

## MADE IN MANHATTAN

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### Prologue

*(Opening shot: fade in to an extreme close-up of a full bookshelf. One title becomes enveloped in a magic field and is pulled away, and a long shot of the area gives more detail. Tree-patterned windows and banners, long semicircular shelves lining the back wall with a conveniently placed ladder for easy access, overarching blue/violet crystal columns, and branches of a blue crystal tree sculpture that reach up into view from the bottom of the screen. This is the upper portion of the library in Twilight Sparkle's castle. The chosen piece of literature loops slowly toward floor level, the camera tilting down to follow it and frame Twilight and Spike in an overhead shot. Several round tables have been placed around the room; she sits at one, with books stacked up on both sides, and others litter the rest of the tables and the floor. Spike sits atop a few, reading a comic book from the box that rests before him, and a few dozen have been arranged to form a giant house of cards.)*

*(Close-up of Twilight as the selected book descends to her. Magic opens the cover and settles it on the table, but her out-of-sorts expression and weary sigh speak to a general lack of enthusiasm for heavy reading. The book is telekinetically closed and set on the pile to her left; blowing a hearty raspberry toward it, she extracts one from her right side and gives its contents a quick look. Another sigh, a slump down, and the book settles itself on that same pile—spine upward, covers open, pages fanned to support its weight. After a groan with chin nearly touching the table, she draws herself upright and immediately lets herself sag down with a third, drawn-out sigh.)*

**Twilight:** I'm bored.

**Spike:** But you're reading. *(Long overhead shot of them.)*

**Twilight:** *(echoing slightly)* I've read all these books already. *(Ground level.)*

**Spike:** *(rolling eyes)* And...?

**Twilight:** And I'm bored! *(She plants her front hooves on the table, jarring the stacks.)* I want to do something! Things have been so slow around here and I just—

**Rarity:** *(distant)* Twilight! Twilight!

*(The Princess on duty zooms out of the library, and Spike jumps down from his improvised seat to follow, comic in hand. Cut to the closed throne room doors, seen from inside; these fly open in Twilight's magical grip and the two race in.)*

**Rarity:** *(from o.s.)* Ooh, Twilight, darling!

*(Cut to her, standing at the far edge of the room's central table and its magic map.)*

**Rarity:** Oh, thank goodness! It seems that my—

*(A clatter of hooves cuts her off, and here comes Applejack into the throne room. She downshifts from a gallop to a walk, out of breath, wiping sweat from her forehead, and with her cutie mark flaring.)*

**Applejack:** Got here as fast as I c—

*(Twilight eyes the three apples with a surprised gasp, and Rarity crosses the room to join the group. Her mark has also begun to act up, bringing a huge smile to Twilight's face.)*

**Twilight:** *(pumping a foreleg)* Yes! Finally! *(trotting to map; Spike follows)* We've been summoned. I wonder where the map wants us to—

**Spike:** Uh, Twilight?

*(Extreme close-up of one wing as he lifts it to point out the stars on her haunch—which are doing nothing but sitting there and being pink and white. Applejack and Rarity cross to them, the earth pony giving a sheepish little grin, the unicorn a puzzled grimace. Twilight's enthusiasm dribbles away, and she lets off a long, loud, bored sigh while sinking almost completely out of view behind the map. Snap to black.)*

## OPENING THEME

### Act One

*(Opening shot: fade in to the four and zoom in slowly.)*

**Applejack:** Where do you think—

*(Images of both her cutie mark and Rarity's float up toward the room's tree-stump chandelier, circling around each other, and descend toward a clump of high-rise buildings on the map. Rarity breaks into a giddy laugh, alternately hunching down for a closer look, straightening up again, and drumming her front hooves on the table edge. Both mares' marks have quieted down now.)*

**Rarity:** Oh, Manehattan! We've been called to Manehattan! (*Hunch down.*) Oh, I've simply been dying to go back for a visit— (*Close-up; she stands.*) —and now, I return. (*fiercely*) With a purpose!

**Twilight:** (*from o.s.*) Hmmm.

(*Cut to her, now peering closely at the spot where the two marks have settled—on the outskirts of the teeny tiny big city.*)

**Twilight:** It looks like you've been summoned to this particular neighborhood here.

(*Zoom in to an extreme close-up of the location as she finishes, then cut to Rarity zipping over to Applejack.*)

**Rarity:** (*throwing foreleg around Applejack's neck, squeezing*) We're off to solve a friendship problem in one of the busiest and most vibrant cities in all of Equestria! Isn't this exciting?

(*The blue eyes pop and she does her very best to bite back a squeal of joy, catching her lower lip in her teeth just to be safe. Applejack, on the other hand, keeps her composure and nudges Rarity back.*)

**Applejack:** Seems a hair odd, though, don't it? The map callin' me to a big city like Manehattan?

(*Cut to Twilight on the start of the next line; behind her, Spike has taken a seat on Pinkie Pie's throne and started back in on his comic.*)

**Twilight:** You may be more of a country pony at heart, Applejack, but the map picked you two because you're the best ponies to tackle this particular mission. (*Spike looks up and nods.*)

**Applejack:** But how will we even know what our mission's supposed to be? That neighborhood prob'ly has twice as many ponies as all of Ponyville. (*Rarity sputters out her disbelief.*)

**Rarity:** (*with mounting giddiness*) More like three times. Why, it's not only home to the hay-packing district, it's also home to the fashion district!

(*She ends with a gasp and a chew on her bottom lip; across the way, though, Twilight lets her ears droop disappointedly.*)

**Rarity:** Hmmm. Shame you weren't called as well, though, darling. You did end up quite a fan of the hustle and bustle of Manehattan on our last visit.

(*A reference to "Rarity Takes Manehattan."*)

**Twilight:** (*smiling wistfully*) It's such an exciting city, and there's still so much I'd like to do there. (*rising slowly*) So many museums and historical landmarks to visit, not to mention all the libraries.

