulting?" Dinky asked.

"Oh! It's a way of getting a big bass drum across town really really fast. Applebloom invented it!" Sweetie Belle said.

"It's a way of gettin' unfairly grounded really really fast." Applebloom muttered, putting the list back in her bag. "How was Ah supposed t'know Applejack was gonna set her stall up right in the target zone?"

“But Applejack always sets her stall up in the same place, doesn’t she?” Dinky said.

“Aw, you sound just like her,” Applebloom said to Dinky with a wounded expression, before turning her attention to Ditzzy.

“Miss Ditzzy, we were wonderin’ if maybe you could do us a favour! See, we’ve got these letters that have got to get to Rarity and Rainbow Dash,” Applebloom explained, pulling two envelopes out of her saddlebags and presenting them proudly. One of them had “For Rarity” written on the front in slapdash print, the other “Miss Rainbow Dash” in elaborate cursive. On both envelopes, an abundance of hearts were printed around the edges.

“We’d take them ourselves, except we can’t take them to Rainbow Dash’s place because she can fly so she lives in a cloud house and I’ve not got the hang of my wings yet,” Scootaloo leaned in to explain.

“And I said I’d give the other one to my sister but the pony who wrote it doesn’t want her to know that they wrote it, and if I give it to Rarity myself then she’ll make me tell,” Sweetie Belle explained, reddening slightly. Scootaloo almost groaned; this was such a tiny lie, and Sweetie Belle was still terrible at it! It wasn’t even really a lie at all, Scootaloo figured, since she’d written the letter to Rarity herself and she sure didn’t want her finding out about it.

Ditzzy looked at the letters and the fillies in front of her with her good eye. She raised an eyebrow for a second, thinking it over. From the way Applebloom and Sweetie Belle were starting to blush, and Scootaloo’s obvious exasperation, she wouldn’t be surprised if the two more embarrassed fillies had started to reach the age where anonymous love letters seemed like a great way to communicate with a new and unexpected crush.

“Okay, g-girls, I’ll t-take them.” Ditzzy said, to a resounding chorus of cheers. She made a mental note to herself to explain the source of the letters to Rarity and Rainbow Dash before handing them over- they’d want to handle the situation themselves, and that’d be much easier for them if they knew who’d authored the letters.

She lifted the letters in her mouth, depositing them in one of the mailbags by the platform before shifting the bags over her shoulders, getting used to the weight and the heft of them. They were heavy today- best to keep as much height as possible, Ditzzy figured. She didn’t want to cause any accidents, after all. She had her mail route to run, and then time to get home and wash up before speech therapy. At the thought of that last appointment, she could almost feel her tongue freeze up, and grimaced in frustration. Couldn’t she even think about him without falling over her words now? While she continued her flight preparations, the fillies behind her started talking with her daughter about their ongoing crusade.

“Hey, Dinky, you don’t have a cutie mark! I thought you had a bubble wand.” Sweetie Belle said.

“Ah thought it was dolphins. Didn’t you used t’have dolphins?” Applebloom asked.

“Well- Well I was just-” Dinky shrank back, embarrassed.

“No way, it was a pillow, I remember! What happened to it? Did you lose it? Can you lose a cutie mark?” Scootaloo asked with mounting panic.

“No- I just- I-” Dinky closed her eyes, blushing furiously. “I drew them on! I thought maybe it would help me get one!”

The Cutie Mark Crusaders stared at Dinky for a second before all starting to talk at the same time.

“That’s such a good idea! I can’t believe we didn’t think of that!”

“They looked really good, too! You know, I bet if you got the right one then it’d help everything along. Rarity always says it’s easier to work from a good pattern.”

“Well, that’s just th’sort of spirit we’re looking for in the Cutie Mark Crusaders!” Applebloom ran over to Ditzzy, who was starting to prepare her takeoff.

“Miss Ditzzy! Miss Ditzzy! Can Dinky play with us this afternoon? We’re gonna try and get our cutie marks and with Dinky helpin’ we’ll be done before dinner for sure!”

“Oh! Mom that would be totally great! Please please please?” Dinky ran over to her mother as well, bouncing up and down as she pleaded.

“Sure you c-can, Dinky. Just m-make sure you tell Sparkle wh-where you’re going, okay?” Ditzzy said. She was pleased Dinky seemed to be making new friends; while Sparkle was a great help and the ‘big sister’ program had really started to get the shy little unicorn out of her shell, it was good that she was making friends about her own age.

“Okay mom! We’ll go into town and tell Sparkle and then we’ll go get our cutie marks! Bye mom!” Dinky and Applebloom ran off towards the other two fillies, and Ditzzy saw them have a brief discussion before Applebloom pointed out the great bucket of apples she’d left at the top of the hill. As Ditzzy took off, veering slightly to the left, she saw the four fillies start dragging the bucket towards the town. Shaking her head, the mailmare adjusted her bags once more and started to gain a little height, aiming for the library at the centre of town and almost staying on track.

