

BROTHERHOOVES SOCIAL

Written by Dave Polsky
Produced by Devon Cody
Story editing by Meghan McCarthy
Consulting direction by Jayson Thiessen
Supervising direction by Jim Miller
Directed by Denny Lu

Transcribed by Alan Back (ajback@yahoo.com)

Prologue

(Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of Sweet Apple Acres during the day. Zoom in slowly.)

Granny Smith: *(voice over)* Aw, snickerdoodle! Where is the darn thing?

(Cut to a close-up of her inside the main barn, glaring angrily into an open box.)

Granny: *(groaning)* I wish for once I'd remembered to label these boxes!

(Longer shot: she is standing on one, and she uses another as a step down to the floor. The end of a ladder poking up through an opening in the boards indicates that she is in the hayloft; cobwebs and stains are in abundance up here.)

Granny: Uh, Big Mac— *(Pan to bring Big Macintosh into view.)* —be a dear and help me move those... *(eyeing a box)* ...maybe it's in that one on the bottom.

(Two sizable crates are stacked on it, but the workhorse ducks to get his nose underneath and easily lifts them away. Granny approaches the container; cut to the darkened interior, filled with toys, as she pushes the lid aside and looks in. Hopefulness gives way to irritation; on the start of the next line, cut back to her and Macintosh.)

Granny: Oh, dagnabit, it's not in there either!

(He has set the two crates aside. She clomps petulantly back across the loft, but the sound of Apple Bloom's laughter from outside draws Macintosh to the window. Cut to just outside it, concern registering on his face.)

Bloom: *(from o.s.)* You can't catch me!

(Zoom out to frame both her and Applejack in the barnyard; both laugh as the older sister chases the younger, who has a bowling pin in her mouth. A sidestep by Applejack allows her to cut off Bloom, who spits the item away.)

Bloom: Hey! *(She charges off, Applejack following.)*

Applejack: *(fading out)* You trickster! *(Back to Macintosh inside.)*

Granny: *(from o.s.)* Sisterhooves Social is right around the corner. *(Cut to her, looking over other boxes.)* Thought it'd be nice to award the winner of the big race a ribbon from when we hosted the very first Social.

(Being the event that figured prominently in the episode of the same name three seasons ago. Now the old green mare scratches her chin in thought before poking around again.)

Granny: If'n of course I can find the darn thing.

(She comes up with a toy locomotive and tosses it aside, moving across the loft to check another stack. A few toys tumble out of a box when she knocks it over; she smiles and points at a wooden dragonfly mounted by its thorax on the end of a stick.)

Granny: Oh, would you looky here!

(Macintosh turns toward her; close-up of the insect plaything, zooming in slowly.)

Granny: *(from o.s., wistfully)* My, how Apple Bloom used to love watchin' you make that thing fly. *(Back to the two; he crosses to her.)* It's like she thought you used magic. *(She snaps back to business.)* Hah! Right. Enough reminiscin'. *(pacing)* Gotta find that ribbon!

(Her grandson throws a fond smile toward the dragonfly and gets its stick in his teeth. Meanwhile, Granny is standing on a box.)

Granny: If you would just help me pull— *(pushing, straining)* —this—here—box— *(She sinks to her haunches; zoom out to show Macintosh gone.)* —then maybe I could...

(She stands and turns away from the stack, fully taking in his absence.)

Granny: ...uh, Big Mac?

(The cardboard on which she is standing gives way. Down she goes into the box, putting her head up through the hole with a blue ribbon on the end of her nose; the whole thing topples over and the decoration falls off to hit the floor.)

Granny: *(smiling)* Found her!

(Fade to black.)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(Opening shot: fade in to Applejack and Bloom standing inside the barnyard fence. Both rise to their hind legs and tap their front hooves in rhythm with the first line of the following.)

Applejack, Bloom: S-I-S-T-E-R-S!
(Drop to all fours; tap a hind hoof together, then the front hooves again.)

Which two sisters are the best?

(rearing up) We are! Apple Bloom and Applejack forever! Yee-hoo!

Bloom: We're gonna win every competition at the Sisterhooves Social! *(touching Applejack's chest; zoom out to show Macintosh watching)* Those other fillies aren't gonna know what hit 'em!

(Big sister takes notice of even bigger brother, who still has the dragonfly toy in his mouth.)

Applejack: Oh! Hey there, Big Mac. *(Close-up of him, grinning around the stick; she continues o.s.)* Did you want somethin'?

Macintosh: Ee-yup. *(Zoom out to put Bloom in the fore.)*

Bloom: Hold that thought. *(turning from him)* Applejack, you are the most awesome sister ever! *(Close-up of a blushing Applejack.)*

Applejack: *(laughing, blushing)* Aw, gee whiz. Well, I think it's sweet that you hold that opinion, but—

Bloom: *(from o.s.)* It's not opinion. *(Cut to frame all three.)* It's objective fact! You've saved Equestria, like, a gazillion times, you're smart, funny, strong—why, you're the best sister of all time! *(leaning into Applejack's face; she grins)* Probably the best Apple of all time! *(over shoulder)* Right, Big Mac?

(Caught completely off guard by this torrent of praise, he scrambles to get the grin back on his face.)

Macintosh: Ee-yup.

Bloom: *(circling around Applejack)* And with you by my side, I am guaranteed to taste sweet, sweet Sisterhooves Social victory!

(Macintosh nervously scratches one foreleg with the other, Applejack picking up on his mood.)