*(Stars twinkle in her eyes as she loses herself in her travel plan; after a moment, she snaps back to herself.)*

**Twilight:** *(settling back down)* But this is your mission. *(Chuckle.)* Don't worry about me. I've got plenty of...

*(After a quick glance around, she whisks Spike's comic out of his grip with her aura and shifts it in front of herself.)*

**Twilight:** ...books...to keep me...busy.

*(Its owner glares at her and voices a short noise of disgust at having his pastime commandeered; Applejack and Rarity tack on humoring smiles.)*

**Applejack, Rarity:** *(nodding)* Mmm-hmm. *(Pause; Rarity gasps.)*

**Rarity:** I just remembered something—the Sisterhooves Social! *(Applejack pulls a hoof wearily down the side of her face.)*

**Applejack:** We'll have to miss it. No tellin' how long we'll be in Manehattan. *(She slumps; zoom in slowly on the marked spot.)* I sure hope Apple Bloom and Sweetie Belle aren't too upset.

*(Dissolve to a long shot of a train crossing the suspension bridge over the river/bay at the edge of Manehattan and heading toward the city proper. The sun shines in a clear daytime sky. Zoom out slowly, then cut to a city intersection, a stretch of the bridge visible between the buildings. Carriages and taxis zoom back and forth as the train rolls through with a shriek of its whistle. Cut to the upper portion of several buildings and tilt down to the train station that served as the start of the Ponyville crew's visit to Manehattan thirty-four episodes ago. The street is filled with speeding vehicles, the sidewalks with pedestrians and tourists, and Applejack and Rarity step out of the front entrance, the former balancing a trunk on her back. Rarity jumps to hook a foreleg onto a lamppost and let herself swing out from it.)*

**Rarity:** Oh, Manehattan, what you do to me!

*(Her companion's only response is an irked eye roll, perhaps remembering the semi-sweatshop that she and the others found themselves thrust into the last time. Her eyes pop in surprise as she looks ahead of herself, the camera zooming out quickly to the other side of the street. Between the two sidewalks is a seemingly impassable tide of horseflesh harnessed to carriages that flow through the streets of the city. She swallows hard and her legs begin to shake as Rarity turns to her.)*

**Rarity:** *(waving a hoof in her face)* Darling, are you all right? *(Applejack shakes her head clear.)*

**Applejack:** Ponies move so fast here, not at all like back home.

*(She eases up to the curb, inserting herself between a stallion and mare already standing there and completely ignoring the nasty looks they shoot at her.)*

**Applejack:** *(to herself)* Eyes peeled, ears open. Eyes peeled, ears open.

*(Traffic thunders in both directions along the street until a police stallion blows his whistle and waves for the pedestrians to cross. Before Applejack can even begin to get a hoof off the curb, a stream of ponies pours past, leaving her disoriented for a moment. She barely regains her senses before another knot of walkers hurries by from the opposite direction.)*

**Rarity:** *(trotting up to her)* Remember, Applejack, you're in the big city now. No moseying. You've got to walk with speed and confidence!

*(Another whistle is her cue to start purposefully across. Cut to an overhead shot of this stretch of road, Rarity nimbly swerving about to dodge the other pedestrians, then to just behind Applejack as the white mare reaches the opposite side.)*

**Rarity:** *(waving)* Yoo-hoo!

*(Now Applejack paws the sidewalk, snorting out steam, and gallops into the street. Overhead view; each of the following interruptions comes when she nearly plows into another pony.)*

**Stallion 1:** Move it!

**Applejack:** Sorry 'bout that.

**Mare 1:** Ah, get outta my way!

**Applejack:** Sorry!

**Mare 2, Mare 3:** Watch it!

**Applejack:** Hey—oh, dear.

*(Street level; she dives for the other curb and lands with a complete lack of grace on her belly, just in front of Rarity.)*

**Applejack:** *(standing, dusting herself off)* Butter my biscuits. I can barely cross the street in this town! How am I supposed to help solve a— *(Rarity's sharp gasp cuts off that inquiry.)*

**Rarity:** *(pointing to one side)* There!

*(Pan quickly to a street-corner cart selling hats and zoom in quickly. The vendor stallion is passing a shapeless number in a rather unappetizing shade of green to a mare; its brim droops down to cover her eyes and ears as she sets it on her head. Both are earth ponies.)*

**Hat buyer:** Yes, I think this is the one. *(She pulls out a coin, but Rarity gallops into view.)*

**Rarity:** No! *(Strike the money away.)* No.

**Hat buyer:** Excuse me?

**Rarity:** That hat clashes with your mane, not to mention it's far too large— *(Buyer's half-blocked perspective; the hat is floated away.)* —and will undoubtedly obstruct your vision.

*(The two mares again; she moves to the cart and runs a critical eye over the goods.)*

**Rarity:** Oh, dear! None of these will do. (*Here comes Applejack.*) Oh, Applejack! (*crossing to her*) What good timing!

(*The lid of the trunk is magically flipped forward to whack the blond farmer a good one in the back of the head. Humming placidly to herself, Rarity circles around to root through it.*)

**Rarity:** Here!

(*The buyer again; a round-crowned blue-violet hat is levitated onto her head, its brim turned up in front, and she smiles.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) This will do splendidly. (*A hand mirror is next so she can check herself out.*)

**Hat buyer:** Oh, it's lovely! How much would you like for it? (*Rarity crosses to her.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, no, no, please, please, keep it. I can always make another.

**Hat buyer:** (*touching Rarity's chest*) Thank you!

(*Off she goes at a trot, the portly, unkempt vendor glaring after her. The trunk is now closed.*)

**Rarity:** (*to Applejack*) And you thought we wouldn't discover our purpose here. (*She sputters out her disbelief.*)

**Applejack:** (*dryly*) Yeah, I'm pretty sure that wasn't it.

**Rarity:** (*affronted*) What? I just saved that poor pony from committing a terrible crime of fashion.

(*Her hopeful grin is met by Applejack's quizzical, slowly rising eyebrow.*)

**Rarity:** (*hastily*) W-Well, she could have been...meeting a friend who would've laughed at her new hat, and then their friendship could've been ruined forever, and... (*She finally peters out with a weak smile.*) ...ooh...it's possible!

