

CRUSADERS OF THE LOST MARK

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Note: Background song lyrics are in square brackets; any marked with exclamation points are shouted rather than sung.

Prologue

(Opening shot: fade in to a slow tilt up the length of a large sheet of paper on a wall. It is filled with crayon drawings of several different activities, all of them marked out with red X's, and can only be the product of the Cutie Mark Crusaders' failed attempts to find their talents.)

Apple Bloom: *(from o.s.)* Okay, Crusaders!

(The top edge of the sheet comes into view, marked with a heading and the group's insignia. Cut to frame all three in their clubhouse; Bloom sits on her haunches, perched on a crate by the list, and Scootaloo and Sweetie Belle watch.)

Bloom: Back to the business of earnin' our cutie marks! *(standing on crate)* Any suggestions?

Scootaloo: *(frustrated)* No, we've tried everything!

Sweetie: *(dejectedly)* We've run out of ideas.

Bluegrass melody with acoustic guitar/mandolin/bass/light percussion, lively 4 (E major)

(Now the daytime sky can be seen through a window.)

Bloom: Are you kiddin' me, Crusaders? We can do better than that!

(She jumps down to their level.)

We've been searchin' for our cutie marks for a while now

(The others brighten a bit.)

Tryin' to find out how we fit in

(leading them toward the wall, tacking up a fresh sheet)

So many ways we've tried before, but we keep on tryin' more

Crusaders: 'Cause the Cutie Mark Crusaders don't give in

We'll make our mark, one way or another

We'll make our mark on the day that we discover

The ultimate reward of our cutie marks

Bloom: Now that's more like it!

Song ends

(They get alarmed back into the here and now by the sound of the door opening.)

Pipsqueak (Pip): *(from o.s., frantically)* Cutie Mark Crusaders!

(Pan quickly to the upper portion of the door and tilt down to frame the pinto colt in time with his next word.)

Pip: HEEELLLP!!

Bloom: What's wrong, Pipsqueak?

Pip: I'm running for student pony president! *(He steps inside; they move closer.)* I was hoping you three would be my campaign managers!

(An inquisitive look passes between the three fillies, followed by a smile.)

Bloom: *(to Scootaloo, Sweetie)* We've never tried gettin' our cutie marks in campaign managin'! What do you say, Crusaders?

Crusaders: YEAH!!

(Cut to a point closer to ceiling level; each raises a hoof into view for a three-way high five.)

Crusaders: *(from o.s.)* Huh!

(A fourth, thinner hoof flails up toward them but falls shy of making contact—Pip, whose legs are a bit too short to reach. It drops out of sight, only to be replaced by the colt himself in the grip of Sweetie's magic. He is a little puzzled by the sudden assist, but touches his hoof to the other three. Cut to an overhead shot of the four, all trading smiles and grins, and fade to black.)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(Opening shot: fade in to Bloom striding confidently across a stretch of grass, a couple of foals talking in the background. Sweetie shoves a crate into view with her head, and Scootaloo carries Pip into view and sets him on top. These two back off once they have done their part, and Bloom stops alongside.)

Bloom: *(loudly)* So, Pip...

(Longer shot of the area, which proves to be the Ponyville schoolhouse lawn.)

Bloom: ...how would you help the school if you were elected student pony president? *(Foals start to gather in.)*

Pip: Our playground equipment took quite a beating during Twilight's battle with Tirek.

(Case in point: the swing set, whose frame is badly bent and cracked. One of the two swings has already given way, and the other promptly does likewise, dumping the youngster sitting in it to the grass.)

Pip: If I'm voted in as student pony president, I'll go to the school board and right this wrong!

(A round of cheers from the spectators, which gets cut off when Diamond Tiara shoves her way through from behind, followed by Silver Spoon.)

Diamond: Well, *I* think that's a ridiculous waste of money! *(scornfully, pointing at Twist)* It's just like when Twist proposed to repair the window that Discord destroyed. *(Lean in close.)* She just wanted to repair it like a plain old schoolhouse window.

(The bespectacled filly cringes; now the snooty one turns to another student.)

Diamond: But you all know voting for *me* was the best choice— *(crossing lawn; Silver follows)* —because *I* convinced the school board to give that window visual appeal!

(On these last two words, pan quickly to follow her pointing hoof and stop on the side wall. One of its windows depicts a stained-glass rendition of Diamond standing on a hilltop against a sparkling sunrise. After she finishes, pan back to a dismayed Pip and a disaffected Bloom.)

Bloom: 'Course, it doesn't hurt that her mother, Spoiled Rich, is president of the school board. *(Candidate and manager trade half-smirking smiles.)*

Silver: *(from o.s.)* Exactly! *(crossing to Crusaders, Pip; with growing glee)* Which is why when Diamond Tiara is voted student pony president, the school will be putting a statue of her in the center of our schoolyard!

(Diamond's sharp pull on her braid shatters the rapture.)

Diamond: Silver Spoon! *(through gritted teeth, nudging her in the chest)* That was *my* big announcement for when *I* won!

Silver: *(sighing, shaken)* I was only trying to help.

Diamond: *(through teeth)* I don't need that kind of help! *(Bloom pops up in front of them.)*

Bloom: *(to crowd)* Haven't we all had enough of Diamond Tiara? *(Murmurs begin.)*

Scotaloo: Do we really need a big statue of her?

Sweetie: Especially where our playground equipment should be?

(The murmurs grow as Bloom smirks at the opposing candidate, who scowls in reply at first but lets her eyes widen as she glances around at the prospective voters. Now, in close-up, Scootaloo shoves Pip up to the top of the giant upside-down horseshoe that stands in the playground. On the start of the next line, zoom out quickly to frame all the foals.)

