

## One Little Peek

By Fioriboy

A certain young filly by the name of Sweetie Belle sighed for the umpteenth time as she leaned against the window still, watching the residents of Ponyville go about their daily business in a feeble attempt to keep herself entertained.

For the most part, it had been an ordinary day in Ponyville. It was the middle of autumn, and the once bright green trees that dotted the landscape were already starting to wither and turn red. It had been a week or so since the Nightmare Night celebration, and many ponies were still taking down their decorations and cleaning up the countless sweetie wrappers that littered the street. The weather was unbearably dull, with every inch of sky covered up by clouds, creating the impression of there being an endless white void that sucked out all the excitement in the world. It didn't get your blood boiling like a blisteringly hot summer day, or scare you like a terrifying thunderstorm. Depressing was probably the best way to describe it, but even then that implied that it was invoking some kind of emotion, when in actuality it had more of a draining effect that left you as nothing more than an apathetic shell. And if one pony was suffering from this effect more so than any other, it would have to be the small white filly currently gazing out of her bedroom window.

With her parents on vacation in Manehattan, Sweetie Belle once again found herself spending the week at Rarity's house, much to her big sister's dismay. After all, for the past few weeks she had been working hard on a brand new dress for an extremely important client, and the last thing she wanted was to worry about keeping her little sister amused as she made the final adjustments to her latest masterpiece. Normally, this wouldn't be that big a problem, seeing as the young filly was keen to spend some time with her fellow Cutie Mark Crusaders. But sadly, both her friends were occupied with other matters, with Applebloom visiting a relative in Appleloosa and Scootaloo bedridden with the flu. So for the past few days, she had to find other ways to entertain herself.

It wasn't too hard at first. Twilight had lent her a book to read, Pinkie Pie had invited her to yet another one of her parties and even Rarity gave her some glue and a few spare materials to do whatever she wanted with. But sadly, it was only a matter of time before she found herself growing bored once again. By the second night she had already finished Twilight's book, Pinkie Pie had recently become too preoccupied with work to host any more parties. And whilst she had been having a lot of fun working on a collage for School, she ended up using way too much glue and ran out early, leaving her work both unfinished and stickier than she originally intended it to be. So for the past hour or so she found herself staring half-heartedly out of the window, praying that something interesting would finally happen. Anything really would suffice.

A plague of parasprites, another monster attack, anything was more interesting than sitting around in the most boring house in Equestria.

Although, now that she thought about it, that wasn't entirely true. There was one thing about the house that had always intrigued her. One room that she had always been curious about, partially because it was the only part of the house which Rarity strictly forbade her from ever visiting. For as long as she could remember, Sweetie Belle had always wanted to know what it was like in Rarity's cellar. The only pony who was ever allowed to go down there was Rarity herself, with the occasional exception of especially important clients. Apparently all that was down there was a bunch of dresses that Rarity considered to be her "finest work", but for whatever reason nobody but the most important VIPs was allowed to go anywhere near them. Whenever Sweetie Belle asked why, the only reply she ever got was that Equestria "just wasn't ready" for what was apparently the Magnum Opus of her career. To this day, Sweetie Belle still wasn't sure how a simple dress could be so mind-blowing that the whole of Equestria wasn't ready to accept it's overwhelming brilliance. The very thought that her big sister was holding back her best work was more than enough to make Sweetie Belle anxious to see what it looked like.

So, with nothing better to do, the young filly decided to finally go take a look. After all, surely one teeny-weeny little peek couldn't hurt? As long as she was careful, Rarity would never even know she was down there. And in any case, if she did happen to find anything really cool she would respect her sister's privacy and not tell anyone about it. Well, except for her fellow Cutie Mark Crusaders of course, but she was pretty sure neither of them would tell anyone else.

First things first, she had to make sure that her sister was preoccupied. Last thing she wanted was to get caught red handed, especially considering how high-strung Rarity was at the moment thanks to all the stress she was under. Apparently this client was notoriously hard to please, going as far as to claim that even Hoity Toity was nothing more than a tasteless hack with unforgivably low standards. As much as she admired her sister's talents, she couldn't help but wonder whether or not even Rarity could live up to this client's high expectations.

