**PRINCESS TWILIGHT SPARKLE—PART TWO**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a “Previously on My Little Pony” title card, then to black, then to a long shot of Canterlot under the divided day/night sky as seen in Part One, Act Two. Zoom in slowly as the voice of one of the Royal Guard unicorns is heard—from the end of Act One.*)

**Guard 1:** (*voice over*) It’s Princess Luna and Princess Celestia.

(*Cut to Twilight Sparkle and Spike in the reading room of the Ponyville library, addressing the rest of her friends in Act Three. Twilight is wearing her tiara and will continue to do so until further notice.*)

**Spike:** *They’re missing!*

(*Long shot of these latter five mares in the town square, suffering from a severe infestation of spiky black Everfree Forest vines at the end of Act Two. Zoom out.*)

**Twilight:** (*voice over*) The Everfree Forest is…invading!

(*The library again, Act Three; they get kitted out with their Element of Harmony necklaces.*)

**Twilight:** (*voice over*) I think I’m starting to get a pretty good idea of who we’re up against.

(*On the end of this, cut to the rainbow twister they have unleashed, which clears to reveal Discord busily showering off. Next he chums up to Fluttershy.*)

**Discord:** I’m reformed. (*nudging her*) Don’t you remember?

(*Cut to the six mares rushing to the aid of Zecora, whose legs have just given out hauling her possessions out of the forest.*)

**Discord:** (*voice over*) Why don’t you ask your zebra friend? (*Zecora, now standing, addresses Twilight.*)

**Zecora:** You can turn the potion from purple to white.

(*As she finishes, tilt down slightly to focus on the potion bottle resting on the ground before her. Cut to the Princess levitating it in front of herself; it has gone white from her spell, and Zecora nudges it into position so she can drink.*)

**Zecora:** (*voice over*) You may see why the sky is day and night.

(*During this line, cut to her as she gestures at the split heavens, then to Twilight. Having taken a slug from the bottle, she snaps her wings wide and lets her eyes burn white. Zoom in quickly until the glare fills the screen, then fade in to an angry Princess Luna standing before her throne in the unfamiliar castle Twilight was transported to.*)

**Twilight:** (*from o.s.*) Princess Luna! (*Who rises into the air near the freshly shattered tree window.*)

**Luna:** (*voice over*) There can only be one Princess in Equestria!

(*As she proclaims this, tilt up to frame the eclipse she has just triggered. The view then cuts to the red/yellow ball of energy that has enveloped her, its core turning black.*)

**Luna:** (*voice over*) And that Princess *will be me!*

(*The blackness bursts into the blue-violet mist of Nightmare Moon’s mane and tail, exposing her silhouette, and her fully illuminated form laughs madly from the half-destroyed walkway connecting Luna’s throne to that of her sister. Snap to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to an extreme close-up of Nightmare’s laughing mouth and zoom out to frame her. The cackle gives way to an enraged grimace that spooks Twilight into taking a step back; now the usurper fires a beam from her horn, tearing a gash through the ceiling. Twilight finds herself caught in a rapidly growing shadow and dives for cover just before a freshly cut hunk of masonry crashes down on the carpet. Skidding to a stop on her belly, she finds herself looking up at the approach of Princess Celestia, whose eyes are turned down in muted regret. The white ruler lifts them slightly as Nightmare steps imperiously forward through the clearing dust.*)

(*Celestia takes to the air and dodges a shot from her twisted sister; it carves a fresh hole in the ceiling to expose the full moon above. The flying Princess touches down as Twilight, now upright, skids over next to her.*)

**Twilight:** Luna! Think of how long you were banished to the moon! You’ll give us no choice but to send you back there if you don’t stop! (*Close-up of her, panning to frame Celestia some steps back.*)

**Celestia:** Luna! I will not fight you! You must lower the moon! It is your duty! (*Cut to Nightmare.*)

**Nightmare:** Luna? I am… (*Zoom in to a close-up.*) …Nightmare Moon!

(*Hearing those two words again, straight from the horse’s mouth, throws a scare into Twilight.*)

**Nightmare:** I have but one royal duty now… (*She lifts off, horn powering up.*) …to destroy you!

(*Here comes the next blast; thanks to Celestia’s leap, it takes out only a patch of floor instead of everything from her knees/hocks down. She bolts out through the ceiling hole.*)

**Nightmare:** And where do you think you’re going?

(*She gives chase, followed by Twilight. The pursuit ranges into the sky high above the castle, and Nightmare sends one blast after another toward her sister as Twilight gapes in horror. The fusillade does a number on the architecture in the bargain. As the high-speed pursuit skims the ground through a courtyard, Nightmare fires off one more shot and finally hits home, scoring a bullseye on Celestia’s chest. The stricken pony screams in agony and plunges out of the air, falling through the ceiling hole into the throne room.*)

**Twilight:** *CELESTIA!!*

(*She dives after her mentor, with Nightmare paying no mind and voicing a long, triumphant laugh. Zoom out to frame her backlit by the moon, then cut to the fallen Princess as Twilight descends to land alongside her. For the first time, Celestia’s mane/tail are perfectly still, rather than seeming to shift in an intangible breeze. Purple eyes well with tears as they take in the impossible development sprawled on the floor before them.*)