Bloom: *(improvising a few dance steps)* Go, Apples! Go, go! Go, Apples, go!

(She ends with a twirling leap, coming down on her haunches.)

Applejack: Uh, Apple Bloom? *(pointing past her)* I think Big Mac's got somethin' he wants to show you.

(The stallion gleefully shifts the toy from teeth to front hooves, and after rotating the stick back and forth a couple of times, he releases it into the air. It follows a high, tight arc, remaining vertical as a whirling blur; and finally clatters to the earth at Bloom's hooves in close-up. Zoom out to frame all three siblings.)

Bloom: Oh, hey. Is that the toy we used to play with when I was little?

Macintosh: Ee-yup.

Bloom: Neat. *(to Applejack)* All right, then! Let's get back to practicin'.

(She bounds away, missing both Applejack's look of puzzlement and Macintosh's disappointed expression as he turns back toward the barn. Close-up of the orange-tan farmer; zooming out to frame the filly on the start of the next line; she has a stack of three bowling pins balanced on her nose.)

Bloom: One more run-through of our jugglin' routine... *(They fall off.)* ...make sure our harmonies are tight in our song... *(Hold up a pie.)* ...and see if we can't beat our best pie-eatin' time.

Applejack: Hold on, sugar cube. I need a minute to talk with Big Mac. *(She heads for the barn; Bloom drops to her haunches.)*

Bloom: *(calling after her)* Mind if I go ahead and start eatin' this pie?

(With no response immediately forthcoming, she buries her face in the dessert, splattering filling all over herself. Cut to inside the barn; Macintosh is at the far end, hammering a piece of metalwork at an anvil, and Applejack walks in.)

Applejack: Hey, Big Mac. *(He pauses.)* You all right? *(Hammer is set down.)*

Macintosh: *(sighing with irritation, pacing)* Yup.

Applejack: You sure? You seemed a little down back there.

Macintosh: *(scoffing)* Nope. *(A loose pitchfork is picked up and leaned against the wall.)*

Applejack: Come on. *(smiling)* You can tell me. You feelin' a little left out? Apple Bloom and I have been spendin' a lot of time together gettin' ready for the Social.

(He turns to face her, opens his mouth to speak—and is interrupted by the flare of Applejack's cutie mark.)

Applejack: *(gasping)* What in the—?

(Close-up of the three apples sounding off on her haunch, then zoom out slightly as Bloom leans in close with a smile and gasp. Her face is now clean of pie residue.)

Bloom: Your cutie mark! *(hopping around excitedly)* You're being summoned, Applejack! This is so cool! *(Close-up of Macintosh.)*

Macintosh: *(sighing bitterly)* Yup.

Bloom: *(from o.s.)* Wonder where you're being called to. *(His eyes pop, then a grimace; all three again.)* Wonder what you're supposed to do when you get there. *(zipping to Applejack)* Obviously it is something awesome because you're awesome!

(A thought strikes under the red mane and pink bow, and she begins to pace and become increasingly worried.)

Bloom: But...but if you're being summoned to solve a friendship problem, that means you'll have to miss the Sisterhooves Social! And if you have to miss the Social, then *I'll* have to miss the Social! *(dropping to haunches)* Which means I won't be able to taste sweet, sweet victory!

(She ends with a hyperventilation fit and front hooves pressed to temples. A look of great concern passes between the green eyes of her siblings before Applejack steps forward.)

Applejack: Now calm down. Let me just go over to Twilight's castle and see what's what. *(smiling)* Maybe it's just a false alarm.

(Zoom in on the distraught little pony, whose spirits brighten considerably at this prospect, then cut to her standing on her hind legs to block the kitchen doorway. Panic has set in all over again, and a bindle knotted onto a stick is extended toward her.)

Bloom: But you said it was a false alarm!

(Zoom out on the start of the next line to frame Applejack addressing her in the kitchen; the bindle is propped up against the door, and the cutie mark has gone quiet.)

Applejack: I said *maybe* it's a false alarm. Well, it's not. Rarity and I have to go to Manehattan.

Bloom: Can't you just tell that map it'll have to wait a couple days?

Applejack: No can do, sugar cube. When duty calls, I gotta answer right away. *(patting Bloom's head, pulling her closer)* What kind of an example would I be settin' for my little sister if I didn't?

(These lines establish the current time frame as being immediately before the start of "Made in Manehattan." Bloom pulls away from her sister's grip.)

Bloom: This can't be happening! *(galloping farther into the barn)* Your extreme awesomeness is backfiring on me!

(The blond mare sighs heavily as Macintosh steps to the door.)

Applejack: I'm sorry, Apple Bloom. *(to Macintosh)* Try and cheer her up, won't you?

Macintosh: Ee-yup.

(Getting the bundle settled just so, she walks past him and into the great wide open. Dissolve to a long shot of the main barn, zooming in slowly. The sound of a clanging iron triangle cuts the tranquility.)

Granny: *(voice over)* Breakfast! Come and get it!

(Cut to a close-up of a downcast Bloom sitting at the dining room table, her bow drooping to underscore her glumness. The family matriarch walks over, gripping the edge of a plate of greens and fruit in her teeth, and sets it down in front. Bloom averts her eyes from the grub as the camera zooms out slightly to frame the edge of Macintosh's chin and hitching collar across the table. Granny throws a split-second glance his way; after a chin-scratching moment of thought, he regards his own plate—two whole carrots and some lettuce—and smacks the whole thing into his own face. When he pulls the plate away, the carrots are stuck under his upper lip like tusks, the greens from their tops have wound up in his ears, and he has a pair of lettuce-leaf eyebrows, which he waggles comically. The culinary silliness gets nothing even resembling a rise out of Bloom; instead, she puts her head down on the table and pushes her plate away.)