After quickly checking to see if she was working on anything upstairs, it didn't take long for the young filly to find her sister in the main workshop desperately adding the last few finishing touches to the dress she'd been working on for so long. Even though she wasn't one of those fancy fashion ponies from Canterlot, even Sweetie Belle could tell that it was truly one of Rarity's best is ages. The expert stitching, the fantastic patterns, the striking colour. Everything about it was absolutely picture perfect. The thought that Rarity didn't consider this to be her finest work instead of the mystery dresses she kept in her cellar just made the young filly all the more curious to see what was down there. First things first though.

“Hey Rarity! Do you mind if I—”

“Hush Sweetie Belle, can’t you tell that I’m busy? Starlight Skies will be here any minute now, and this dress isn’t remotely ready yet!”

“But Rarity, I was just wondering if it would be okay if I—”

“Yes yes, sure, go right ahead! Whatever makes you happy. Just PLEEEASE leave me alone, okay?”

Sweetie Belle grinned. “Whatever you say sis!”

On that note, the young filly quickly turned around and skipped down the hallway, stopping just as she reached the staircase that led down to Rarity’s cellar. For a moment she just stood there, gazing down at the simple wooden door fifteen steps below. Who knows what secrets were being kept down there, just waiting to be discovered. Well, her sister of course, but after spending years waiting for the day that Rarity would finally let her take a peek the young filly could no longer contain her curiosity.

Just as she was about to make her way down, a sudden meow caught her by surprise, causing her to let out a quiet squeak of fright before realising that it was just Opal. The white cat was staring at her disapprovingly, almost as if she knew that Sweetie Belle was going against Rarity’s wishes. It was surprisingly chilling in a way, and for a brief moment Sweetie Belle almost considered turning back and forgetting about the whole idea. But in the end, she shrugged off the thought. After all, Opal was just a cat! It wasn’t like she could tell Rarity on her, right?

“Shh... This is just between you and me, alright?” she whispered jokingly to Opal, who meowed nonchalantly before trotting off to find something more interesting to observe.

“There’s a good kitty!” whispered the young filly, and after checking one last time that her sister definitely wasn’t watching, she quietly began to make her way down the staircase. With every step down, there came a loud audible creak that made the curious filly wince, knowing full well that it would only take one mistake for Rarity to realise what she was up to. As she neared closer and closer to the door, doubts began to flood her mind. What if this was a really bad idea? Who knows how her sister would react if she ever found out that she had invaded her privacy like this? She remembered how angry Rarity had been when she printed passages from her diary in the Foal Free Press, so she could only imagine how hurt she would be if she ever found out. Just one little peek, that’s all she would need to satisfy her curiosity.

Eventually, after what felt like forever had passed, she found herself facing the door that stood between her and Rarity’s supposed masterpieces. She

gulped, briefly considering the idea of heading back before shaking the thought off again.

"Well, here goes nothing..."

She took a deep breath, extended her hoof towards the door, and slowly turned the handle...

...Only to find that the door was locked. Drat, probably should have seen that coming.

It was at that point that the front door bell rang, causing the young filly to leap out of her skin with fright. Putting her curious thoughts on hold for now, she quickly made her way back up stairs, briefly glancing back down at the cellar door before moving on to see what was so special about this client Rarity was so worked up about. By the time she reached the main workshop, Rarity was already in the process of showing off her latest creation, her client briefly glancing at the young filly before turning her attention back to the dress Rarity had made for her.

Whilst Sweetie Belle had never even heard of this Starlight Skies before, she could tell just by looking at her that she wasn't just any ordinary unicorn. The snow-white mare stood tall and proud, with a long golden mane that had been washed and groomed to the point of perfection. She wore a long indigo cape made from the shiniest silk Sweetie Belle had ever laid her eyes upon, embroidered with numerous gems and spectacular flower patterns. But most notable of all was the pair of round red-tinted sunglasses she wore, which went perfectly with the red beret she wore upon her head.