**Applejack:** (*dryly*) Did your cutie mark glow signifyin' a job well done?

**Rarity:** (*glancing back at her haunch*) Ye— (*Face falls.*) No. I suppose it didn't. Still, a disaster was averted.

**Hat vendor:** (*from o.s.*) Averted? (*He advances toward the pair.*) You just lost me a paying customer!

**Rarity:** Oh, my. Oh, I-I-I-I'm so, so sorry. I-I never meant to—

**Hat vendor:** (*shaking a hoof at her*) Beat it!

**Rarity:** Uh, please accept my sincerest apologies for the misunderstanding— (*Applejack pulls her back and begins to push her away.*) —a-and might I add, what a lovely establishment you have here!

(*She chuckles weakly as he finally relents and goes back to his cart, and both out-of-towners get back to moving under their own power.*)

**Rarity:** (*clearing throat*) You're right, Applejack. (*Chuckle.*) The search continues!

*(Her partner's green eyes just flick a hard glance back at the trunk. Dissolve to a slow pan along a block lined with apartment buildings; Applejack stands on the sidewalk, addressing the passing ponies and being thoroughly ignored. She no longer carries the luggage.)*

**Applejack:** Uh, 'scuse me? I was just wonderin'... *(Camera stops.)* ...uh...friendship problem, anypony? See, we've been sent here to...a-a map summoned us and, uh...if you could just take a moment to... *(She lets her head drop wearily.)*

**Rarity:** *(from o.s., voice raised)* Friendship advice!

*(Applejack stares out across the street; cut to a quickly constructed wooden booth on the far side. It is decorated with an overhead sign that shows the pair's faces with a heart between them, a stool is set up out front, and the unicorn stands behind it to lean over the counter.)*

**Rarity:** Anypony looking for friendship advice? *(Not a single passerby even breaks stride.)* Good grief! *(slumping down)* This isn't working. *(Zoom out slightly as Applejack steps up with a sigh.)*

**Applejack:** I'm not sure what we're supposed to do. To be honest, I'm still not even sure what the map called me here for.

**Rarity:** *(touching Applejack's chest)* Oh, try not to worry, Applejack. The map picked us for a reason. *(Long overhead shot of them.)* Although how we're supposed to uncover that reason, I haven't a clue. We can't possibly approach every single pony in town until we find out what we're meant to—*do!*

*(During this last sentence, an advertising flyer blows into view is carried down toward the booth, and the camera cuts to them as it plasters itself across her face on the final word. She uses her magic to yank it loose.)*

**Rarity:** *(reading, as Applejack looks on)* "Please help us restore our long-lost but beloved tradition, the Midsummer Theater Revival. With a guest performance by local theater troupe, the Method Mares, as well as games, food, and much, much more—" *(Cut to Applejack and back as she continues.)* "—this event promises to bring our Bronclyn neighbors together and restore our sense of community, but there's so much to do and we need your help." Huh.

*(She pulls in a happy gasp and looks up from the page, flipping it to give Applejack a good look.)*

**Rarity:** Darling, this is it! The contact on the flyer is *Coco Pommel!* *(Close-up of Applejack.)*

**Applejack:** *(remembering)* Oh, right! *(stroking chin)* She's the one you got a job makin' costumes for that designer friend of yours. *(Zoom out to frame Rarity.)*

**Rarity:** Don't you see? *(magically folding flyer)* This must be why the map called us here! *(touching Applejack's chest)* Oh, and you were so worried. *(Laugh.)*

**Applejack:** Well, I suppose it's at least worth lookin' into. *(worried, looking around)* That is...

*(Overhead shot of the booth; the thoroughfare is as lively as before. Zoom out slowly.)*

**Applejack:** ...if we can ever get off this street corner.

*(Fade to black.)*

## Act Two

*(Opening shot: fade in to a group of apartment buildings, seen from across the street. Night has fallen, and a few windows are lit. Zoom in slowly.)*

**Coco Pommel:** *(voice over)* I can't believe you found my flyer.

*(Cut to a close-up of the earth pony, reading it over. A rack loaded with fabric rolls is visible behind her.)*

**Coco:** Quite a coincidence, don't you think?

*(Longer shot. She half-lies on an overstuffed cushion, facing a haunch-sitting Applejack and Rarity on a couch. The three are in Coco's living room, which is cluttered with design supplies and materials. Before the Ponyville pair stands a table set with a tray of sandwiches, a teapot, and a cup/saucer.)*

**Rarity:** Applejack and I were specifically summoned here to be of service. *(floating cup upward)* And you, my dear friend, are in need of help. *(Applejack snags a sandwich in her teeth and chows down.)* It's no coincidence, darling. It's fate! *(Sip.)*

**Applejack:** This Midsummer Theater Revival—what is it, exactly?

*(Now Coco straightens up on her perch and picks up a photo album lying on the floor.)*

**Coco:** An outdoor play held at the community park.

*(She opens it to show a couple of pages, the camera zooming in to a close-up of the single photograph on the left one. A stallion is on outdoor stage in a well-kept park, delivering a monologue for a rapt audience.)*

**Coco:** *(from o.s.)* Many moons ago, local theater troupes would perform—

*(Pan to one photo on the facing page; three foals, including a young Coco, are costumed to take roles in a pony version of The Wizard of Oz. With them is a bespectacled earth pony mare, Charity Kindheart, keeping an eye on the proceedings. Light yellow coat, vivid blue eyes behind red-framed glasses, beauty mark under the right one, two-tone blue-gray mane/tail with a few hairs sprung loose, violet jacket with lighter sleeve/hem accents and white fur at the collar; orange pearl necklace, cutie mark of a red fabric heart with two pins stuck into it.)*



**Coco:** *(from o.s.)* —and ponies in the neighborhood would help make the costumes— *(Pan to the page's other photo: Filly Coco, out of costume, painting a backdrop and wearing a few splotches.)* —and design set pieces—

*(Her mane is tied in braids for the costume picture, a loose ponytail for the painting one, and she does not wear her sailor-suit collar, red tie, or three-colored flower clip in either. Page flip: on the left, a stallion and mare on kitchen duty dish up soup and fruit for a customer.)*

**Coco:** *(from o.s.)* —prepare food to share during the performance. *(Cut to frame all three; the album is now propped on the table, and she stands alongside it.)*

**Applejack:** Y'all do look like you're enjoyin' each other's company. *(Rarity's aura turns a page.)* Kinda reminds me of Ponyville.