Pip: A vote for Pip is a vote for the playground! *(Diamond leaps over to the base; zoom in quickly on her.)*

Diamond: A vote for Diamond Tiara is a vote for *more* Diamond Tiara!

Marching drum cadence with stoptime acoustic guitar/string chords, brisk 4 (A major)

(She glares upward as the Crusaders climb the horseshoe to stand with Pip.)

Crusaders: It's time to make a change, this is our chance
(Bloom beckons the crowd toward herself, and the three hoist Pip overhead.)

Don't be afraid to do what's right [He's it! Vote for Pip!]

(Set him back on the horseshoe; next the four leap down off one side.)

You've got an opportunity to have fun again

(They fall into a marching line, with him in the lead.)

A vote for Pip and you can join the fight

Stoptime ends

It's time for a new leader, it's time to make a change

(The Crusaders double back to a merry-go-round on which two fillies are riding.)

We're here to fight for what we believe [Vote for Pip!]

(The base gives way, dumping them onto the ground; now the trio hurries to catch up with Pip.)

It's finally time we beat her and play a better game

(All stop at a tetherball pole; he bucks the ball away.)

'Cause when we vote together, there's nothing that we can't achieve

Pompous orchestral waltz, slightly slower 3

(As the ball swings past the camera on its return trip, the view wipes behind it to a close-up of an incredibly annoyed Diamond. She stops it with one front hoof and begins to move about, facing down one foal and then another.)

Diamond: I don't believe what I am hearing, I'm the only one who should be cheering

(She shoves Pip's face into the grass.)

Pipsqueak? Try "Pip's Weak," don't you think?

(The Crusaders glower at her; now she prances and twirls, fluffing her mane.)

But a diamond is perfection, it's a natural selection

(Behind her, a giant ballot slides into view to block out the sky and trees. One of its two boxes is marked with a well-drawn picture of her face, the other with a sloppy caricature of Pip's.)

So your vote better be for me, not the weakest link

(One bottom corner is shoved aside from behind by Bloom, exposing her and Scootaloo.)

Bloom: We'll let the votin' decide!

A minor

(Diamond storms off. Bloom lets the corner fall back into place; the whole ballot then rolls up to the left, the view wiping to the incumbent smugly stepping among her intimidated classmates.)

Diamond: Everypony has their little secrets

(spoken, to a colt) I know you do!

(He recoils worriedly; now she turns to a filly, stroking her cheek.)

A vote for me will help you keep them safe

(Same response; she crosses to a filly who has tilted the entire schoolhouse up off the ground with one foreleg to get at a kickball beneath.)

(spoken) Like your creepy super-strength!

(The building crashes back into place as the instantly chastened youngster gazes after Diamond, who has already zipped away to flick at a filly's unusually long and shaggy mane/tail.)

Or your mane extension, a little thing I won't mention

(Now she pulls down a colt's bottom lip, exposing a set of teeth much bigger than average.)

Or those freakish large teeth in your face

(He hastily claps hooves over his mouth.)

Bloom: *(from o.s.)* Come on now, ponies! *(Pan quickly to the Crusaders.)* Don't listen to her!

March feel/tempo (A major)

Stoptime at first, but transitioning out of it

(The ballot slides partway into view, filling the right half of the screen, with Pip's face properly drawn next to his box now. It gets a check mark; the left side pans to frame him marching next to Scootaloo.)

Crusaders: You've gotta vote for change, it's time for a new leader

(An X is drawn over Diamond's face; the ballot slides left, the view wiping behind it to a close-up of the shocked/resentful incumbent.)

End all the tyranny, vote now and we can beat her

(Cut to the four, waving from the front porch, and zoom out. A voting booth has been set up on the lawn, and foals file in to cast ballots as Cheerilee watches.)

It's now another day, and we believe in what's right

(One is checked for Pip and dropped into a waiting box.)

Vote for Pip! Vote for Pip! Our victory is in sight

Waltz feel/tempo (G flat minor)

(Diamond stands up into view, her back to the camera, and waves for attention.)

Diamond: Stop! Everypony who hasn't voted, listen up!

(She paces to a filly with a couple of books under one foreleg, another in her teeth, and several others scattered nearby on the ground.)

Diamond: Pip makes promises he can't keep, but I can do more
(spoken; holding up a saddlebag) You could really use a new book bag.

(Snatching it away from the reaching hoof, she crosses to two other foals.)

'Cause I'll make things happen that none of you here can afford

(spoken, in rhythm) To do, like, ever

(Now she shoves candy into a filly's mouth and gives an umbrella to another as shade from the overhead sun.)

Wouldn't you like a little something sweet? Here's a parasol to hide you
from the heat

(Walking past a beanie-wearing colt, she flicks its propeller and sets the whole thing to lifting clean off his head.)

Who says that I can't be nice?

But first there's one thing, an itsy-bitsy little string

(Stop at a crudely drawn, unflattering picture of Pip on a sign; spin it to show her smug visage on the other side.)

And voting for me is the price

Gentle flute/string melody with light percussion (D major)

(Silver sidles up next to Diamond.)

Silver: I've a tiny suggestion
That you should be aware
You could probably win this election

Horns in; intensity builds

(Zoom out as she gestures to the line of voters.)

If you show them all you really—

Music pauses

(Zoom in quickly on the pair again.)

Diamond: I don't recall asking you to speak! *(Shocked gasps all around; cut to the porch.)*

Sweetie: Well, if that's how you treat your best friend, then I choose Pipsqueak!