However, despite all the fashion accessories she was wearing, there was something about her that bothered Sweetie Belle to no end. Something about her demeanour that gave off a sense of smug arrogance that only the most uptight Canterlot ponies could pull off. Something about the way she had a constant look of disinterest about her, despite the fact that any other pony would be in awe at the work of art Rarity had hand crafted just for her. As much as Sweetie Belle hoped that she would be impressed by her sister's work, it was pretty clear that even a miracle probably wouldn't impress a pony as stuck up as this one.

"So, what do you think?" asked Rarity, a bead of sweat dripping from her brow.

For a moment, Starlight said nothing as she continued to observe the dress Rarity had prepared, her eyes drifting up and down as she studied it intensely. Just looking at her take her time made Sweetie Belle squirm, the tension gradually building up until she finally lifted a hoof to adjust her glasses.

"Hmm... I'm not sure." she said in an unimpressed tone of voice.

Rarity gulped, her smile growing more nervous with each passing second.  
"N-Not sure? About what exactly?"

"Well, everything really. The patterns are rather uninspired, and azure isn't really my colour. How long did you say this took to make?"

"Um..." Rarity began, not really expecting the question. "...Several weeks?"

"Really? It looked to me as though it had been thrown together at the very last minute. To be quite frank, I've seen cheap birthday party outfits that have had more care and effort put into them than these drab overalls."

Shocked and enraged, Sweetie Belle opened her mouth to say something in defence of her sister, but she just couldn't think of anything. She was just as speechless about what Starlight was saying as Rarity was.

"Hmm, you know what, I'm rather unimpressed. Disappointed really. After all the hype I was at least expecting something passable, but from the looks of things all I've done is waste my time in coming here."

Sweetie Belle couldn't believe what she was hearing. How dare she say that! Did she have any idea just how much effort Rarity had put into that dress? How much time she had spent perfecting it, only to be torn apart by the most cold-hearted pony Sweetie Belle had ever seen.

That said, considering how harshly she was being criticised, Rarity seemed to be taking it surprisingly well. She still somehow managed to maintain a smile, even as Starlight vocally ripped her to shreds. If anything, it was actually somewhat unnerving. The way she barely bat an eyelid as Starlight detailed everything she thought was wrong about the dress she'd spent nearly a month working on. At first Sweetie Belle assumed that it just didn't faze her, but then she remembered how tense Rarity had been beforehand. How stressed she was over making sure that the dress was absolutely perfect. No, Rarity couldn't possibly be okay with this. Not after all the hard work she had put into it.

"Anyway, I should be off now. I've got better things to do with my time..."

"W-Wait!" called Rarity, stopping Starlight just as she was turning to leave.

"What is it now?"

"I... Okay, I can see that you're only interested in the very best. Which is fine, of course, nothing wrong with high expectations! Now that you mention it, the dress is a little tacky..."

Tacky? Since when would Rarity ever describe her own work as tacky?

"Sooo, if this isn't to your taste, perhaps I should show you where I keep the REAL masterpieces."

Starlight paused, her eyebrow rising with curiosity. "Really? And are these supposed masterpieces better than this dull excuse for a kitchen apron?"

"Oh goodness, yes! Why, they're some of my finest work yet! It won't take longer than a second to show you, I promise."

The fashion pony pondered for a moment, wondering whether or not it would be worth giving this talentless pony a second chance to impress her. Eventually, she shrugged and turned to face Rarity. "Alright, fine, this better be interesting."

"Oh, don't worry, it certainly will..." said Rarity, who then turned to face her sister. "Oh Sweetie Belle, could you be a dear and go pick up some cupcakes from Sugercube Corner?"

"Uh, sure Rarity," replied Sweetie Belle, slightly disappointed that she wouldn't get a chance to see these masterpieces as well.

After quickly putting on her saddle bag and making sure she had enough bits for the cupcakes Rarity wanted, she took one last glance at her sister as she guided her guest down the cellar stairs before leaving the boutique.

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"Thank you Mrs Cake!"