**Rarity:** It sounds lovely, darling.

**Coco:** It was... *(sadly)* ...up until several moons ago.

**Applejack:** What happened?

**Coco:** *(pointing to album, smiling)* That's Charity Kindheart.

*(Close-up of one photo: Filly Coco and three other foals stand next to Charity.)*

**Coco:** *(from o.s., pointing to her)* She was a well-known costume designer on Bridleway.

*(The hoof slides to another photo, which shows her on the stage, holding a bouquet of flowers and beaming at the audience's applause.)*

**Coco:** *(from o.s.)* She started the Midsummer Theater Revival as a way to share her passion for theater with the neighborhood.

*(Page flip; Charity stands before a cleaned-up Filly Coco, holding the familiar bloom in her teeth.)*

**Coco:** *(from o.s.)* No matter how busy she was— *(Pan to a second snapshot: she has tucked the flower into the youngster's mane.)* —she always made time for the Revival.

*(Closing the album, she begins to cross to the apartment's balcony.)*

**Coco:** But when she moved away to be closer to her grand-fillies, the neighborhood lost the special tradition she had started—

*(Cut to outside, a short distance beyond the railing; she steps out and leans her forelegs on it.)*

**Coco:** —and worse, the sense of community it fostered.

*(Pan/tilt down to the nearest intersection, still buzzing with activity at night even as it did in the day. As an elderly mare starts across the street, a stallion pulling a taxi carriage screeches to a halt to avoid hitting her.)*

**Mare 4:** Hey, I'm trottin' here!

*(She goes on, the stallion resuming his headlong rush once she has moved far enough to let him by. Inside the apartment, Rarity has traded her teacup for a sandwich.)*

**Applejack:** Nopony else stepped up to take over for Charity? *(Coco comes in from the balcony.)*

**Coco:** I've been trying to— *(closing doors)* —but I've just gotten a last-minute request to alter costumes for the cast of *My Fair Filly*, and I'm afraid I haven't made much progress. *(with growing panic)* Ooh...there's just so much to do to bring back the Midsummer Revival, and my flyers haven't attracted a single volunteer!

*(She pulls nervously at her face; now Rarity hops off the couch and crosses to her.)*

**Rarity:** Say no more! You finish up your work, and by this time tomorrow you'll be up to your mane in ponies who want to lend a hoof. *(Applejack joins them.)* Applejack and I will make sure of it.

**Coco:** You will? *(Big squeaky grin.)*

**Applejack:** You bet your boots we will!

**Coco:** *(chuckling nervously)* Oh, I don't wear boots. I find they chafe my calves when I walk. *(Long pause.)*

**Applejack:** *(dryly)* It's just an expression.

*(She and Rarity smile gently at Coco, who allows herself a blush and a big grin at having let this bit of slang go over her head. Dissolve to a close-up of Applejack and Rarity standing side by side on a sidewalk, the former equipped with a saddlebag full of flyers. Rarity addresses herself o.s.)*

**Rarity:** So you see, the Method Mares are only available on this one day—

*(Zoom out. They are standing at a newsstand whose proprietor, an earth pony stallion, is busy stacking papers on the counter. It is now the following day.)*

**Rarity:** —and we need all the help we can get with preparations. *(She grins as he sets out a bundle.)*

**Newsstand vendor:** Yeah, not a good time right now. *(A passing stallion lays down a coin and takes a paper; he chuckles.)* What am I sayin'? It's never a good time.

*(The two visitors turn glumly away as a copy floats across the screen. Behind its trailing edge, the view wipes to a popcorn cart; the earth pony mare working it brings up a full bag for a grinning stallion who has already put his money down. The sound of Rarity's throat clearing draws an annoyed over-shoulder glare from the vendor; as the customer leaves, zoom out to frame her standing just behind. Still farther back, Applejack offers the flyer in her teeth to a passing stallion, who pays no mind. They are standing near a set of aqueduct-style bridge in a park.)*

**Rarity:** Well, what do you think?

**Popcorn vendor:** I got my own problems.

*(Longer shot: a line of customers is waiting impatiently for service.)*

**Popcorn vendor:** You think I got hours to dedicate to somepony else's?

*(Away go the two would-be organizers. A bag of popcorn floats by; behind it, wipe to them looking hopefully a well-dressed, mustachioed dandy of an earth pony stallion in a meadow. He is sitting upright, with his hindquarters out of view.)*

**Dandy stallion:** *(stroking mustache)* Ah, yes. Charity's Midsummer Theater Revival. Such wonderful memories.

**Applejack:** So you'll help us?

**Dandy stallion:** *(laughing)* Don't be ridiculous. I run a very important oat and hay import/export business. Why, I can't spare even a moment for such things.

*(He drifts slowly o.s. to the sound of water splashing, and a longer shot discloses that he is now lying face up on a shallow, flat-bottom boat that is just large enough to accommodate him. Pan to follow his lazy journey across the stream in which he is floating—so much for "can't spare even a moment"—then dissolve to a close-up of a downcast Coco in her living room.)*

**Coco:** This is a nightmare. *(Cut to Rarity nearby.)*

**Rarity:** Oh, not at all, darling. *(She floats up a hat.)* It's quite lovely.

*(Obviously the two are talking at cross purposes. The chapeau is lowered again; cut to a close-up of Applejack, also in the room, on the start of the next line.)*

**Applejack:** I think she was talkin' about the Midsummer Theater Revival. *(Back to the others; Coco haunch-sits on the couch.)*

**Coco:** I've finished the alterations for *My Fair Filly*, but I've barely started the costumes for the revival and the Method Mares are coming to the park tomorrow for a costume fitting and rehearsal!