March feel/tempo, stoptime over a mandolin line (A major)

Background lyrics are shouted by the other foals, over the corresponding line

(They descend the steps and parade down the front walk.)

Crusaders: [Vote! For Pip!] Stand strong and we'll not be afraid, ponies
(Diamond and Silver soon find themselves standing alone as their audience departs.)

[Vote!] Let's free ourselves from the past

(The entire view swivels 180 degrees on a vertical axis through the center of the screen, revealing a background wallpapered with Pip campaign posters. Several foals stand before them and hold up more copies on signs.)

Foals: [He's it! Vote for Pip!]

(A box is marked, and foals enter/exit the voting booth.)

Crusaders: [Vote! For Pip!] We'll let honor win now against the tyranny
(One of Diamond's posters drifts down to fill the screen and is torn in half; now the screen shows the challenger and managers proceeding along the walk.)

[Vote!] And make a change that will last

Foals: [Vote for Pip!]

Stoptime ends; tambourine/horns in

(Pip walks proudly past the voters.)

Crusaders: It's time for a new leader, it's time to make a change
(Diamond rolls her eyes disgustedly as Silver aims a worried glance her way.)

We're here to fight for what we believe

(Two vertical panels slide in from opposite sides, framing the strong filly and the beanie colt.)

[Vote for Pip!]

(Fullscreen: Pip steps onto a decrepit seesaw, and a colt gallops over to pull down the high end and lift him up for a good view of the whole lawn.)

It's finally time we beat her and play a better game

'Cause when we vote together, there's nothing that we can't achieve

(Hooves of all colors shoot skyward toward him.)

[Vote for Pip!]

Song ends

(Snap to black.)

Act Two

(Opening shot: fade in to a long overhead shot of the schoolhouse and lawn, panning slowly toward the building. Cheerilee stands on the porch to address her students.)

Cheerilee: The votes have been counted.

(Split screen, with a nervous, hoof-biting Pip on the left and a supremely confident Diamond on the right.)

Cheerilee: *(from o.s.)* The student pony president is... *(Diamond starts to move forward.)*
...Pipsqueak!

(She turns to stare popeyed at him across the dividing line, drawing in a disbelieving gasp, and her side slides away as his moves over to fill the screen. There are more than enough cheers to go around; close-up of Bloom.)

Bloom: Oh my gosh, Crusaders! Pip won! *(Longer shot on the start of the next line; Pip crosses to them.)*

Pip: I couldn't have won without the hard work of my campaign managers, the Cutie Mark Crusaders!

Sweetie: *(rearing up briefly)* Campaign manager cutie marks!

(All three glance hopefully toward their haunches, but find no changes in them whatsoever.)

Diamond: *(from o.s.)* Guess you're not as good as you thought, blank flanks!

(Cut to her on these last two words; Cheerilee, irked, stares at her from the porch.)

Diamond: *(to her)* In fact, I demand a recount!

Cheerilee: *(dryly)* Trust me, Diamond Tiara. Pip won.

Diamond: *(walking up steps)* I'll be the judge of that, Miss Cheerilee!

(Cut to a long shot of the schoolhouse as she enters. Long, tense silence.)

Diamond: *(from inside)* WHAAAAAAT?!?!?

(Her one word shakes not only the structure, but the surrounding turf and the camera as well. Close-up of the porch; she zips out to the doorway, utterly confounded, as Cheerilee cringes.)

Diamond: *(stepping out)* Silver Spoon! *(zipping down to her)* You didn't vote for me?

Silver: No, I didn't.

Diamond: But...y-you're my best friend!

Silver: Am I? 'Cause I tried to help by mentioning your surprise statue, and suddenly I wasn't even allowed to speak. You could've actually won this election if you'd just listened to me.

(Diamond's mouth falls open.) You want to know how? *(leaning close, softly/viciously)* Sorry, I'm not allowed to speak.

(She snaps the slack jaw closed on this last word; as soon as she takes her hoof away, its owner goes into a rising growl. Zoom out quickly to frame the president-elect and his staff as Diamond completely blows her top with a feral scream and gallops off.)

Silver: What? (*Close-up.*) I don't have to follow her drama anymore.

(She walks calmly off, leaving the three fillies and the pint-size pinto trying to wrap their heads around the last few seconds. Pip exits after a moment; zoom in slowly on the Crusaders.)

Bloom: I know Diamond Tiara's been pretty awful, but...we should probably make sure she's okay. Just 'cause she's never cared about anypony else's feelings, doesn't mean we shouldn't care about hers.

(By this point, all six eyes have turned in the direction of Diamond's exit. Dissolve to an overhead shot of her trudging glumly down a Ponyville street. As she approaches a shop whose overhead sign shows a mare's head in a tall powdered wig, its door opens and out steps a pink earth pony mare with a tinge of red in her coat. The Crusaders poke their heads out from around the corner of a building across the street to watch. This mare is Spoiled Rich, Diamond's mother, as mentioned by Bloom in Act One.)

(A close-up of mother and daughter picks out Spoiled's carefully styled, two-tone purple mane/tail, scornful dark blue-green eyes with blue-violet shadow, hint of a double chin, and diamond-ring cutie mark. She wears a light blue blouse with short, ruffled sleeves and a gem-studded gold hem, as well as a necklace of gold links, and sounds about an order of magnitude more stuck-up than Diamond.)

Spoiled: Diamond Tiara! (*The latter freezes, stunned; Spoiled circles to her other side.*) Why are you making *that* face? *That* is not the face of a winner.