"No problem dear, feel free to stop by any time you want!"

"Will do!" replied Sweetie Belle as she gently placed the box of cupcakes in her bag, making sure not to accidentally drop them. "By the way, I don't suppose you happen to have any spare glue, do you?"

"Hmm... I don't think so, no."

"Oh, nevermind..." replied the young filly, who zipped up her bag and turned towards the door. "...Anyway, thanks again for the cupcakes!"

And on that note, she left the bakery, blissfully making her way back home. It was dusk by the time she had brought the cupcakes Rarity wanted, and the sun was already beginning to set. The once busy streets were gradually getting emptier as the residents of Ponyville returned to their homes, with only a few making good use of what little sunlight was left.

As she made her way past the spa that Rarity loved to visit so often, she

couldn't help but overhear a conversation between two teenage mares that caught her attention.

"So, like, did you hear about Wok Gan?"

"Yeah, isn't he like, still missing and stuff?"

"Yeah, it's really weird. One month ago he was, like, one of the biggest fashion ponies in Trottingham, then one day he like, just totally disappears. No pony has any idea where he is!"

"Omigosh, that is so weird... OH, have you listened to Sapphire Shore's latest album?"

"Omigosh, I totally have, and it's AMAZING!"

It was at that point that Sweetie Belle lost interest in the conversation. Nevertheless, the name Wok Gan definitely rang a bell. Hadn't he gone to see Rarity last month? He must have seen her not too long before he disappeared. How strange. Probably just a coincidence, but still.

It was dark by the time Sweetie Belle made it back to Rarity's house, and the young filly couldn't be happier to be back. After listening to all the things Starlight Skies had said to her sister, the first thing she wanted to do was give her a big hug to cheer her up. It wouldn't surprise her if she came home to find Rarity curled up on the sofa crying her heart out.

Which is why she was even more surprised to find Rarity washing something in the kitchen whilst humming a cheery little tune. After all she went through, Sweetie Belle assumed that she would at least be feeling somewhat melancholy. But if it weren't for the fact that she was right there when Starlight insulted her she would have assumed that everything went completely fine. Then again, maybe she was right about Rarity not being phased after all?

Well, only one way to find out.

"Rarity, I'm baaack! Is, uh, *she* still around?" asked Sweetie Belle.

"Evening Sweetie Belle! No, she left not too long ago. Said something about attending some prestigious party in Canterlot."

"Oh... So, where should I put the cupcakes?"

"Hmm, cupcakes? Oh yes, right! Just place them on the kitchen table, would you darling?"

Sweetie Belle paused for a moment, a thought briefly crossing her mind. Why had Rarity wanted cupcakes in the first place again? She couldn't remember her ever bringing them up earlier, and it wasn't as if they were celebrating some special occasion. Did Rarity suddenly just feel peckish for cupcakes or something?

Shrugging off the thought for now, she gently placed the cupcakes on the kitchen table as her sister asked. As she turned to face Rarity, she couldn't help but notice that the object she was washing happened to be a pair of scissors of all things. Not that there was anything odd about that. At least, she didn't think there was anything odd about it. It wasn't the first time she had seen Rarity wash scissors before, but at the same time she couldn't think of anyone else who did. Then again, who else did she know who used scissors on a regular basis? In any case, right now she was more concerned with Rarity's state of mind than she was with her washing habits.

"Um, Rarity... Are you okay?"

"Why, of course I am Sweetie Belle! Whatever made you think otherwise?"

"Well, it's just... After what Starlight Skies said..."

Rarity began to laugh, cutting off Sweetie Belle's sentence before she had the chance to finish it.

"Oh Sweetie Belle, you really shouldn't worry about such things! It's hardly the first time I've ever had to deal with a harsh critic, and it probably won't be the last time either. Oh well, that's art for you Sweetie Belle! You just can't please everypony..."

Rarity paused for a moment, placing the scissors on the counter as she turned to face her sister.

"Still, on the bright side, I'm one step closer to finishing my piece de resistance! Mark my word Sweetie Belle, once my upcoming masterpiece is finished, everypony in Equestria will know my name!"