**Rarity:** Well, I could help you with the costumes.

**Coco:** But...what are we going to do about the rest? The park is in desperate need of repairs, and the sets still need to be built! *(She gnaws a hoof fearfully; cut to frame all three. Applejack sits alongside, her saddlebag gone.)*

**Applejack:** Well, I know a thing or two about buildin' and fixin' things. *(climbing down)* It's kinda, well, my thing. *(Coco smiles.)* Could be the reason the map called me here! *(Grin.)*

**Rarity:** *(to Coco)* You see, dear? We went out looking for volunteers when all the help you need is right here.

**Applejack:** *(crossing to her)* Uh-huh!

**Rarity:** The map wouldn't have chosen just Applejack and me if it was more than we could handle. *(Close-up of them.)* Everything is going to be just fine.

*(The view quickly swivels 180 degrees around an invisible vertical center pivot, presenting the same view of the pair—now standing outside and staring at whatever is ahead of them with great discomfort.)*

**Rarity:** *(dumbfounded)* Perhaps I spoke too soon.

*(Cut to their perspective, panning/cutting/tilting up slowly through the view that greets them: a wildly overgrown stretch of park land with badly deteriorated benches, a rearing-mare statue stained with moss and marred by climbing vines, a covered stage that looks as if it might be one hard wind away from a total collapse. Cut to behind all three mares, standing at the edge of this train wreck of a park, then to a close-up.)*

**Coco:** Oh, dear. You're right. Are you sure you can manage this by yourself?

**Applejack:** Well, there's a lot to do, but Rarity's right. *(pacing; all three smile)* The map wouldn't have called us here if we weren't up for the challenge. *(waving the others off)* You two go on and take care of the costumes. I'll see you at the dress rehearsal.

*(Off they go; once they are well out of visual range, Applejack lets a deep uncertainty play over her face and swallows hard at the sheer magnitude of the project sets in. Dissolve to a path through the park; she pushes a wheelbarrow along with her teeth, stops, and turns her pearly whites to the job of yanking up the weeds that border the route. One after another is uprooted and spat into the wheelbarrow, and a clock wipe marks the passage of time and shows it now piled high. The earth pony, now tired and dirty, wipes her forehead and looks out with a relieved smile that goes bye-bye in no time flat. A zoom out reveals why: the weeds cover a vast expanse of the park, and she has managed to clear only a few square feet of ground. She puts a hoof wearily to her forehead.)*

*(The wheels of a "cylinder" lawnmower roll past in extreme close-up, followed by four badly scuffed orange-tan hooves; behind the lot, the view wipes to a ground-level view of the out-of-control grass. The mower makes a return trip, then is steered along a straightaway to get the weeds lining it. Applejack's hat catches on a low-hanging branch and winds up dangling from its end for a second before it falls off and drops o.s. Here she comes with the mower; there comes the sound of cloth shredding, in time with a burst of brown fragments from ground level, and she stops with a horrified stare. A bend and nip allow her to bring up the tattered remains of her hat in her teeth; she stares dully at the wreck.)*

*(Wipe to an extreme close-up of a small weed growing in the middle of a path. Applejack's hooves step up to it, and she bends down—now wearing the hat—to bite on it and yank. The first attempt yields no results, but on the second, the stem stretches and finally breaks, causing her to lose her balance and tumble backwards. She slams into the base of the park's statue and topples onto her belly, looking up dazedly as the whole thing totters and finally comes down toward her. A last-second roll gets her in the clear, but the ruined hat falls off her head and gets mashed into the grass when the statue slams down dead center on it. Applejack stands up woozily, a bit of*

*plant life now matted into her mane, and lets her head sink toward the ground upon taking in the damage to both the sculpture and her headwear.)*

*(A new scene falls into view as if it were a cut tree falling over: Applejack walking to one of the benches set up in front of the stage. Wearing the hat, now filthy as well as shredded, she removes it and sets it on one bench; as she wipes sweat from her brow, the seat cracks and breaks under the minor added weight. As she glumly regards the collapse, her tail sags of its own volition until it drags in the grass.)*

*(A paintbrush is drawn across the screen in two broad strokes, the view wiping behind its passage to show a paint-splattered, re-hatted Applejack using a brush in her teeth to paint a scenery flat. Zoom out to a long shot of the stage area as Rarity and Coco approach, a rack of outfits held in the unicorn's magic. Applejack drops the brush back into the paint can.)*

**Applejack:** I know it looks bad, but I'm movin' as fast as I can.

*(One front hoof comes down squarely in the can; she tries in vain to dislodge it and glowers over the misstep.)*

**Rarity:** Don't worry. We've still got plenty of time. Everything's going to be—

**Male voice:** *(British accent)* Um, excuse me.

*(All three turn slightly frightened eyes toward the sound; pan quickly to a quartet of earth ponies on a nearby hilltop. These are the members of the Method Mares troupe, from left to right as follows. Mare; light pink coat; deep blue eyes; two-tone grayish-purple mane/tail loosely tied back; light gray turtleneck; deep magenta beret that also appears as her cutie mark. Stallion; light gray coat; short, two-tone darker gray mane/tail; dark gray turtleneck under a tan overcoat; heavy beard stubble; eyes hidden behind black sunglasses; cutie mark not visible due to camera angle. Mare; pink-violet coat; straight, two-tone bright pink mane/tail; turtleneck striped in white and dark blue; cutie mark of a gold star; dark blue cap; eyes also concealed by black sunglasses. Stallion; orange-tan coat; curly, two-tone red-pink mane/tail; violet turtleneck; light green eyes; cutie mark of two theater tickets. The first two of these are Raspberry Beret and Onstage, respectively; the other two will be referred to as Cap and Tickets. Onstage is the one who spoke.)*