Diamond: (*very hesitantly*) Because...I didn't win.

Spoiled: (*affronted*) Whaaat? You mean *I* hefted all these party supplies to celebrate *nothing*?!?

(A longer shot of the shop on the end of this line gives the lie to her claim. Two maids are hauling bags of supplies and a bunch of balloons, and the family's old butler Randolph—as seen in “Twilight Time”—has drawn the job of lugging a large statue of the arrogant filly on his back. Once Spoiled finishes speaking, his legs give out under the weight and it crushes him flat.)

Diamond: Sorry, Mother.

Spoiled: It's bad enough you lost to that transplant from Trottingham, but imagine if you'd lost to one of those... (*voice dripping contempt*) ...*blank flanks*.

(The expression that comes across her face gives the idea that those two words cause her no small amount of gastrointestinal distress.)

Spoiled: As a Rich pony, you must always think of your social standing.

(Fancypants and Fleur stroll by, turning their noses up; he voices a self-satisfied little chuckle. Zoom in slowly on Diamond and Spoiled after they have gone.)

Spoiled: That starts here in Ponyville and reaches all over Equestria! (*She leans into Diamond's face, lifting her chin.*) Don't ever forget that, Diamond Tiara—*ever!*

***Melancholy, quiet flute/piano/acoustic guitar melody with glockenspiel accents
Moderate 4 (A major)***

(Cut to the Crusaders, still hunkered down at their vantage point, and zoom out to frame Diamond and Spoiled. The mother walks off, nose in air, and the crushed daughter slowly moves off down the street. Extreme close-up of a large diamond on display in a shop window; her reflection appears in the glass, and the camera zooms out to frame her eyeing the gem forlornly.)

Flute/glockenspiel out

Diamond: If I'm a diamond, then why do I feel so rough?
I'm as strong as a stone, even that's not enough
(She kicks a rock fragment away and begins to walk.)
There's something jagged in me, and I've made such mistakes
I thought that diamonds were hard, though I feel I could break

Guitar out; flute/strings in

(The view silently shatters, the pieces falling away to show her now standing on a bridge over the stream bordering Ponyville. A happy stallion and filly walk past behind her—father and daughter, perhaps—and leave her alone as she looks morosely out over the side.)

Diamond: Would you believe
That I've always wished I could be somepony else?
Yet I can't see
(Close-up, seen from below; tears gather in the blue eyes.)
What I need to do to be the pony I want to be

(As they fall to fill the screen, the camera shifts to a close-up of her image in the water; now the tears drop away from the camera to splash down.)

Glockenspiel in

(Five stirred-up droplets of water drift away from the stream, the background fading to black. They become blue-green circles and drift down onto her haunch in extreme close-up, settling themselves onto the points of the tiara that is her cutie mark and flaring brightly for a moment. Zoom out to frame her in the fore, with ghostly images of herself being addressed by a disapproving Spoiled farther back.)

Flute/glockenspiel out; guitar in

Diamond: I've been told my whole life what to do, what to say

(Pivot 180 degrees; Sugarcube Corner fades in behind her, and Mr. and Mrs. Cake smile at Pound and Pumpkin.)

No pony showed me that there might be some better way

(The background tilts up until it is nothing but clear blue sky...)

And now I feel like I'm lost, I don't know what to do

(...which then recedes to become a hole in the ground, seen from below as she descends into it and falls o.s.)

The ground is sinking away, I'm about to fall through

Flute/glockenspiel/light percussion in

(A backdrop of glowing pink gems appears, and she rises into view on a large blue diamond.)

Diamond: Would you believe

(She is swept past the camera and o.s.; behind her, wipe to a slow pan down a street as she walks among the contented locals.)

That I've always wished I could be somepony else?

(The Crusaders peek out from a corner, faces showing true concern for the filly who has bullied them so mercilessly.)

Yet I can't see

(tearing up) What I need to do to be the pony I want to be

(Dissolve to a long shot of her walking slowly along an empty street.)

To be the pony I want to be

Song ends

(Zoom out slightly to put the Crusaders in the fore as they step a bit closer, then cut to a head-on shot of them.)

Sweetie: I-Is it weird that I feel bad for her?

Scotaloo: *(scratching back of neck)* If it is, then...I'm weird too.

Bloom: She wants to change, but...she doesn't know how.

Sweetie: *(smiling)* Seems like she could use a friend or two to help her figure it out.

(The yellow filly's mouth curves up as well. Dissolve to a close-up of the ringing bell in the tower atop the schoolhouse, then pan/tilt down to ground level. Chattering foals stampede and fly out the door, classes having ended for the day. Diamond lags well behind them, and the Crusaders hang farther back still, stopping on the porch.)

Bloom: *(waving)* Hey! Diamond Tiara!

(They gallop down the steps; close-up of the pink filly, wearing a rather sour look.)

Bloom: *(from o.s.)* Wait up! *(She turns toward them.)*

Diamond: What do you three want? To gloat? *(They stop in front of her.)* Rub in my defeat? *(She starts away.)*

Bloom: Actually, we wanted to invite you to our clubhouse to hang out.

(That gets a reaction, freezing Diamond in her tracks and causing her eyes to pop in pure surprise, and she turns back with a puzzled brow drawn down over one eye.)

Diamond: Really?

Scotaloo: Yeah, for real.

Diamond: *(sourly, rising to hind legs)* Well, thanks to you all, I don't have any important class-president business to attend to or anything— *(crossing forelegs)* —so I might as well.

(This declaration is followed by a world-class grimace.)