Granny: Oh, it's no use, Big Mac. If I know my Apple Bloom, she won't come out of a funk this funky 'til her big sister gets back.

(Nipping the plate's edge in her teeth, she carries it away; Macintosh's goofy grin evaporates as one of the carrot tusks drops from his mouth. A knock and the sound of a door opening startle him back to the here and now, and the camera zooms out slightly on the start of the next line. An exterior door stands near the table; Sweetie Belle has opened its bottom half and is standing here.)

Sweetie: Hey, Apple Bloom. *(Bloom lifts her head.)* The Social's gonna start in a few hours. Thought you might want to go with us. *(She steps in, Scootaloo taking her place.)*

Scootaloo: Since Rarity and Applejack are out of town, you and Sweetie Belle can cheer on me and Rainbow Dash instead.

Sweetie: *(to her)* Pretty great they're letting you participate even though you're not technically sisters.

Granny: *(from o.s.)* Well— *(Cut to her in the kitchen.)* —Social's always had a pretty loose definition of what consti-ma-tutes a sister. As long as you share a bond that represents the spirit of the Social, you're in. *(The table again; Sweetie slides up alongside Bloom.)*

Sweetie: So what do you say? *(Scootaloo joins her.)*

Scootaloo: You coming?

Bloom: *(listlessly)* Why not? Got nothin' better to do. Let me wash up and I-I'll meet you in a little bit.

(Exeunt two worried fillies, leaving the third to go face-first onto the table again. A sigh from the o.s. Granny; cut back to her.)

Granny: *(crossing kitchen)* Such a shame we don't live closer to all your second cousins. *(reaching table; Macintosh has shed all his facial produce and stares wide-eyed)* You could maybe do the Social with one of them instead.

(Close-up of the stallion, whose mental gears begin to turn under the messy orange mane, twisting the mouth up into a knowing smile. Zoom out to frame Granny watching intently.)

Granny: What is it, Big Mac? *(The smile becomes a grin.)* Y'all got an idea?

Macintosh: Ee-yup!

Bloom: *(from o.s., eagerly)* What? *(She jumps across to him, her bow perked up.)* What is it?

(Zoom in slowly as he stitches on a more calculating sort of grin that takes the smile right off Bloom's face. A dissolve shifts the scene to a slow pan through a stretch of meadow that has been set up with tents and banners for the Social, including a table at which mare/filly pairs have lined up to sign in. Carrot Top and her younger sister walk off along a path as Rainbow Dash and Scootaloo pass them.)

Scootaloo: Today's our big day!

Rainbow: We have so got this. I'm gonna go sign us in. *(She heads for the table as Sweetie walks up.)*

Sweetie: *(to Scootaloo, scratching back of neck)* I guess I'm just a little jealous you two get to compete and I don't. *(smiling)* But at least I get to be here and cheer you on. *(Big grin from Scootaloo; she looks behind herself.)* I thought Apple Bloom was gonna be here too.

Scootaloo: Guess she changed her mind.

(Zoom out from the pair to put Bloom in the fore, walking nervously across the path. She halts at Scootaloo's next words.)

Scootaloo: *(waving)* Hey, there you are! *(She and Sweetie walk up.)* You ready to cheer on me and Rainbow Dash to victory?

Bloom: Uh...not exactly. Seems I'm gonna get to participate after all.

(Spoken with much more unease than enthusiasm; Sweetie, on the other hand, pulls in a happy little gasp.)

Sweetie: Applejack is back from Manehattan already? *(She jumps toward Bloom, knocking her to her back and standing on her belly.)* That must mean Rarity is back too!

Bloom: No, our sisters are still gone. *(gradually pushing Sweetie off, standing up)* But it, uh...turns out my long-lost cousin...Orchard Blossom was able to make it last-minute.

(She finishes with a lame chuckle as the white filly gets upright.)

Sweetie: Your cousin Who-What, now?

(A male falsetto voice cuts in here, surprising both her and Scootaloo. It carries a thick Southern drawl.)

Falsetto voice: Well, I do declare—

(Cut to the speaker—Macintosh, wearing a dress whose pale blue skirt is patterned with light pink apples, and whose sleeveless white blouse has darker pink collar/waist trim and a matching bow at the neckline. He has also donned dark blue shoes on all four hooves, removed his hitching collar, and made up his face. His shaggy orange mane is hidden under a two-tone pale blond bouffant wig with a fringe of ringlets and a flower tucked in on one side. The front shoes have small pink bows attached, and lacy pink bloomers can be glimpsed under the skirt. Until/unless otherwise noted, he will speak in the affected Southern-belle voice.)

Macintosh: —it's hotter today than the business end of a corncob pipe!

(Pulling a handkerchief out of his neckline on the end of this, he proceeds to wipe his neck while delivering his best attempt at a demure giggle. Scootaloo and Sweetie can only goggle slack-jawed at the sight of him, their minds having completely shorted out; behind them, Bloom grimaces to herself at this sudden spell of idiocy on her big brother's part. Snap to black.)

Act Two

(Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of Macintosh's shoes and tilt up to his face. Having stowed the handkerchief, he bats his eyelashes coyly before turning to address Scootaloo and Sweetie.)