“That’s ‘Love In The Time Of Colic’ for Lyra, ‘Apples Are Not The Only Fruit’ for Granny Smith, and... wait, that can’t be right,” Twilight talked to herself as she packed her saddlebags for town. She wrinkled her nose at the bad information and checked her packing list against her book requests list to find that Spike had gotten those last two mixed up. She shook her head, remembering how absent-minded her number one assistant had been that morning; at the prospect of any interaction with Rarity he tended to be more than a little distracted. After attaching the correct notes to the books, Twilight was about to levitate her saddlebags onto her back when she heard hoofbeats and a voice on her balcony.

“Hey! Twilight! Are you around? I need to talk to you about something,” Rainbow Dash’s voice rang out through the library.

“I’m down here, Rainbow!” Twilight shouted back. “I was just getting ready to do some deliveries. We could walk together if you like?”

“Nah, it’s okay. If you’re busy, I mean. I can just talk to you about it later or something.”

Not for the first time since coming to Ponyville, Twilight silently thanked Celestia she’d built an extra hour into her routine in case of an unexpected occurrence. Rainbow Dash clearly wanted to talk about something a little uncomfortable, since she’d made the trip over and then immediately tried to brush it off. Twilight walked up the stairs to see Rainbow hovering over her balcony, ready to leave.

“I’ve always got time for a friend who needs to talk. What was it you wanted to discuss?” Twilight asked with a bright smile. Rainbow landed on the balcony again, not making eye contact with Twilight for a second. When she did, she seemed to think for a second before saying anything.

“I don’t actually need to talk to you. Well, I do, but not for me. I’ve just- I’ve got this friend, okay? And I’ve given her my advice on something, and that totally covered everything because I knew exactly what to do, but I thought maybe I should get your advice -for her- too, because... because maybe you read about it in a book. Or something.”

Twilight untangled the sentence in her mind for a second.

“Well, why not just tell me who your friend is? Then I could just talk to her directly,” Twilight asked.

“No, that won’t work. Because, er, she’s too shy to talk to you face to face,” Rainbow explained with a tired smile.

“Is it Fluttershy? Because she knows she can always just come round and-”

“It’s not Fluttershy! It doesn’t matter who it is! Will you just go and get whatever book it is that

says how to ask somepony on a date so you can tell me what to do?" Rainbow almost shouted, exasperation written plainly across her face. "I mean, tell her what to do. My friend. I already know how to ask a pony on a date."

"Oh, you need dating books! I've got loads of those!" Twilight exclaimed happily. "I can get just the right one for your friend and you can take it to her, if you tell me a couple of things. Is she interested in a mare or a stallion?"

"She's thinking of asking a- wait, no, if I tell you you might work out who it is. She definitely doesn't want that."

"Rainbow, it's not really statistically significant information. I mean, if you take the accepted averages of twenty percent of the population having a specific interest in mares, twenty in stallions, and sixty in both, then..." Twilight started to hit her stride, levitating a handy scrap of paper over to demonstrate the math. Rainbow Dash could feel her focus slip, imagining for a second giving her Wonderbolts acceptance speech to an adoring crowd. Applejack and Pinkie Pie would be cheering as hard as they could, Fluttershy would be doing her best to keep up, Twilight would be stamping her hooves as hard as possible, and Rarity...

She snapped back to reality, blushing, as an oblivious Twilight finished up her explanation.

"...so even if I knew an existing sexual prediction of every mare your friend could be then this new information would, at best, eliminate twenty-five percent of the possible candidates, so there's no good statistical reason not to tell me and it'll really improve the accuracy of the books I'm able to give you!" Twilight finished with a flourish of her quill on the paper and a satisfied smile. Rainbow Dash snapped up the page, scanning it intently.

"Well, the math checks out," Rainbow said, "so I guess it's okay to tell you she's interested in a mare."

Twilight raised an eyebrow at that. Mathematics was not traditionally one of Rainbow's strong suits. She was about to mention it before Rainbow Dash carried on; a dam of information seemed to have burst somewhere within her.

"It's not so much that she doesn't know how to ask a mare out, though. I mean, I've asked mares out before," Rainbow flushed scarlet before continuing, her words falling over each other as she blurted it all out. "So has she! I mean, I have, and my friend has, and that's not the problem, okay? It's that she's never asked out somepony who's so different to her before. I mean, they have totally different priorities! She's got no time for fun, at least not proper fun, and she'd be totally lost without her stupid weekly spa visits, and she spends way too long on her mane even if it does look all- all soft-"

Rainbow Dash trailed off, staring at her hooves. Twilight took a moment before speaking very

softly indeed.

“Dash, are you interested in somepony?”

“Yes,” Rainbow Dash muttered under her breath.

“And is that somepony Rarity?” Twilight asked in the same quiet voice, suppressing a smile.