Sweetie: *(smiling hesitantly)* That sounds like a yes.

(Bloom and Scotaloo smile as well. Dissolve to a long shot of the clubhouse; zoom in slowly.)

Diamond: *(voice over; scornfully)* So...

(Cut to the filled and empty cutie mark idea lists on the wall inside.)

Diamond: *(walking into view)* ...do you three just sit around here plotting out different ways to try and get your cutie marks? *(Cut to the Crusaders by the door.)*

Bloom: Actually... *(All three smile.)* ...yeah. *(Sweetie nods.)*

Diamond: You three are...

(She cuts herself off, thinking hard; when she resumes, the haughtiness is completely gone.)

Diamond: ...uh, really lucky. *(Cut to the trio and zoom in quickly.)*

Crusaders: *(flabbergasted)* We are?

Diamond: *(from o.s.)* Yeah! *(Back to her.)* You get to explore all these options, learning who you really are before you're stuck with something you don't understand. *(Bloom moves toward her.)*

Bloom: But...y-you've done that...right?

Diamond: *(very snarky, pointing at haunch)* Yeah, 'cause I have my cutie mark, and I'm not struggling at all to figure out who I'm supposed to be and what I'm supposed to be doing with this mark that's already on my flank!

Bloom: Uh...are you sure about that?

Diamond: *(scoffing)* That's a weird question. *(She narrows her eyes icily.)*

Sweetie: *(scratching back of neck)* Not really, since we kind of overheard you yesterday.

(The spoiled-rotten filly, freshly incensed by this admission, leans toward her with an accusingly pointed foreleg and a short, acidic scoff.)

Diamond: Were you trying to get your cutie mark in *spying?!?* Is *that* on your little chart?!?

Sweetie: No! We were just worried about you when you lost the election, and then you lost your friend, and then your mom yelled at you.

Bloom: We know you want to change, and...we think we can—

Pip: *(from outside, through wall)* HEEEEELLP!!

(During this yell, cut to him outside, halfway up the ramp and frantically drumming his hooves against it. The door opens so that the Crusaders can get a look at him.)

Pip: Cutie Mark Crusaders! I was at the school board meeting, and they didn't approve my request for the new playground equipment!

Sweetie: Why not?

Pip: There's no money in the budget! So I checked my peggy bank to see if I had enough bits...

(On the end of this, cut to a close-up of an upside-down piggy bank being lifted, styled as a potbellied pink pegasus. A good shake dislodges only a dead insect, a couple of puffs of lint, and a piece of candy; he leans down over the spot where they have hit the ramp.)

Pip: ...but my little peggy wasn't nearly full enough!

Sweetie: Don't worry, Pip!

Scootaloo: We'll meet you back at school.

Bloom: And help you find a solution!

Pip: *(wiping his forehead)* Thanks, Cutie Mark Crusaders!

(As he starts down the ramp, his defeated opponent comes to the doorway, her face already rearranged into its old venomous smile.)

Diamond: Oh, I already *have* a solution. Our new student pony president is gonna be kicked out of office and I'll be reinstated!

Urgent drum cadence with flute melody and string bass, fast 4 (E minor)

(She reaches the bottom of the ramp almost too fast to follow and sprints off through the trees.)

Scootaloo: Where is *she* going?

Bloom: Where do you think? *(diving down ramp)* Come on! After her! *(Scootaloo follows.)*

Sweetie: Wait! *(She and Scootaloo take the plunge.)* I'm coming too! *(They start to catch up to Diamond.)*

Higher strings in

Diamond: Cutie Mark Crusaders, get out of my way

(Cut briefly to her perspective, approaching Ponyville proper, then back to her crossing the bridge over the stream.)

Those ponies need to know the truth, and they'll hear it from me

(Here come the Crusaders in hot pursuit; a couple of ponies stare after them, puzzled, and the chase moves into a street.)

Horns in

Crusaders: Stop! Diamond Tiara, this is not the way
We know you're better than this hostility

(Pan quickly ahead to a stallion hauling a cartload of apples. Diamond stops and overturns it, causing them to skid and tumble, and races off down the block.)

Flute out

Diamond: You don't even know me at all
Don't understand the meaning of my fall

(Her headlong flight takes her past a gathering of affluent ponies, including both of her parents, Filthy and Spoiled Rich.)

What my family would think if I ever
Fail at anything

(They glance quizzically after her. Close-up of Spoiled; she tosses her head imperiously, the view wiping behind it to a head-on view of Diamond galloping toward the camera.)

Diamond: I'm a diamond, that means you never break
(Overhead shot; she weaves through the ponies enjoying the day and turns into an alley.)

No matter what be the cost of the path I take
(Another turn, then back to a main road.)

Whatever I have to do to win in the end

(The Crusaders whip into view in front of her, standing as a three-pony roadblock, but she veers around them.)

Flute in

Crusaders: Stop! This is not the answer
(Another cutoff attempt, foiled by a hairpin turn.)

Wait! And it's plainly seen
(A third try, another miss; now they start after her.)

Listen! You can redeem yourself
But by helping others, not by being mean

(They pull ahead of her and turn around, galloping backwards at full speed to face her.)

Flute out; acoustic guitar in

Crusaders: We know you want friends who admire you
You want to be the star with all the power, too

But there's a better way, there's a better way

Flute in (G major)

(As Diamond continues to hurtle along the street, the three drop in alongside her.)

Crusaders: There's so much more still left to
 Learn about yourself
 See the light that shines in you

(She looks back at her cutie mark, a mix of fear and confusion in her eyes.)