Macintosh: Oh, my! I'm so delighted to meet your little friends, Apple Bloom. *(hunching down to them)* Would these be your dear and beloved Cutie Mark Crusaders?

(This shot picks out the small white apple set at the center of each shoe bow.)

Bloom: *(sighing heavily)* Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo, Cousin Orchard Blossom. *(He stands up.)*

Macintosh: It is my extraordinary pleasure to make your acquaintance.

(These two are not amused, and the glares they shoot toward their third partner in mayhem are met by a big dopey "please don't kill me" grin. Long silence.)

Sweetie: That's Big Mac in a dress. *(Bloom drops to her haunches, tapping front hooves together.)*

Macintosh: *(feigning confusion)* Big Mac? Why, as charmed as I am that you find me in the slightest resemblance to such a...a...a fine and noble product of the Apple clan— *(walking past them; Bloom is now standing again)* —I'm astonished in equal measure. *(Stop.)* However, I shall take this startling observation under advisement— *(Cut to the Crusaders; he leans down to*

Sweetie as he continues.) —given that it's from such an astute and perceptive filly as yourself, Sweetie Belle.

(She gives him a cocked-eyebrow smile, then lets it become more genuine as he straightens up again.)

Sweetie: That's awful nice of you to say, Cousin Orchard Blossom. *(Bloom gapes at her in disbelief and disgust.)* I've been told before I'm pretty observant.

Macintosh: I haven't the slightest doubt.

(Cut to an older earth pony mare on duty at the sign-in table, filling out a sheet with the pencil in her mouth.)

Macintosh: *(from o.s.)* Pardon me!

(She looks up with a smile, but the pencil falls free when her whole face goes slack with shock a moment later. Cut to her perspective, tilting up to frame the inauthentic cousin now across the table from her as well as the very scared eyes of the yellow filly hunkering down alongside.)

Macintosh: My dearest cousin Applejack is regrettably unable to be here as planned, so I— *(fluffing wig ringlets)* —her cousin Orchard Blossom—

(Her perspective, panning slowly along the three dumbstruck ponies behind the table. All are advanced in years, and the last is an earth pony stallion.)

Macintosh: —will accompany Apple Bloom in her stead.

(The stallion puts on a hopeful little grin and adjusts his bolo tie; back to Macintosh.)

Macintosh: I trust that's acceptable to all concerned?

Rainbow: *(from o.s., skeptically)* Cousin Orchard Blossom, huh?

(His eyes pop; cut to frame her and Scootaloo now in line behind the Apple pair. The younger pegasus has a hoof to her mouth to stop a giggle.)

Rainbow: I know Applejack has a lot of relatives— *(He turns to her.)* —but I feel like she would have mentioned you. *(He thinks fast before smiling and speaking.)*

Macintosh: Why, you must be Rainbow Dash! You're Scootaloo's...mm... *(stammering a bit)* ...how are y'all related again?

Rainbow: Hmm. *(Unsettled glance between her and Scootaloo; then a smile.)* Why don't I just let you finish signing in?

(She throws a grin to the stallion in drag, then leans close with all her good cheer instantly gone.)

Rainbow: *(softly)* But don't think me and Scootaloo are gonna take it easy on you just 'cause you're a stallion!

(She walks away on the end of this, leaving him to stare bug-eyed after her and then turn to the sign-in table with a laugh. He leans onto the end of the table opposite the old stallion, resting his forelegs on the wood.)

Macintosh: Now where were we?

(The table legs buckle under his weight, causing that end to drop sharply toward the ground and take him down with it.)

Bloom: *(trying to smile)* Um...excuse me. I have to...go to the bathroom! *(She bugs out; Macintosh stands up with a grunt.)*

Macintosh: *(addressing himself after her)* You mean "powder your muzzle," don't you, dear? *(to the sign-in trio)* Such a more, uh, feminine-like reference to nature's call, don't you agree?

(The two mares trade slightly discomfited looks, while the geriatric Casanova just lifts his overgrown eyebrows above a grin that has now taken on a slightly greasy tone. Cut to Sweetie walking through the grounds and aiming a slightly apprehensive look back over her shoulder. She stops, glancing this way and that, and the camera zooms out to frame Bloom, trying to hide behind a small barrel but still in the unicorn's line of sight.)

Sweetie: Have they called your brother's bluff yet?

Bloom: No, but they're about to! *(hoof to face)* I can't bear to watch!

Macintosh: *(from o.s.)* Yoo-hoo! *(Pan quickly to him, waving from a few yards away.)* Apple Bloo-oom! *(walking toward her)* They've approved us as a pair! *(giggling)* Hurry along now, precious.

Bloom: *(to Sweetie)* I can't believe they bought it!

Sweetie: It's sweet he wants to help you out like this. Weird, but sweet.

(The red-maned filly takes no comfort in those words as she trudges grudgingly into the open. Dissolve to an overhead shot of a stage on which one sister team is finishing up a vocal performance for the crowd. Banners with musical notes are hung from poles, a single large note tops the backstage tent, and an announcer stallion in a white shirt, striped vest, and boater hat is running a phonograph at the curtain opening. The two take a bow as the spectators applaud.)

Announcer: *(stepping up front)* Bravo! Bravo!

(This shot picks out the dark gray apron he wears over his shirt/vest, as well as the bolo tie encircling his collar. The sisters leave the stage.)