Sweetie Belle smiled nervously. As happy as she was that Rarity was taking this well, she couldn't help but feel as though her sister was hiding something. She just seemed too happy for someone who was on the receiving end of such scathing criticism. Maybe she was just trying to not let on how upset she was? Yeah, that was probably it. She couldn't think of any other reason why she would be in such high spirits all of a sudden.

"Anyway, so, what do you feel like having for tea?"

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It took a while for Sweetie Belle to fall asleep that night.

A myriad of thoughts kept her up until nearly three in the morning. Thoughts such as Wok Gan, the fashion pony from Trottingham who disappeared a month ago. And the way Rarity seemed so calm when Starlight was tearing into her. Eventually those, these thoughts subsided and Sweetie Belle was



able to catch some shuteye.

That is, until she was awoken at six in the morning by the sound of a cart stopping just outside the house. She peered through the bedroom window to see who it was, her vision blurry from having literally just woken up. It was a fairly large cart, probably one used for delivery purposes, but she couldn't tell what the contents were due to the fact that there was a large dirty brown sheet covering them up.

What she did notice though was her sister Rarity talking to a mule, exchanging some bits and waving him farewell before he swiftly moved on with the cart. If it weren't for the fact that she was desperate to go back to sleep, Sweetie Belle would have been curious as to why Rarity was awake so early. The sun wasn't even up yet! That said, all she could think about right now was taking advantage of what little night she had left before she herself had to get up. She'd ask Rarity why she was up so early in the morning when she was feeling less sleepy.

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Once she was finally up, the first thing Sweetie Belle did was head downstairs to the main workshop to see what her sister was up to, and sure enough she found her working hard on her next big project.

"Morning Rarity," she yawned, still feeling a little bit drowsy.

"Afternoon Sweetie Belle, haven't you noticed what time it is?"

"Huh... Oh yeah, hehe." replied the young filly, only now noticing that it was nearly two in the afternoon. Seeing as she didn't want to beat around the bush, she decided to get straight to the point.

"I, uh, couldn't help but notice that a delivery cart parked outside our house this morning. What was that all about?"

"Oh, that was just a bunch of stuff I ordered that was supposed to arrive last night. Turns out there was a big roadblock that caused the traffic to grind to a standstill, so I ended up getting it a tad late. Speaking of which..."

On that note, Rarity picked up a tub full of glue and tossed it over to her sister.

"...Here you go! Now you can go finish that art's and crafts project you were so worked up about."

"Oh wow, thanks Rarity!" squeaked Sweetie Belle, pleasantly surprised that she would get to finish her project on time after all.

Her curiosity satisfied, she was about to head back upstairs to get back to

work when another thing caught her eye. It was tricky to tell from where she was standing, but she could almost swear that the indigo material Rarity was using was the same material that Starlight's cape was made from. She was pretty sure it wasn't the cape itself, though then again Rarity had cut it up so much that it was impossible to tell. Nevertheless, Sweetie Belle couldn't stop herself from asking about it anyway.

"Say Rarity, where did you get that material from?"

Her sister stopped, her head slowly turning to face Sweetie Belle, the scissors she was levitating being held aloft for a few seconds before she suddenly went back to work.

"Oh, this? I got this from the delivery cart you saw last night. Marvellous, isn't it?"

"Uh, yeah..." replied Sweetie Belle.

"Ahuh, and it will look even more marvellous once I've finished my next project. Until then, could you do me a quick favour?"

"Um, sure? What is it?"

"Could you kindly take these to the laundry room?" said Rarity, indicating a basket full of dirty clothes.

"Oh, sure thing." replied the young filly, who was more than eager to lend her sister a hand.

"Good, and don't worry, there aren't any priceless one-of-a-kind sweaters this time."

As Sweetie Belle made her way towards the laundry room with the clothes, she still couldn't help but feel as though there was something Rarity wasn't telling her. No matter how hard she tried, she still couldn't shake the thought that her sister was keeping the whole truth to herself. She wasn't sure why that would be the case. After all, what could Rarity possibly know that's so terrible that she couldn't even tell her own baby sister?