**Twilight:** No…why would Luna do this? Why now?

(*She sobs quietly over the prone equine, but grief turns to confusion as the latter slowly stands up to her full height and the four-colored hair begins to do its thing. Finally Twilight backs up a step, letting a relieved smile come over her face.*)

**Twilight:** You’re all right. (*And plenty angry, too.*) You’re all right!

(*But Celestia does not acknowledge this expression of joy in any way—nor has she taken any notice of Twilight throughout this entire sequence.*)

**Twilight:** Princess Celestia?

**Celestia:** Oh, dear sister. I am sorry, but you have given me no choice but to use these.

(*On the end of this, she lights her horn and channels magic into a patch of floor; cut to a close-up of it on “these.” It rises slightly and splits into two halves that slide apart, revealing a hatch from which a contraption of five small platforms rises. They are mounted on radial shafts that revolve independently around a central pedestal, which is attached to a turntable on a pillar. Resting atop this pedestal is a large stone sphere. It is the same arrangement that Twilight and company found in the ruined castle during “Elements of Harmony,” but without ten centuries’ worth of disrepair. Each of the five small platforms holds a gem of a different color.*)

**Twilight:** Are those…the Elements of Harmony? (*puzzled*) But that’s how they looked in…

(*Now she puts it all together and realizes that she is in the middle of a thousand-year-old playback. The location can only be that old castle, whose ruins hosted her climactic battle against Nightmare sixty-five episodes ago.*)

**Twilight:** …the past. (*Celestia flies up toward the central sphere.*) This is the night you banished her.

(*The solar sovereign’s magic envelops each of the five gems, lifting them away, then touches the sphere to cause a sixth to emerge—a duplicate of the pink six-pointed star in Twilight’s tiara. Celestia regards it gravely for a moment, then sets all six Elements whirling around her in a circle. Faster and faster they spin, eventually throwing off a blinding multicolored corona and merging into a single ribbon of rainbow light. Twilight shades her eyes at first, but soon risks a glance and sees the grim resolution broadcast by a Princess who knows what must be done, unpleasant though it will surely be.*)

(*Celestia gains enough altitude to look Nightmare straight on. The younger sister conjures up a magical wave and holds it in check; the older—tears streaming from her eyes as she squeezes them shut—creates a field bright enough to turn the sky around her golden. As Nightmare unleashes power from her horn, Celestia focuses on the six Elements now floating in front of her—five gems at the periphery, the star Element of Magic at their center and placed slightly ahead. The other five pour energy into this one, causing a broad rainbow to pour forth from it.*)

(*The two sisters’ attacks meet at a point between them and cancel out, but it does not take Celestia long to begin overpowering Nightmare’s offensive. With the rainbow almost touching her horn, the slitted pupil of one blue-green eye narrows in shocked realization—and then the golden aura is upon her, leaving her visible only as a rapidly disintegrating silhouette.*)

**Nightmare:** NOOOOOOO!!

(*The screen goes completely white from the glare, and the view then snaps to a long overhead shot of the battleground. Pan to follow Celestia’s beam toward the moon; when it hits, a multicolored shock wave emanates through the heavens, similar to that from Rainbow Dash’s Sonic Rainboom. A pattern of dark spots emerges on the lunar surface, forming the unicorn-head pattern that will come to be known as the Mare in the Moon.*)

(*The view fades to white, and the camera zooms out to frame it as one of Twilight’s glowing eyes—she is back in Ponyville. She closes them, opens them to find one still lit, and gets it to behave itself with a quick rub. Looking around herself, she finds five mares, one dragon, and one zebra who are all too stunned for words.*)

**Twilight:** Why are you all looking at me like that? (*Long pause before Applejack speaks up.*)

**Applejack:** It’s just…you were mumblin’ to yourself.

**Pinkie Pie:** Ooh! And don’t forget the uncontrollable sobbing.

**Fluttershy:** We were really worried about you. (*A poof from o.s.*)

**Discord:** (*from o.s.*) I for one found it delightful.

(*On the end of this, cut to the trickster lounging on a thorny vine and grinning like an idiot.*)

**Discord:** Sort of a one-pony theater piece, if you will. (*reaching toward Twilight with a poster and unrolling it*) You should really consider taking it on the road.

(*The sheet depicts a video clip of the Princess crying her eyes out, accompanied by the sound of a bawling infant.*)

**Rainbow:** (*hovering, kicking at air*) Did you find out whose rump we need to kick and where we can find ’em?

**Twilight:** (*softly*) I saw something from a long time ago, but it didn’t explain what’s happening now. (*Zecora crosses to her, along with Spike.*)

**Zecora:** Perhaps farther back still are the answers you seek.

(*Close-up of the potion bottle being held forward in her hoof; she continues o.s.*)

Another sip of the potion will give you a peek.