**Onstage:** Is this where the Midsummer Theater Revival is supposed to be, *par cheance?*

*[Note: These last two words, taken from Old French, are the source for the English word "perchance."]*

*(Accompanied by the following. A gesture with a foreleg, revealing black hoof tips; lower the shade slightly to glance over them, showing dark brown eyes. Each troupe member has a British accent when he/she speaks.)*

**Raspberry:** Uh, we're here for the dress rehearsal.

**Coco:** Oh, yes! (*trotting to rack*) We've just put the finishing touches on the costumes.

**Tickets:** (*aside, to Cap*) At least *those* look professional.

(*Cap turns her head toward him on this line, giving a flash of violet eyes behind the opaque black lenses.*)

**Raspberry:** (*crossing to rack*) We'll do a dry run of the play first, and then the fitting.

(*The four move toward the stage, such as it is, as the camera zooms out to frame it. This shot frames Onstage's cutie mark as a pair of drama masks. Applejack has removed the paint can from her hoof, but a sudden mental flash throws her into a panic.*)

**Applejack:** No! Wait! (*Close-up of a ramp leading up on the stage; she continues o.s. as Raspberry climbs it.*) I haven't got a chance to—

(*Zoom out quickly to frame both of them and the entire structure, which begins to creak and sway in a most unwholesome manner. As Raspberry stares upward, paralyzed with fear, Applejack dives across to plow her off the stage just before the whole thing comes down in a cacophony of splintering wood and a cloud of dust. This sequence reveals a small beauty mark at the left corner of Raspberry's mouth, a detail not previously visible due to the camera angles. The haze clears to show them unharmed and lying on the grass; Applejack stands up, and both look back toward the others—Applejack worried, Raspberry indignant. Rarity comes out of her cringe, Coco takes her hooves down from her mouth, and the other three actors stare slack-jawed at the barely averted disaster. Cut to a long shot of the park.*)

**Applejack:** (*weakly*) —reinforce the stage yet.

(*Fade to black.*)

### Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to an overhead shot of the now-empty park and the ruined stage. Pan to bring Coco into view, gazing down despondently from her balcony, then cut to a head-on shot. Applejack and Rarity stand inside the apartment, visible through the open balcony doors, and Applejack has cleaned herself up. Coco gives a heavy sigh.*)

**Coco:** I just wanted to live up to Charity's example. (*She turns toward the pair.*) To bring my neighborhood together again. (*Gaze out again.*) But the park is still a mess, we haven't even thought about what refreshments to serve during the performance— (*Cut to behind her; she turns one more time.*) —and even if we had, we don't have a stage for the Method Mares to perform on. It's hopeless. Just...hopeless!

(*Accompanied by a front hoof stomp to emphasize the last words. Once again she pivots to look dejectedly over the street; pan/zoom out to put Applejack and Rarity in the fore.*)

**Rarity:** I don't understand. The map summoned us here to solve a friendship problem. We've clearly found it, but why did it send the two of us? Why not Twilight? (*pacing*) I'm sure she could've used her magic to transform this park in an instant.

*(Accompanied by a stomp of her own on the last word, muffled somewhat by the living room rug.)*

**Applejack:** I've been thinkin' the same thing. I mean, I can at least see why you're here. Coco's your friend, and you have an eye for costumes and all. But me? I was never gonna be able to finish a project this big. (*Rarity falls dramatically back into her forelegs.*)

**Rarity:** (*hamming it up*) We'll return to Ponyville as failures! (*starting to cry, makeup running*) Why must this be, Applejack? Why? (*She gets upright...*) Why? Why?

*(...and promptly gets her mouth corked with one of the farmer's hooves. The waterworks instantly stop, and all traces of the tear stains vanish.)*

**Applejack:** Now hold on there. I'm not suggestin' we pack up and go home.

*(Rarity tries to say something, but it comes out as a muffled, garbled mess due to the hoof still in her mouth. She shoves it away and tries again.)*

**Rarity:** Then what are you suggesting?

**Applejack:** I'm suggestin' we stop worryin' about what we *can't* do and start doin' what we *can*. (*The balcony; she steps out next to Coco, followed by Rarity.*) I think I've got a plan. It won't be anythin' big or fancy, but it'll be somethin'. (*She and Rarity smile.*) And somethin's gotta be better than nothin', right?

**Coco:** (*listlessly*) I suppose so.

**Applejack:** That's the spirit! (*Smiles run away from her and Rarity.*) Sorta.

*(To the sound of a nail being hammered in, the view dissolves to an extreme close-up of this very task. Once the head is flush with the board, cut to Applejack on the job, putting the finishing touches on a new, curtained stage. A tool belt is strapped around her midsection, and she tucks the hammer into one of its pouches before addressing herself o.s.)*

**Applejack:** All right, y'all!

*(Long shot of the structure, which has been built at the park entrance so that it fronts directly onto the sidewalk. A marquee of tragedy/comedy masks has been added up top, and a light hangs from either end of the proscenium. It is now sunset, and Rarity and Coco stand watching.)*

**Applejack:** It's ready!

*(The Manehattan mare beams at the sight, receiving a smile from her Ponyville friend, and the builder jumps down just before Onstage pokes his head out through the curtains. He has shed his shades, and the edge of his shirt collar indicates that he has also changed his clothes.)*

**Onstage:** *(whispering)* Should we go ahead and start?

*(Coco nods placidly as Applejack steps out next to her and Rarity, having jettisoned the hardware; now the thespian pulls his head back and the curtain slides open. The scene is an office; he stands behind a desk as Raspberry enters. All of the scenery and props consist of wooden flats that have been roughly cut and painted. Onstage has donned a light gray suit jacket, dark gray dress shirt, and black necktie, while Raspberry now wears the mane/tail style, glasses, fur-lined jacket, and necklace that match the appearance of Charity in Coco's album. Both have sheet of paper taped over their cutie marks—a dollar sign for Onstage, Charity's pinned red heart for Raspberry. A rack of dresses is pushed into view from backstage with the aid of a long hooked cane.)*

**Raspberry:** Excuse me. I'm Charity Kindheart. I'm here about the open design position. *(gesturing to rack)* I brought some samples of my work.