“Yes! No! I don’t know!” Rainbow sat down in a slump on the balcony. “I just- I can’t stop thinking about her. I don’t know how to look her in the eye. I can’t get her on her own and I don’t know what I’d say even if I did! Ever since the Best Young Fliers competition I’ve been trying to get a way to talk to her properly, or do another Sonic Rainboom, and I can’t do either. I’ve never had trouble asking asking a pony out before. Or with a trick. So I thought maybe you’d know some way to help me out, like a spell or something.”

“Rainbow, I don’t think this needs a spell. Everything I’ve read tells me they’re nothing but trouble when it comes to romance. And have you actually tried just going round to the boutique and asking her out? No plans, no get-out clauses?” Twilight nodded towards her library.

“I have read a lot of books about this. The more nervous you are about asking a question, the more invested you are emotionally in the outcome. In this case, your nerves are really just a signal that you should bite the bit and go for it.”

Rainbow sat up, smiling at her friend. Twilight was right! Since when had she been afraid of anything? She was Rainbow Dash, for crying out loud! No more excuses, no more stupid plans, no more anything except getting out there, and doing it!

“Okay!” She squeaked, her voice pitifully small. She took a deep breath and stood, facing Twilight and getting ready to shout.

“Okay! You’re right! I’ll go over to her boutique and knock on her door and ask her out.” Her volume slid away as she got to the end of the sentence.

“Tomorrow,” she said, twitching her ears down apologetically.

“No excuses, Rainbow-” Twilight was interrupted by an enormously loud crash at the front door, extending into the library. She and Rainbow exchanged worried glances before running down the stairs to see letters strewn about the library and the local mailmare holding her head in her hooves and cursing quietly.

“Oh my goodness! Ditzzy, are you alright? What happened?” Twilight asked, running down to check on Ditzzy Doo.

“The d-d-. The d-” Ditzzy stammered at Twilight, taking a moment to get her voice under control. “D-door was c-closer than I th-thought. N-nothing broken.”

Ditzzy smiled apologetically, getting to her hooves and starting to sweep up the mail that had spilled out of the top of her bags. Rainbow and Twilight pitched in too, grabbing pieces of mail from between books, under tables and in one case from behind Ditzzy’s own ear.

“Oh, hey, this one’s for me!” Rainbow said, extracting an envelope from between the floorboards.

“Look, it’s all formal. ‘Miss Rainbow Dash’, heh. It’s got hearts all over it.” She took the envelope in her teeth,

“W-wait!” Ditzzy shouted, reaching out a hoof to stop Rainbow Dash opening it, and getting the distance right on the second attempt. “I was g-given that b-b-by Sweetie Belle. I th-think she’s got a b-bit of a crush.”

“Huh. Sweetie Belle, really? I mean, I know Scootaloo has kind of a hero worship thing going on, but I didn’t- huh. What am I supposed to do about something like this?” Rainbow said, putting the unopened letter on a nearby table and glaring at it accusingly.

“I remember doing something like that when I was about her age,” Twilight said, smiling at the other two ponies. “It was just after I’d started magic school properly, and Celestia had made me her own personal protégé there. She just seemed so regal, and kind, and she was at least kind enough never to mention the letter I sent her. I don’t think you need to do anything, Rainbow, except maybe go talk to Rarity? I think she’d want to know, and she won’t let on to Sweetie Belle.”

Ditzzy nodded, grateful that Twilight had articulated what she wanted to suggest so clearly, before suddenly starting- she must have been in here for five minutes! That meant she was going to be late finishing her round, which meant she’d be late for speech therapy, and that was definitely not something she needed to be more stressful than it already was. Waving to Twilight and Rainbow, she set off out of the open doorway.

“Bye Ditzzy!” Twilight shouted after her, before turning back to Rainbow. “Now, you go! You’ve got a good reason to talk to Rarity now, so no more excuses.” Twilight shoved the letter in her friend’s mouth, muffling any further argument as she shoved the feebly protesting pegasus out of the door.

Twilight shut the door firmly, looking over the mess of her library. They’d managed to get all the letters together, she was fairly sure, but her books had still been badly scattered by the crash. Sighing, she resigned herself and Spike to yet another weekend of organisation and levitated her saddlebags onto her back. As she made her final preparations for leaving, she didn’t notice that one of the letters had wedged itself inside “Common maladies of the *Malus* genus” at the

top of her bag, little hearts on the edge of the envelope just visible whenever she moved.

Author's extraneous notes!

You remember last time when I said this got bigger than I thought it would? I didn't know the half of it. I reckon this will clock in at about five or six updates total, now, but I could still be underestimating it. I've had to make charts.

In any case, feedback is appreciated- my email's at the top if you fancy dropping me a line. Enjoy, you marvellous pony-lovin' lot!

Arkensaw

[<----- Part One!](#)

[Part Three! ----->](#)