 We know you can be somepony else

(The Crusaders pull up and skid to a stop at a fork in the road.)

Crusaders: You can stop right now

(Zoom out; they gesture to their left, toward a gazebo standing under a bright, rainbow-lit sky. To their right, the path leads through a foreboding patch of woods to the schoolhouse, under a sky thick with gray clouds and shadow. The ballot box and posters are gone from the lawn.)

 And try another start

(Diamond looks from one to the other, panic growing in her eyes.)

 You'll finally free yourself from the dark

 And see the light, and see the light of your cutie mark

All instruments out except for flute/strings/swelling cymbal roll (E minor)

(To their very great dismay, she swerves to their right and makes a beeline for the schoolhouse. The camera is now close enough to pick out Cheerilee, Pip, and the crowd of foals gathered out front, and Diamond stops before them to catch her breath.)

Music pauses on an ominous chord accented by a heavy percussion note

Diamond: *(as Crusaders gallop to the scene)* Everypony, I have an announcement!

(All three recoil in horror, anticipating all too clearly the upheaval she is about to set off. Cut to a close-up of them, zooming in slowly.)

Song ends with one last flourish

(Snap to black at the same time.)

Act Three

(Opening shot: fade in to the confrontation. The sky has returned to its normal blue.)

Bloom: Diamond Tiara! Think hard about the choice you're makin' right now! (*Head-on view of the four fillies, the focus on the Crusaders.*)

Scotaloo: You can be a better pony!

(*The focus shifts to Diamond as indecision tears at her mind, but before she can even get a word out, the sound of the door opening cuts in.*)

Spoiled: (*from o.s.*) Diamond Tiara!

(*All four look up in shock; back to the crowd, which parts to give an uncomfortably clear view of the materfamilias glaring from the porch. Zoom in on her.*)

Spoiled: (*toying with mane*) I just happened to be here for the school board meeting— (*gesturing to one side*) —and *this* is what I see when we adjourn? My daughter associating with confused, insignificant lowlives? Socializing with their kind is not how you move up in Equestria!

(*During the second sentence, cut to Diamond and pan slowly to follow Spoiled as she paces behind her and the Crusaders. The level of undiluted contempt radiating from the mare is almost enough to reduce a Sherman tank to scrap metal. Bloom aims a searching look back toward Diamond, while Scotaloo sends a half-squinched glare after Spoiled and Sweetie's brain seems to lock up. Back to Diamond.*)

Spoiled: (*from o.s.*) Come, Diamond Tiara!

(*That command kicks her out of the morass of wavering self-doubt that has claimed her, and her face rearranges itself into a look of quiet, steely resolve. Cut to behind Spoiled, walking imperiously back toward the main road.*)

Diamond: (*from o.s.*) No, Mother! (*Spoiled whirls back, unable to believe her ears.*)

Spoiled: Excuse me? (*Longer shot, framing all five.*)

Diamond: You've spent your life acting like a high horse, and raised me to follow in your hoofprints! (*walking slowly toward her*) At first I thought this was fine, but then I finally realized I wanted something you *don't* have—friends!

(*There follows a tripartite gasp from the Crusaders, backed up by a round from the rest of the bunch. Spoiled puts a hoof to her mouth, unsure of how to react to this outburst—but only for a moment until she draws herself up to full height.*)

Spoiled: That's enough, Diamond Tiara! Step away from those blank flanks!

Diamond: (*glancing toward Crusaders, smiling*) These are the Cutie Mark Crusaders, and they are my friends! (*Back to a dumbfounded Spoiled; she continues o.s.*) You need to stop calling them such mean and hurtful names! (*To the four; slow pan across them.*) They are working harder to get their cutie marks than anypony I've ever seen— (*The entire gathering.*) —and they will get them exactly when they discover their true talent— (*stepping toward Spoiled*) —which I guarantee will be amazing!

(Throughout all of this, the Crusaders' expressions shift from queasy frowns to incredulous gapes to warm smiles—their nemesis is making peace at long last. Cut to a close-up of Spoiled, so dumbfounded that her brain seems to have forgotten exactly what to do with her jaw.)

Diamond: *(from o.s.)* Now— *(Zoom out slightly to frame her.)* —will you please deliver this to Father?

(Ducking her head to one side, she comes up with a paper in her teeth.)

Spoiled: *(cowed)* Yes. Of course, dear.

(The sheet is transferred to her mouth, and she walks cautiously off the grounds as if fearing that her daughter might come after her with a large and heavy blunt object. Instead, said daughter turns back to the Crusaders.)

Diamond: I have to thank you, Crusaders. *(pacing past them)* Obviously I've known since I got my cutie mark that my talent is getting other ponies to do what I want. *(facing crowd)* I just asked my father if he could donate the money for the new playground equipment.

(Awed, appreciative murmurs from Cheerilee and foals; now she walks up to Pip.)

Same melody as her Act Two solo song, but with an upbeat feel
Acoustic guitar, bass, light percussion, off-beat pizzicato strings/mandolin, bright 4 (A major)

Diamond: I know you were worried there for a second, weren't you? Ha! Well, I think it's all gonna work out just fine— *(winking)* —Mr. President.

(She trots along the front walk as other students fall in behind her.)

Diamond: We'll build a playground for all of us to enjoy
(to Crusaders) So full of games, there's enough for each girl and boy
(They follow; now she jumps up to the porch.)
I want to help and do everything that I can
I'm here to show you I've changed, listen up, here's the plan

Bowed strings in

(Dissolve to the playground. She backs into view past a few foals.)

Diamond: Bring it in!