It was at that point that Sweetie Belle realised that she had just passed the staircase that led down to the cellar, and after taking a quick glance down she couldn't help but notice that the door had been left open ajar. Strange, why hadn't Rarity made sure it was locked? Perhaps after she showed Starlight her "finest work" she simply forgot shut it behind her.

Either way, now that the one obstacle standing between her and the secrets of her sister's cellar was gone, Sweetie Belle couldn't help but take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity. After double checking to make sure

nobody was watching, the young filly began her decent. Slowly she crept down the stairs, being extra careful this time not to make any sudden loud noises. The closer she neared the door, the more nervous she was beginning to get. Now that she was so close to finding out what was in her sister's cellar her doubts from yesterday were beginning to flood back with twice as much ferocity. What if her sister found out? And even if she didn't, should she really be doing this in the first place? Rarity wanted it kept secret for a reason, so what if she ended regretting finding out what it is? Then again, what could possibly be down there she wouldn't want to know about? Besides, she doubted that she would ever get another opportunity quite like this, and there was simply no way she could back out now. This was her one and only chance, and deep down she knew that she would be more regretful if she didn't take advantage of it.

Eventually, she once again found herself standing just outside the door. Only this time, finding a way past the lock wouldn't be an issue anymore. All she needed to do was take one little peek, then head back upstairs and act like nothing happened. Simple as that.

In theory, anyway.

Strange. For some reason, a part of her couldn't help but be a little bit afraid. She wasn't sure why exactly, seeing as this was just a cellar after all. Sure it was a little dark and spooky, but really, what's the scariest thing she could possibly find? She was just nervous, that's all. And the longer she spent standing around, the more likely she was to turn back.

"Well... It's now or never."

Sweetie Belle took a deep breath, her heart racing with anticipation, and slowly poked her head through the door.

At first, she could barely see a thing. The room was poorly lit, with the only light source emanating from a handful of candles hanging here and there along the walls of what looked like a long corridor, on the other end of which hung a large red curtain. Once her eyesight adjusted to the darkness, she could make out the shapes of what at first looked like a dozen or so ponies lined up on either side of the corridor in a haphazard fashion, none of whom seemed to be moving an inch at the sight of this newcomer. It was a startling sight to say the least, although it soon became apparent that whatever they were she was pretty sure that they weren't alive. Or real ponies, for that matter. Hopefully. In any case, she couldn't see anything resembling a masterpiece just yet. As much as she wanted to turn back, deep down she knew that in order to satisfy her curiosity she would need to move in and take a closer look. So, after quickly looking back to make sure her sister wasn't watching, the young filly slowly made her way inside.

One of the first things she noticed as she entered the corridor was how

perfectly clean it was. Normally, you would expect cellars like this to be the filthiest part of the house, but this one looked as though it had been washed thoroughly from top to bottom. There was not one speck of dust, not one solitary cobweb. She could even just about see her reflection in the floorboards. If she didn't know any better, the corridor looked as though it had been cleaned as recently as the night before. Then again, this was Rarity's cellar after all, and Sweetie Belle knew all too well about her sister's obsession with cleanliness.

Upon closer inspection, she quickly deduced that the ponies were just mannequins dressed up in a variety of different outfits. Some wore top hats and suits; others wore elegant dresses and gowns. None of them however seemed to be wearing anything that struck Sweetie Belle as being particularly special. Just the usual kind of outfits Rarity would sell en masse to her normal customers. She was beginning to wonder whether or not there really was a secret in this cellar after all. All she had found so far was a bunch of mannequins, really clean floorboards and a big red curtain. There wasn't anything worthwhile at all, unless...

The curtain. What if the masterpiece was hidden behind it, in a secret chamber of some description?

Of course! That must be where Rarity kept her finest work! Her body shaking with excitement, Sweetie Belle quickly made her way over towards the red curtain, taking great care to not disturb any of the mannequins as she did so. This was it! This must be where the secret was being kept, she was sure of it!