*(The edge of the stage, framing the three spectators now haunch-sitting in front of it. A passing mare aims a funny look toward the performance.)*

**Raspberry:** *(from o.s.)* I'm sorry I'm late. I had the hardest time finding my way here. *(voice breaking; the newcomer sits to watch)* I just moved here— *(Back to her.)* —and I keep getting mixed up by the street names! I had a map, but I dropped it in a puddle— *(crying)* —which only made the street names harder to read!

*(Stage edge again; an earth pony mare walks past with her pegasus daughter, who stops and frantically gestures for her to do the same.)*

**Onstage:** *(from o.s.)* I see.

**Filly:** *(to her mother)* What is that?

**Mother:** I don't know, sugar. Looks like some kind of play.

**Filly:** Well, can we stay and watch it, please? Please, can we? *(hovering up to her level)* Can we?

**Mother:** *(pushing her gently down)* Oh, all right. *(smiling)* I suppose we could stay for a minute.

*(Now Tickets enters the scene. Glasses, short-sleeved light green sweater marked with an alligator head, fake cutie mark of a baseball.)*

**Tickets:** Excuse me— *(bowing, gesturing behind himself)* —but your next appointment is here. *(Mother and daughter join the audience.)*

**Onstage:** All right. Send him in. *(Tickets backs offstage; he turns to Raspberry.)* I'm sorry, but based on these samples, I just don't think this is the place for you. *(She snaps upright with a lung-bursting gasp.)* Don't get me wrong. These clothes are all exquisite and well-made, but more theatrical than *avant-garde*. Have you considered costume design? I have a contact on



Bridleway. If you're interested— (*Raspberry drops to her haunches with a grateful smile.*) —I can put you in touch with him. (*Pause.*) And scene.

*(The curtains close, and a murmuring of voices causes Applejack/Rarity/Coco to glance behind themselves. They are rewarded with the sight of quite a few ponies who have paused their chase through the streets of Manehattan to see what is going on. All three turn their eyes back to the stage with satisfied smiles; now the curtains open for a new scene—Cap, wearing a flowered hat and pearl necklace and sitting on her haunches in the park. She tosses seed from a real bag to the prop birds before her, and a real cane is hooked onto a nearby prop bench. A bit of makeup has been applied to make her appear older, and her tail hides her taped-on cutie mark for the moment; both it and her mane are in a slightly untidy curled style now. She turns to address Raspberry in an older-mare voice as the latter pushes a cart full of outfits into view with her head.)*

**Cap:** Charity, dear! Is that you? (*The birds “fly” away.*)

**Raspberry:** Hello, Mrs. Pearblossom. I didn't see— (*She exaggeratedly tosses a real cloth out of the cart.*) Oops!

*(It lands at the edge of the stage; cut to the mother and her filly, now watching raptly.)*

**Cap:** (*from o.s.*) Oh, let me help you, dear.

*(Back to the stage; now standing, she picks up a second fallen piece. Now the ersatz mark can be seen as a pear and flower.)*

**Cap:** Are these the costumes you've been working on?

**Raspberry:** Yes. (*Birds “fly” across.*) I was supposed to be finished by now, but there's just so much to do! (*pulling a third cloth from cart*) And I still have a few last-minute alterations to make before opening night! I'm sorry I couldn't get enough tickets for everypony in the neighborhood.

*(Long overhead shot of the stage and the slowly growing knot of spectators; pan slowly across.)*

**Raspberry:** (*hidden by roof*) I hope Mr. Pearblossom wasn't too disappointed.

*(The stage again; now Cap is leaning on her cane.)*

**Raspberry:** I know *Trotter on the Roof* is one of his favorites.

**Cap:** Oh, my dear filly, don't worry about that. (*touching Raspberry's shoulder*) We're so proud of you. We shall be with you in spirit!

**Raspberry:** Thank you! You've all made me feel so welcome here, and have become like family to me.

*(Cut to the crowd; now an earth pony stallion, a construction worker, walks up. The popcorn vendor from Act Two has pulled her cart in behind them all.)*

**Raspberry:** *(from o.s.)* I just wish I could share this experience with you and the others.

**Worker:** *(to the nearest spectator)* Uh, what's goin' on?

**Spectator:** It's the Midsummer Theater Revival. The Method Mares are performing.

**Worker:** *(smiling, sighing)* The Revival. Hm. Yeah, my pop used to bring me.

*(He takes a seat on his haunches and removes his hard hat, holding it over his chest. Dissolve to a stretch of the city skyline, the sun slowly sinking behind the buildings and darkening the sky.)*

**Cap:** *(voice over)* It's so nice of you to put on this play for the neighborhood. *(Cut to a slow pan through the crowd.)*

**Raspberry:** *(from o.s.)* I couldn't have done it without everypony's help.

*(Up on the stage; she runs a length of real fabric through a prop sewing machine as Cap watches, leaning on her cane.)*

**Raspberry:** I know it's not Bridleway, but—

**Cap:** *(waving her off)* Oh, pish-tosh. It's perfect, dear.

*(The crowd again; a filly with a balloon prances cheerfully across behind the popcorn vendor. Pan to follow her and stop on an elderly mare easing her way up through the rows with the help of a walker. A stubble-chinned business stallion steps aside to make room for her.)*

**Mare 5:** *(laughing)* Oh! You're such a dear. Thank you. This is so nice. Haven't seen the neighborhood this friendly since Charity moved away.