Announcer: Weren't those two sisters great? *(Crowd quiets down.)* Now, where are our next competitors? *(Here come Bloom and Macintosh from one side.)*

Macintosh: *(singsong)* Here we are!

(As reluctant as Bloom may be to get up there, a playful shove in the rump by her “cousin” persuades her to get her hooves moving. Now backstage, the announcer pushes forth a crate filled with records for consideration. Bloom walks queasily onto the stage, while Macintosh tosses his ringlets to the announcer’s great consternation and pulls a record out of his blouse.)

Macintosh: *(passing it over)* This one, please. *(He heads out.)*

Announcer: Excellent choice...ma’am!

Bloom: *(softly, to Macintosh)* You sure you know all the words? ’Cause it took Applejack a pretty long time to get it down.

Macintosh: *(softly)* Did it now?

(Needle hits vinyl; crank is turned; zoom in on the pair.)

***Bluegrass mandolin melody with tambourine beats
Triplet feel, slow 4 (D major)***

(Bloom’s nerves gradually give way to a smile.)

Bloom, Macintosh: We all love our brothers, and our fathers and mothers

(They turn to face each other, holding out one front hoof to touch.)

We honor them like every family should

(Throw a foreleg over each other’s shoulder.)

But there’s something that’s quite unique when my sister’s there
with me

And we share that special bond of sisterhood

Violin in

Bloom: Sisterhood

Macintosh: Sisterhood

Bloom: Is a special kind of friend

Sisterhood

Macintosh: Sisterhood

Bloom: Is a bond that never ends

Bloom, Macintosh: It’s not always perfect, you might fight or be misunderstood

(Touch front hooves again.)

Bloom, Macintosh: But together you’ll always have sisterhood

Macintosh: Sisterhood

Bloom: Sisterhood

(Macintosh gambols clumsily across behind Bloom.)

Macintosh: Sisterhood

Bloom: Sisterhood

(He tiptoes back to stop behind her.)

Macintosh: Sisterhood

(Whip out of view behind her.)

Bloom: Sisterhood

(Now he slides to the stage edge on his hocks and sings the next line in his own deep voice, surprising her badly.)

Macintosh: Sisterhood

Bloom: ...hood

Song ends

(Her last syllable is delivered in time with his—a unison finish that went down the drain—and he lifts a foreleg in triumph as the crowd stares dumbfounded. Cut to his perspective, panning slowly through the murmuring throng; he returns to his high voice.)

Macintosh: *(giggling nervously)* Ee-yup!

(The old stallion from the sign-in table pops up in the back, applauds, and hurries away, giddy over having made eye contact with “Orchard.” Back to the stage.)

Bloom: *(to Macintosh, chuckling uneasily)* Are you okay, Cousin Orchard Blossom? You sounded like you were catchin’ a cold or... *(He lowers his foreleg.)* ...somethin’ else that would make your voice sound totally different, right at the end of the song. *(Weak chuckle; he catches himself with a gasp and smiles.)*

Macintosh: *(standing up)* Just a frog in my throat, dear. Probably just need to get a sip of water. If you’ll excuse us, we’ve another event in which to participate.

(They make for the curtains as a couple of front-row onlookers trade puzzled glances; cut to the backstage side entrance as Macintosh emerges.)

Macintosh: Oh, my! *(descending steps)* That certainly didn’t go as I had planned. *(Bloom hangs back.)* But don’t you worry. We’ll get you a blue ribbon yet, Apple Bloom.

Bloom: *(dryly)* You sure about that?

Macintosh: *(walking off)* As sure as my name is Cousin Orchard Blossom!

Bloom: *(to herself, under her breath)* But that isn’t your name!

(Dissolve to an overhead shot of another stage, this one marked with a banner of a dancing-mare silhouette. Plenty of ponies have turned out to watch this contest, and the two Apples are taking their turn as the camera zooms in. They sit on their haunches facing each other, tapping front hooves together in the same rhythm as the bit that Applejack and Bloom rehearsed at the beginning of Act One.)

Bloom, Macintosh: C-O-U-S-I-N-S!

(Stand up; get their next moves muddled a bit.)

Which two sis—uh, cousins are the best?

We are!

(Macintosh’s wig slides down over his eyes.)

Bloom, Macintosh: Apple Bloom and Appleja— (*out of sync*) —uh, um/I mean, Orchardjack—Blossom forever!

(By now, they have wound up facing opposite sides of the stage and away from each other. Macintosh lifts one front and one hind leg with a whoop—and enough force to send his little sister hurtling away.)

Bloom: Whoa!

(A crash of pony against wood drifts back; only now does he shift his wig out of his eyes to see the mishap, and he chews his bottom lip fearfully. Cut to a tub full of apples, from which one exasperated young earth pony puts her head up, spitting out one of the fruit as another balances on her head.)

Bloom: (woodenly) Yay.

(Dissolve to a spot several feet above the ground. A jump rope is swung up into view and down again, and Rainbow and Scootaloo leap in time with it. They are face to face on the first bound; for the second, they have each turned around so they can each put out a hind leg for a high five. Now the camera cuts to ground level; two stallions are swinging the rope ends in their mouths, and on the next jump the unofficial sisters both do a backflip and come down to slap all their rear hooves together. Their fourth takes them up into a position with heads down and legs extended out to their sides, allowing a double high five. Pan from them to Bloom and Macintosh, also jumping rope—or trying to. The apple is gone from Bloom's head now. She easily clears the rope every time it comes around, but he cannot get even an inch of air between his hooves and the ground no matter how hard he tries. After three failed attempts, he simply steps over the rope, earning a hard-eyed squint from Bloom.)