(Zoom out. A unicorn delivery stallion is magically maneuvering a dolly stacked high with crates; Pip rides atop the lot, and several foals are walking alongside.)

Diamond: That's right! Keep it coming!

(Now she turns to a group that includes the very strong filly she tried to blackmail in Act One.)

Diamond: Hey there. *(The others bail out.)* You with the amazing strength. *(pointing)* Can you help them move that merry-go-round across the lawn?

(During this line, the camera pans quickly to the broken-down item in question, being towed slowly along by a colt and filly—and cutting a deep furrow in the grass. The powerhouse zips over and easily lifts it with her head; zoom out to frame Diamond on the start of the next line.)

Diamond: Thank you so much! *(Now she turns to the colt with the oversized chompers.)* And you, with the super teeth. *(He hastily covers them.)* We need you to help with that teeter-totter.

(Cut to Twist, trying to drag the old seesaw away and having no luck at it. The colt whisks to the other end, clamps his teeth onto it, and effortlessly lifts both it and her so he can walk it away.)

Diamond: *(from o.s.)* You've got it! That's the spirit!

Same melody as the Crusader's final verses of Act Two, triumphant
Guitar/pizzicato out; glockenspiel/horns in; percussion strengthens (G major)

(Her figure floats across the screen in close-up. Behind it, the view wipes to a head-on view of her and zooms out across the playground; Cheerilee and her students are moving and unpacking the new gear, and Twilight Sparkle has arrived to lend a horn.)

Diamond: There's so much I can do
To help everypony else

(Her cutie mark flares with a new light.)

I see the light that shines in me

(Close-up of a rope being magically knotted through the board seat of a new swing, then zoom out. Sweetie has done this bit of work, and she trades a smile with Bloom and Scootaloo.)

And now I can be my better self

(A new tetherball pole is set into place, after which the view dissolves to her standing at a distance from the schoolhouse.)

Diamond: I can free the past
'Cause now the future's bright for me

(The sun rises over the rooftop, bathing her in its gentle glow. Cut to Silver, hammering a nail into a fence post. One rail falls loose, eliciting a frustrated grimace around the handle in her teeth.)

My cutie mark has set me free

(It is lifted back into place; zoom out to show Diamond on the other end, getting a smile from Silver. Dissolve to the peak of a cupola; a pegasus mare flies up, pennant held by its pole in her teeth, and plants it on the pinnacle.)

To do what's right and be the pony I want to be

(Tilt down. The cupola has been installed as a roof for the upper platform of a slide, and Diamond stands here.)

And be the pony I want to be

(She slides down, the camera zooming out quickly to frame an impressive complex of interconnected play equipment—slides, ramps, steps, platforms, and so on.)

Song ends

(Cheerilee, Pip, Silver, and other students gather around the reformed bully. Cut to the Crusaders, standing near the schoolhouse.)

Bloom: I've been thinkin', Crusaders. We spend an awful lot of time fussin' and frettin', tryin' to discover our true talent, but when we take a little time off, we end up helpin' other ponies figure out *their* true talent.

Sweetie: Yeah! And I think that's way more important than worrying about our cutie marks. *(Scootaloo grins and nods.)* Don't you?

Scootaloo: Absolutely! *(jumping up)* I don't care if I ever get my cutie mark— *(pulling others closer)*—as long as I get to hang out with my best friends.

(She breaks into an ear-to-ear grin as they share a brief three-way hug. Bloom breaks it to walk across the grass.)

Bloom: So what do you say, Crusaders?

(Cut to behind the rest of the crowd, looking over the new setup. Zoom out to frame Bloom on the start of the next line.)

Bloom: Want to just focus on helpin' others find their cutie marks?

(The camera shifts to a point a short distance above ground; as in the prologue, three hooves reach up into view and clap together.)

Crusaders: *(from o.s.)* YEAH!!

(This particular high five goes just a bit differently from all the others they have performed. Namely: a crackle of pink-edged white energy forms at the point of contact and begins to expand, tracing its way down the three forelegs. Within seconds, it has descended to the turf and grown into a ring that encircles them; next it splits into three separate groups of filaments edged in different colors—red for Bloom, magenta for Scootaloo, violet for Sweetie. The strange power lifts them off the ground, fading away to be replaced by a matching aura around each youthful

equine. A blinding flash turns those coronas to pure white, and they slowly rise high and higher before another one washes out the screen.)

(Fade in to Diamond, Pip, Silver, Snips, and Snails. As they risk a glance toward the epicenter, the three fillies descend insensate to the ground and the light shrinks away to a small white spot on each haunch. Scootaloo is first to rise and rub her eyes, framed in a profile close-up of her face; a stunned murmuring drifts over to her, and the camera cuts to a slow pan across a sea of smiling faces. Sweetie comes up next, seen in close-up next to Scootaloo.)

Sweetie: What happened? *(Zoom out slightly to frame Bloom on Scootaloo's other side.)*

Bloom: What's goin' on?

Diamond: *(awed)* It's your cutie marks! They're amazing!

(All three heads whip around to stare at the corresponding haunches, the lights having faded away, and a series of extreme close-ups tells the reason for Diamond's words. Each now bears a shield striped vertically in red, light pink, and magenta; a purple symbol is overlaid on each, containing a bright pink one in turn. Bloom: heart within an apple. Sweetie: eighth note within a star. Scootaloo: lightning bolt within a wing. Their new bearers trade giddy grins before jumping wildly in place.)

Crusaders: *WE ALL GOT THE SAME CUTIE MARK!!*

(Extreme close-up of all three haunches being placed back to back to back.)