However, as she finally reached the curtain her doubts from before slowly began to creep back. It wasn't too late to turn back and forget about the whole thing. She was almost certain by this point that whatever lay beyond this curtain was the work of art Rarity spoke of, and a part of her still felt really bad for going against her sister's wishes. Nevertheless, by this point she felt that she deserved to know. This is exactly what she wanted, right? The secret of Rarity's cellar was barely a few metres in front of her. After getting this far, it would be more insulting NOT to see what mysteries lay beyond this curtain.

And so, after taking yet another deep breath, the young filly slowly moved the curtain aside to take a look at what lay beyond.

The moment she laid her eyes upon what it was, her jaw practically dropped to the floor in shock. Out of all the things she was anticipating, never in a million years had she been expecting something like this!

"Sweetie Belle! What have I told you..."

The young filly leaped out of her skin, quickly turning around to find her sister Rarity standing in the doorway. Her face, half-illuminated in the darkness, looked more enraged than Sweetie Belle had ever thought possible.

“R-R-Rarity! I-I-I...”

“I thought I made it absolutely clear that you were NOT allowed down here...” she growled, slowly making her way towards the young filly.

“I’m sorry, I...”

“I expect you should be! I told you not to go lurking in my cellar, and here you are, doing exactly that!”

Sweetie Belle’s heart was a pumping, tears welling in her eyes as she found herself fearfully backing away from her sister.

“I-I didn’t mean to, I swear! I just wanted to take a quick peek, that’s all...”

At this point, Rarity was barely a few feet away, a furious look in her eyes as she neared ever so closer.

“Well, now that you know, what do you have to say about it?”

Sweetie Belle gulped as her sister towered over her, corning the little filly in the small chamber that the red curtain had been concealing. She was beginning to regret having ever come down here. She could see now why Rarity had forbidden her from looking in her cellar; see now why she only ever allowed certain ponies inside to look around. But despite how much she dearly wished to have never found out about it in the first place, by now there was definitely no turning back. She knew what Rarity’s secret was, and there was nothing she could do to unlearn it, no matter how much she desperately wanted to.

“Rarity, I... I don’t know what to say... This is one of the nicest things anyone has ever made for me!”

Right behind her was a small mannequin wearing one of the cutest little dresses Sweetie Belle had ever seen in her entire life, underneath which hung a tiny sign with the words “Happy cute-ceañera Sweetie Belle!” written on it.

“I... I’m sorry that I invaded your privacy Rarity. If I knew that you’d made this for when I finally get my cutie mark, then I never would have looked, I swear!”

Rarity sighed, her anger from before slowly subsiding. “Well, as much as I was hoping to surprise you with this, I’m glad to see that you like it. I wasn’t lying when I said that this was truly my finest work yet you know.”

On that note, Rarity was quickly taken aback when her sister leaped forward and enveloped her with a bear hug, which after a few awkward seconds she hesitantly returned.

“Oh thank you so much Rarity, thank you thank you THANK YOU!” squeaked the happy young filly, tears of joy flowing down her cheeks.

“Alright, there there Sweetie Belle. Just, promise me that you’ll never go noseying through my stuff again, okay?”

“Oh, I won’t Rarity! Cross my heart and hope to fly, stick a cupcake in my eye!”

Rarity couldn’t help but let out a small chuckle. “ Good. Now then, how about you and I head to Sweet Apple Acres? I hear Applebloom’s back from Appleoosa.”

With a bright smile on her face, Sweetie Belle quickly ran upstairs, eagerly looking forward to finally hanging out with her friends again.

As her sister left, Rarity briefly turned her attention back to Sweetie Belle’s dress, her lips forming a small grin as she closed the curtain before quickly following suit.

Well, good thing Sweetie Belle didn’t see where she had hidden her *other* masterpieces.

In all the excitement, the curious young filly had completely failed to notice that one of the many mannequins that littered the cellar happened to be wearing a distinctive pair of round red-tinted sunglasses, which went perfectly with the red beret that had been placed upon it’s head.

The End

**Happy Halloween!**