(Wipe to another spot several feet up. Bowling pins are tossed back and forth, and the camera zooms out to show the pair doing the juggling act Bloom alluded to in Act One. Each has three pins going, and they drop onto their backs to continue the routine. Cut first to Macintosh and then Bloom, legs pistoning in rhythm to keep the pins aloft; Bloom suddenly finds herself without any and sits up to find out what has gone wrong. Across the way, Macintosh has also stopped juggling—because all six pins have fallen into his skirt and left him in a hopeless tangle of limbs and fabric.)

(Wipe to a close-up of a very out-of-sorts Bloom glaring behind herself.)

Macintosh: (*from o.s.*) Oh...I don't know why I didn't choose to wear something more casual!

(Cut to a longer shot on the end of this; he stands next to her, having sorted out his disguise and disposed of the bowling pins.)

Macintosh: Why, I knew that juggling routine like the back of my hoof! (*smiling, adjusting wig*) But never you mind. There is still the race to be run.

Bloom: I really appreciate all the effort, Big Ma— (*catching herself*) —Cousin Orchard Blossom, but maybe we just skip the whole obstacle-course thing and call it a day.

Macintosh: (*crossing to her*) Why, Apple Bloom! I wouldn't hear of it! Your cousin Orchard Blossom may be many things, but she is not a quitter.

Bloom: I'm sure she's not, but...it's like Applejack said. There'll be more Sisterhooves Socials down the line, and... (*deflating, pawing at grass*) ...I'm sure she'll help me get a blue ribbon next time around.

Macintosh: (*stammering a bit*) But you wanted to win at *this* Sisterhooves Social! And no matter what, I am gonna get you that win! (*sternly, to himself*) Why, I simply have to.

(*Zoom in slowly on his grim-set face and snap to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of the Sweet Apple Acres orchards, seen from somewhere above tree height. Tilt down to give an overhead view of the starting line of the obstacle course from "Sisterhooves Social," where competitors are gathering and spectators watch from both sides of the track. The first obstacle—the mud pit—is filled and ready, and the start of the zigzag bucket run that follows it can be seen as well.*)

Rainbow: All right, Scootaloo. Remember the parts where teamwork *really* comes into play.

Scootaloo: How could I forget? We've been training all week.

Rainbow: Okay, hot stuff. What's our move on the grape squish? (*Extreme close-up of Scootaloo, in profile.*)

Scootaloo: The alley-oop. (*Pan back and forth between them in turn.*)

Rainbow: Apple toss?

Scootaloo: Flip-flop.

Rainbow: Egg carry!

Scootaloo: Flutter bomb. (*Cut to frame both again; they leap up.*)

Rainbow, Scootaloo: Yeah! (*High five; take their marks.*)

Macintosh: (*worried*) Oh, dear!

Granny: (*from o.s., amplified*) Competi-sisters...

(*Cut to her, sitting in a rocking chair on a stage just like the first time around. The only differences—aside from Macintosh not being up there with her—are that the megaphone she used back then has been replaced with a bullhorn, and that is it properly aimed toward the crowd. Her next two lines are also boosted by the rig.*)

Granny: ...take your positions!

(*Back to the starting line, where five teams in all are tensed to start. Macintosh snorts out a puff of steam and scrapes a front hoof over the dirt.*)

Granny: *(from o.s.)* And ready...and set... *(Bloom steels herself; back to the stage.)*
...GOOOO!!

(All ten racers pelt over the hard-packed earth. Rainbow and Scootaloo are first to reach the mud pit and easily clear it in one leap.)

Rainbow: Nice jump, Scoot!

(They both make quick work of the bucket run. Meanwhile, Macintosh slams on the brakes as he approaches the mud pit, but his forward momentum flings him gracelessly out of his shoes. As Bloom makes her way through the buckets, the big lug comes down behind her and gets a hind leg stuck in one of them. He half-staggers, half-bounces through the rest of them, ending up caught in two, crushing two others, and kicking the last one away.)

(Up ahead is the third obstacle, the crate pyramid. Bloom takes it in one jump without any trouble, but Macintosh simply smashes through and gallops ahead. The buckets are gone from his hooves now, and he wastes no time in catching up to Bloom.)

Bloom: Woo-hoo!

(Up next: pie eating. The Apples plunge their faces into the crusts; after a moment, Macintosh lifts his head and lets go with a hearty belch, then rips the bow off his neckline and gets back to work. It is the work of perhaps one more second to down the rest of his pie, followed by an even less decorous belch that sends the empty pan flying across the table. Up comes Bloom's face, every square inch covered with filling; she clears it all away in one lick, and they are off again.)

(They pull ahead of the pack, Macintosh's face now clean, but Rainbow and Scootaloo are still out in front. The pegasi come up to the hay-bale push and start to move a waiting mass slowly ahead with their noggins; only for Macintosh to overtake them effortlessly. Bloom gallops a few paces back as he gets the bale over the line, and they charge ahead side by side once he flings it backward. Berry Punch and Ruby Pinch slide to an alarmed stop, finding themselves in its growing shadow, and the thing slams to the ground and hides them from view. These two sisters cautiously poke their heads out from behind opposite ends to make sure that they are, in fact, still among the living.)