*(Coco blushes at these words, and Rarity puts a gentle hoof to her chest before trading a high five with Applejack. The crowd applauds and cheers as all four Method Mares take the stage and bow, the scenery having been reset to the office and Tickets having donned a gray suit jacket, white shirt, and red tie.)*

**Onstage:** Thank you, fillies and gentle-colts. Please give a warm welcome to the one who made this entire event possible—our neighbor, Coco Pommel!

*(The unexpected honoree grins bashfully as the crowd voices its high opinion of her. Within seconds, they have closed ranks and hoisted her overhead, passing her from hoof to hoof and setting her on the stage. Onstage takes a step back to make room for her; she clears her throat before speaking.)*

**Coco:** Thank you all so much for coming. The Midsummer Theater Revival was always something that meant so much to me, and it seems it means quite a lot to all of you as well. *(Close-up.)* I really can't take all the credit, though.

*(Zoom out; Rarity enters from the wings, followed by a shakily grinning Applejack.)*

**Coco:** My dear friends Rarity and Applejack helped me ever so much.

*(Unicorn bows, earth pony blushes and somehow manages to wave without keeling over, and the crowd goes wild for some seconds.)*

**Rarity:** Oh, darling, please, it was just a few costumes.

**Applejack:** *(blushing again)* Aw, shucks. I just happen to be good with a hammer, is all. To be honest, we had much bigger plans to start. *(Longer shot; her voice echoes slightly over the crowd.)* When those fell through, we decided to simplify. This here was the result.

**Rarity:** *(echoing)* Oh, don't be so modest. *(Close-up; echo ends.)* Coco and I were lost.

**Coco:** You bet your boots we were!

*(She winks at Applejack, who returns it. Dissolve to a pan through the crowd, now broken up into a multitude of happy conversations; the Method Mares are scattered among them, having changed into their civilian clothes and mane/tail styles and removed their prop cutie marks. Stop on Applejack and Rarity as an earth pony mare walks up to them, accompanied by the dandy stallion who blew them off in Act Two.)*

**Mare 6:** We just wanted to say how much we enjoyed the Midsummer Theater Revival, and how much it inspired us.

**Applejack:** Oh, yeah?

**Dandy stallion:** I used to think that to help my community, I had to do something big. *(Chuckle.)* And let's face it, in this day and age, who has the time for such a commitment? But here, you did something as simple as building a stage and putting on a play, and— *(Another chuckle; he gestures around himself.)* —look at how it's brought everypony together.

**Mare 6:** I saw Coco's flyers for volunteers, but didn't think anything I'd have time to do would be that useful. *(Close-up of Applejack and Rarity; she continues o.s.)* Now I wish I'd offered to help. *(Back to her.)* Even if it was just pulling a few weeds or planting a few flowers.

**Applejack:** Not sure if you noticed, but— *(gesturing toward park)* —the park is far from bein' fixed up.

*(Cut to a slow pan across the collapsed stage and weed-choked audience area.)*

**Applejack:** *(from o.s.)* I imagine if you look around, you'll find there's lots of little ways for you to get involved in changin' this place for the better.

*(On the second half of this line, cut to just outside the sidewalk fence and tilt down toward the sidewalk, picking out the glut of weeds and the stains on the concrete from old spills. The camera then cuts back to the four after she finishes.)*

**Mare 6:** And I will!

**Dandy stallion:** *(as both leave, touching his hat brim)* And I don't think we'll be alone.

*(Applejack's and Rarity's cutie marks flare up after they have gone. Extreme close-up of the three apples, then zoom out to frame both eyeing their own haunches—Applejack with a grin, Rarity with some surprise that shifts into a tranquil smile.)*

**Applejack:** *(rearing up)* Yahoo! *(They laugh and embrace.)* We did it! *(Rarity gasps and pulls loose; the marks go quiet.)*

**Rarity:** I understand now! It all makes perfect sense! *(She trots purposefully o.s.)*

**Applejack:** *(puzzled)* Huh?

*(Her confusion grows as the familiar magic aura envelops her mangled hat and lifts it away. It is dropped into a handy trash can, the camera zooming out to show it next to the hat vendor's cart from Act One. Rarity passes some money over to the heavyset stallion, who is in a much better mood than when they first ran afoul of him.)*

**Rarity:** *(levitating two hats off the cart)* I know why the map called you here!

*(One of them is an exact match for the one she threw out; the other is stacked on top of it. This extra one is returned to the shelf.)*

**Applejack:** You do? *(She smiles as the brown one settles itself on her head—a perfect fit.)*

**Rarity:** If Twilight had used her magic to fix the park— *(Minor adjustment.)* —it wouldn't have fixed the real problem—which is that these Manehattan ponies didn't think they had time to do something for their community.

*(Her perspective on the end of this: Applejack looking out at the display of goodwill among the spectators.)*

**Rarity:** But by building that stage and making sure the play went on— *(Cut to frame both.)* —you showed them that just by doing something small, you can make a big difference!

**Applejack:** Well, I'll be!

**Rarity:** *(stepping closer, linking a foreleg with Applejack's)* Seems you have more in common with the Manehattan ponies than you thought. *(Big grin.)*

**Applejack:** *(chuckling)* But all the same... *(They start off down the sidewalk.)* ...I'd sure like to head back to Ponyville on the next train. I want to check in with Apple Bloom and find out how the Sisterhooves Social turned out.

**Rarity:** Oh, absolutely, my dear. *(She stops short and points ahead, suddenly horrified.)* Just as soon as I stop that pony in the shop over there from purchasing that dreadfully hideous scarf! *(addressing herself across the street)* STOOOOOP!! *(galloping away)* You're making a terrible mistake!

*(Applejack just sighs good-naturedly and crosses one foreleg over the other. Fade to black.)*

*(The usual closing theme does not accompany the credits. In its place is the bluegrass-style melody that played over Applejack's solo efforts to clean up the park on her own. B flat major,*

*lively 4, banjo/drum/tuba; starting on the fifth bar, a faint, repeating metallic clang comes in, as of a pickaxe striking rock.)*