Crusaders: *CUTIE MARK CRUSADERS FOREVER!!*

Same melody/tempo as in prologue
Mandolin/acoustic guitar/light percussion (E major)

(Zoom out as they break apart.)

Crusaders: We were searching for our cutie marks for a while there
(Group hug.)

Trying to find out how we fit in
Bass in

(They circle around the others.)

So many ways we tried before, but we kept on trying more
'Cause the Cutie Mark Crusaders don't give in

Snare drum comes in, off-beat

(They break into a gallop; dissolve to a close-up of Scootaloo walking tall and proud.)

Scootaloo: Now we know what it took all along
(Zoom out; Sweetie is with her.)

Sweetie: And our journey here is never really done
(*Bloom pulls up between them.*)

Bloom: For it is more than just a mark, it's a place for us to start

Crusaders: An adventure that has only just begun

Trumpet in

(*Now they lead the class through Ponyville.*)

We'll make our mark, show the world what we can do

We'll make our mark, helping fillies to break through

(*A leap takes them high above the street.*)

To the ultimate reward of a cutie mark

(*Three vertical panels slide in from top/bottom to tile the screen. Each replaces one filly and shows her new mark against a background of her coat color—left to right: Sweetie, Bloom, Scootaloo.*)

All instruments out except guitar/bass/light percussion

(*Dissolve to the front entrance of Sugarcube Corner. The class has gathered near the open door, where Pinkie Pie hunches down to their level. Applejack watches proudly from one foreground corner, Scootaloo and Sweetie stand in the other.*)

Pinkie: All right, everypony! Get ready for the biggest cute-ceañera celebration EVER!!

(*She bounds up on this last word, throwing a burst of confetti over the crowd. Cheers ring out as the camera pans slightly to follow Applejack's glance over her shoulder, happy tears filling the green eyes.*)

Applejack: Oh, sugar cube...

(*Longer shot; she is addressing Bloom, and Big Macintosh and Granny Smith are also present, also wet-eyed.*)

Applejack: (*hugging Bloom*) ...if Mom and Dad were here, they'd be so proud of you. (*Bloom and Macintosh both wipe away tears.*)

Bloom: Aw...thanks, Applejack.

Applejack: (*pushing her gently forward*) Now go on and party with your pals!

(*The filly gallops off, the camera panning to follow her for a short distance before stopping on Scootaloo. Rainbow Dash touches down to face her and deliver an affectionate noogie.*)

Strings/tambourine/woodwinds in

Rainbow: I'm so proud of you, little buddy
You've taught me a thing or two

(They trade a high five and gallop off. Zoom out to put Rarity and Sweetie in the fore, the big sister supporting the little one's front hooves with hers.)

Rarity: You've inspired everypony around you (Sweetie blushes.)
And you've inspired me too

Tambourine out; mandolin/trumpet/full percussion in

(Cut to a patch of sky and tilt down to street level. Twilight, Fluttershy, Pinkie, and Spike have gathered to one side, Cheerilee and students on the other; and the three big sisters—by blood and by choice—are front and center, marching forward.)

Applejack, Rainbow, Rarity: You've made your mark, done Equestria so proud
(Stop facing the Crusaders; Rainbow now hovering.)

You've made your mark, and we're here to sing it loud
(Tilt quickly up into the sky. Six panels slide into view around the periphery, each displaying one of the six mares' marks against her coat color. The center of the screen tiles itself with the three new ones, shown similarly.)

For the ultimate reward of your cutie mark

All instruments out except strings/bass/light percussion

(Dissolve to a close-up of Bloom, standing behind the lectern in the clubhouse. Balloons float above, anchored to the tables, and her head obscures a poster recently added to the wall.)

Bloom: Well, what do you think, Crusaders? *(presenting her haunch)* Were these cutie marks totally worth waiting for or what?

(Cut to just behind her; she is addressing the other two.)

Sweetie: Yeah! I can't wait to see who we're gonna help next!

(A screen-filling flash of white fades away in favor of a quick series of snippets from their past adventures, all rendered in soft focus.)

Mandolin/snare/trumpet in; majestic half-time feel

Crusaders: We started out just three, Crusaders driven to see
What we find in our hearts, discover our destiny

(Now they float against a glowing pink background filled with stars and images of their marks' shield outline. Large copies of the marks themselves float into view, each forming a backdrop for the filly who wears it.)

And here we are, best friends, about to start it again
(The marks flip down so the Crusaders can ride them like surfboards.)

An adventure that never will end

(They zoom o.s.; behind them, wipe to the upper boughs of a stretch of apple trees. Normal focus resumes at this point.)

Crusaders: We'll make our mark, helping fillies most in need
(Tilt down slowly to bring the clubhouse into view; they hurry down the ramp.)

We'll make our mark, so each one of them succeeds
(The whole gang—adult and child alike—quickly gathers behind them on the grass, and Photo Finish has her camera at the ready.)

'Cause the ultimate reward is a cutie mark

(Its flash fills the screen; from here, snap to Spike outside the schoolhouse, blowing fire onto a scroll to send it to Princess Celestia. Cut to her, sitting on her throne in Canterlot Castle; the wisp of sparkly smoke zooms in, solidifies, and unrolls itself before her face. Princess Luna lands next to her, and Celestia shifts the document so she can look more closely. Cut to a close-up of it, with the fresh group photo affixed to the parchment—Scootaloo and Sweetie proudly pointing to their marks, Bloom beaming for the camera and turned to show hers in full detail.)

Song ends

(Fade to black.)