(Bloom and Macintosh barrel around a turn, now leading Rainbow and Scootaloo, and come to the grape-stomping challenge. The poorly disguised stallion scoops up one pile of grapes, throwing them into the vat just in time for Bloom to leap in after them. She gets her forelegs hooked around the edge and, after a moment's scrabbling, manages to pull herself inside. As the yellow hooves get to work pulverizing the fruit, their pegasus competitors gallop up. Rainbow pitches their pile into a vat, nimbly tosses Scootaloo in, and then joins her to double-team the grapes. Macintosh throws them a glare of naked hostility; cut to Bloom, happily converting grapes to purple pulp. The sunlight above her is blotted out by a rapidly growing shadow, and she has just enough time for one confused look up before Macintosh plunges into the vat, having chosen to copy Rainbow's move. A blast of grape juice covers the screen, then drains away to fill

one jar after another set up below the vats' spigots. An even more puzzled Bloom gets squeezed out and ends up wedged into one of the jars, perhaps wondering if Discord might have decided to show up for this day at the races. She gets her head out and looks up at a contrite Macintosh.)

Bloom: Yikes! You almost squished me!

(Cut to the row of stools that marks the end of this obstacle. He races up, a jar of juice gripped in his teeth, and hastily sets it on one of these before galloping on. It totters back and forth on the verge of falling, and Bloom stops for a moment to put it firmly in place, having extricated herself from the jar. On she goes; now Rainbow and Scootaloo come up with their jar, and an instant later they have unloaded it and begun to pull ahead of Bloom. Next up is the chicken coop for the egg carry; Macintosh rushes in, setting off a flurry of squawks and loose feathers, and the pegasi enter next. One chicken is forcibly ejected from the entrance, followed by Macintosh's head.)

Macintosh: Pick up those hooves, Apple Bloom! Why, you're barely movin' at a mosey!

(Bloom catches up, but Rainbow and Scootaloo are already exiting, each with an egg balanced on the tip of her nose. They move gingerly to the collection basket, set their cargo into it intact, and sprint on; next the entire exit-door wall of the coop bursts outward in a shower of splinters and out come the Apples, each with an egg of his/her own. Macintosh has the doorframe hooked around his neck.)

Macintosh: *(out of breath, turning to walk backwards)* Come on, June bug! It's like you've never carried an egg before!

Bloom: *(groaning)* I'm goin' as fast as I can!

(But not fast enough to avoid being overtaken by two other teams. Macintosh, meanwhile, has shed the debris and already deposited his egg, and his hooves jitter against the dirt as he waits for Bloom. Once she gently places hers in the basket, he scoops her up and gallops along, leaving nothing behind but her cry of surprise. They begin to move up through the pack, but the other teams are already clearing one hurdle after another on the final obstacle. Macintosh takes care of this minor technical hitch by simply bulldozing through one after another, ignoring Bloom's terrified yelps that build into a full-blown scream. Up ahead, Rainbow and Scootaloo have the lead on the home stretch, but Macintosh thunders up in between them and shoulders both aside at once, eliciting a double yell as he carries Bloom over the finish line in a cloud of dust. Scootaloo thumps down on her back, head on the line and body across it, and the long-lost Apple "cousin" slides to a stop and goes into a victory dance, still holding Bloom.)

Macintosh: *(holding her up; own voice)* Woo-hoo!

(Dead silence. Now Rainbow can be seen also lying on the finish line, head/forelegs forward and hindquarters back. Macintosh coughs a bit, remembering the role he is supposed to be playing, and goes back to his falsetto.)

Macintosh: I mean, um... *(clearing throat, setting Bloom down)* ...victory is ours, sweet Apple Bloom.

(Another twitch of his throat is immediately followed by the remains of his disguise going to pieces and falling off around him. The makeup vanishes from his face, and he reverts to his normal speaking voice.)

Macintosh: Uh-oh.

Mare voice: “Uh-oh,” indeed!

(Pan quickly to the speaker: one of the mares at the sign-in table, the one who was initially surprised by his appearance in Act Two. Neither she nor any of the other ponies standing around here find this the least bit funny. Back to the siblings.)

Bloom: *(to Macintosh)* I shoulda known you’d eventually get busted for bein’ a stallion!

Sign-in mare: *(from o.s.)* Oh, no.

(Zoom out slightly; she and the other mare from the table cross to the pair.)

Sign-in mare: We’ve known all along. The Sisterhooves Social has always had a loose policy when it comes to what counts as a sister.

(Cut to Bloom and Macintosh, who trade relieved little smiles at learning that all this masquerade was completely unnecessary. Back to the mare on the start of the next line.)

Sign-in mare: But we do have a strict policy when it comes to sports-ponyship. *(crossing to them, addressing Bloom)* In your “sister’s” desperation to win, he used brute strength to physically take out the competitors.

(On the end of this, cut to one pair—Amethyst Star and her sister—standing among the shattered remains of the crate pyramid, then pan quickly to a couple of chickens clutching fearfully at one another near the wrecked coop. A third one morosely surveys the damage. Back to the three ponies on the start of the next line.)

Sign-in mare: Uh, that kind of behavior is not just unbecoming of a lady, but, quite frankly, of anypony!

(Macintosh’s eyes widen worriedly; close-up of him, zooming in slowly.)

Sign-in mare: *(from o.s.)* And for that— *(To Bloom; zoom in.)* ...you two are hereby... *(All three again.)* ...disqualified!

(She strides off, leaving two utterly crushed siblings in her wake, Cut to a close-up of a slightly scuffed-up Rainbow, slowly working her way up to vertical.)

Rainbow: Huh. *(Zoom out; Scootaloo half-sits up, also battered and rubbing her head.)* Looks like we win, squirt. *(The filly snaps to.)*

Scootaloo: Woo-hoo!

(Two pairs of hooves reach into view, fore and aft, and lift her up off the top edge of the screen. Behind those four limbs, the view wipes to a longer shot of the finish line; the victorious pegasi are carried overhead by a knot of cheering racers and spectators. Bloom and Macintosh are left standing alone among the tatters of the stallion's outfit.)

Bloom: *(bitterly)* I told you I shoulda just waited until the next Social to win with Applejack!

(She plods off; he voices a weary sigh and follows. A moment later, here comes the old stallion from the sign-in table, now carrying a bouquet of flowers meant for Orchard Blossom. Looking around for any trace of her, he sets the blooms down and confusedly picks up a scrap of the blond wig. Cut to a long shot of the foiled Lothario and zoom out slowly as one of the balloons attached to the finish-line poles pops forlornly.)

(Dissolve to a long shot of the Sweet Apple Acres barn, seen from a nearby hillside at sunset, and pan to bring Bloom and Macintosh into view underneath a tree. She paces and ponders the view, while he sits on his haunches with his hitching collar back on.)

Bloom: *(sitting)* You know I'm not mad, right?

Macintosh: Ee-yup.

Bloom: I mean...let's face it. You dressin' up as my cousin Orchard Blossom was a pretty crazy idea in the first place.

Macintosh: Ee-yup.

Bloom: And it's not like you got me disqualified from the Social forever or anythin'. I can participate next time with Applejack. *(turning to him)* Everything's fine.

Macintosh: Ee-yup. *(Long pause.)*

Bloom: I just don't understand why you went so crazy there at the end of the race. I mean, I—I know you like to win and all, but...you want to tell me what's goin' on?

Macintosh: *(turning away)* Nn-nope.

Bloom: *(standing)* All right. Well...it's getting late. You comin'?

Macintosh: Nope. *(Long pause.)*

Bloom: *(sadly)* Okay. *(walking off)* See you later, I...guess.

(The morose red stallion gives her a silent, sidelong look that seems to last a month before speaking up.)

Macintosh: Apple Bloom? *(She stops...)*

Bloom: Yeah? *(...and walks slowly back to him.)*

Macintosh: When you were little, you used to look up to me. Thought I was the best thing since Zap Apple jam. Things are different now. *(Close-up of Bloom; he continues o.s.)* Applejack's the hero of the Apple family. *(Back to him; he slowly gets more worked up.)* Always rushin' off to save Equestria, and I'm just here on the farm, doin' chores, helpin' out the way I can, nothin'

special, nobody's hero. *(To Bloom on these last two words, then cut to frame both.)* I guess I just thought... *(more calmly)* ...aw, never mind. Here I am, about to start blabberin' on about my feelin's. You don't want to hear all this.

(One small yellow hoof gently touches one big red hind leg.)

Bloom: Yes, I do.

Macintosh: I guess I just thought if I could fill in for Applejack at the Social and get you a blue ribbon, well, I could be somepony you looked up to again. *(smiling)* Be your hero again, even if it was for just a day. *(The smile vanishes.)* It was foolish, and I'm ashamed. *(turning away)* Please. I just want to be alone right now.

(Bloom mulls over this relative torrent of words—possibly the most she has ever heard him say at one time—and the camera cuts to a close-up of the gloomy crimson face.)

Bloom: *(from o.s.)* Yeah, well... *(cheerfully; sound of a grab)* ...too bad, you big goof!

(The green eyes widen; zoom out to show that she has stretched her forelegs to hug as much of him as she can.)

Bloom: 'Cause I'm not goin' anywhere, and I know that you're always gonna be here when I need you. Heck, you'll do a whole obstacle course in high heels if you think it'll help me get somethin' I want. *(Back to his face; she continues o.s.)* Y-You're my big brother. *(He perks up; back to her; zooming in slowly.)* You've always been a hero to me, Big Mac, and...you always will be. I'm real sorry I haven't been lettin' you know that's how I feel. Guess both of us have been holdin' back when it comes to expressin' ourselves, huh?

Macintosh: Ee-yup.

(Now he returns the hug.)

Granny: *(from o.s., distant)* Big Mac! Apple Bloom!

(They glance toward the barn; cut to just behind them, giving a long shot of the building and Granny standing at the open kitchen door. Zoom in slowly.)

Granny: Your sister's home! She says she's got quite a story to tell about her trip to Manehattan!

(Brother and sister trade smiling looks from their spot under the apple tree.)

Bloom: Be there in a bit!

(Cut to just behind Granny, the hilltop and its denizens visible as silhouettes.)

Bloom: *(echoing slightly)* I'm spending some quality time with my big brother!

(The old mare turns to re-enter the kitchen. Cut to a closer shot of the pair and zoom out slowly.)

Bloom: Hey, Big Mac?

Macintosh: Ee-yup?

Bloom: How do you think Cousin Orchard Blossom would describe this sunset?

Macintosh: *(chuckling, assuming Orchard's voice)* Why, dear, I do declare this is the most beautiful sunset my eyes have ever looked upon! Though sittin' here on these tree roots is a trifle uncomfortable for my hindquarters.

(He shifts back to his own voice, and both share a laugh. Fade to black.)