(*It is floated out of her grip and up to the unsettled violet mare and equally nervous dragon.*)

**Spike:** You sure about this?

(*She looks to it, then across the way to the four friends with their hooves on the ground, all of whom recoil a bit at the thought of what she—or they—might see next. Up goes the bottle, and down the hatch goes another swallow of the white stuff; she lets her tongue hang out at the taste, and suddenly Discord appears on the scene with a movie camera on a tripod. He is dressed as a director with incredibly bad fashion sense: half-green/half-purple jacket, white pants, red ascot with white polka dots, beret, pencil-thin mustache.*)

**Discord:** (*laughing, starting camera/looking through eyepiece*) Oh, I do hope she breaks into a song this time!

(*The potion lights Twilight’s eyes; zoom in until their whiteness fills the screen, then out to show her against a blurry crazy-quilt landscape studded with floating buildings under a loopy magenta sky. Schools of fish swim past her in midair, and as she looks off after them, the scene comes fully into focus. Hauling loaded saddlebags, Celestia and Luna advance resolutely across the blue checkerboard terrain toward the chaos master, who sits on a throne atop a nearby pink-checked hill with his back to them. The buildings are thatched-roof stone huts. They stop to glare at the back of Discord’s head; this shot is close enough to pick out the scuffs and scrapes on their coats, suggesting that they have had a rough time getting to this point. Discord swivels his throne to face them, revealing it to be the same horned one he sat on in Part Two of “The Return of Harmony,” and laughs heartily. By this point, the camera has zoomed in to a close-up of him.*)

**Discord:** This is so much fun! (*holding up Celestia’s tail*) How about a game of Pin the Tail on the Pony?

(*Back to the royal sisters. The elder has in fact had her tail filched, but she does not notice it until Luna glances toward her rump and she takes the hint. She draws her wings in with a surprised gasp, and both of them move closer.*)

**Celestia:** Playtime is over for you, Discord!

(*Back to him, now messily scattering seeds from a bag.*)

**Discord:** Oh, I doubt that. (*He chomps one, shudders happily, and offers them.*) Hungry?

(*One bounces off each regal forehead, improving their moods not a fraction. Celestia has her tail back in place.*)

**Discord:** Suit yourselves.

(*More eating and scattering. Now Celestia magically opens one of her saddlebags and levitates out three of the Elements, including Magic; Luna produces the other three from her own gear. The sight of the six gems causes Discord to toss his bag of seeds aside in mild surprise.*)

**Discord:** Ohhhh! (*rubbing chin*) What have you got there? (*The Elements circle the pair…*)

**Celestia:** The Elements of Harmony. (*…and generate a pink force field.*)

**Luna:** With them, we shall defeat you!

**Twilight:** (*to herself*) This must be when they turned Discord into stone.

(*The walking zoological contradiction just laughs himself stupid and comes within an inch of falling sideways over the arms of his throne. It takes him a moment to sit up again.*)

**Discord:** You should see yourselves right now! (*Cut to the pair; he continues o.s.*) The expressions on your face—so intense, so sure of yourselves!

(*His mocking laughter drifts across as their glowing horns touch, kindling a spark at their tips and projecting a rainbow spiral skyward. This straightens out into a long, graceful arc that bears down on the still-gleeful draconequus.*)

**Discord:** Hilarious!

(*And he keeps right on laughing up until the moment the spectrum washes over his form and turns every inch of it to stone, freezing him in the position he will hold until breaking loose in “The Return of Harmony.” Fade to white and zoom out to frame Twilight in a different, darker place; an eye-closing and hard head shake bring her fully back to her senses. Looking ahead of herself with a gasp, she sees a tree whose blue-glowing trunk and branches appear to have been roughly hewn from chunks and sheets of crystal. Bunches of pale, luminous fruit hang from every branch, five of which are set with the peripheral Element gems. Embedded in the trunk are three symbols—bottom to top: a crescent moon, a sun, and the six-pointed star for the Element of Magic. The overall contour of this tree is very similar to the one on the stained-glass window that shattered during Luna’s transformation at the end of Part One. It stands in a cavern whose walls are studded with gems, and Celestia and Luna approach it slowly, their steps echoing ever so slightly in the stillness. Luna utters a soft gasp as Twilight slips up behind them.*)

**Luna:** (*shakily*) The Tree of Harmony. (*Twilight pushes up even with them.*)

**Twilight:** The *Tree* of Harmony?

(*Cut to a close-up of the moon on the trunk, tilting up to the sun, then zoom out slightly to frame all of the star as the camera tilts up to it as well.*)

**Twilight:** (*stunned*) My cutie mark.

(*Celestia wings her way gently up to this last and shoots a spell into it; the Tree responds by emitting a brilliant white glow, and she glances behind herself. Cut to Luna.*)

**Luna:** Are you sure? (*She lifts off; cut to the pair as Celestia continues.*)

**Celestia:** We have managed to discover the only means by which we can defeat Discord and free the citizens of Equestria.

(*Cut to one branch gem, then another, her magic easing them away.*)

**Celestia:** (*from o.s.*) Even without these Elements, the Tree of Harmony will possess a powerful magic.

(*The facets on the star slide apart to reveal its pink jewel counterpart within, and she floats it out to join the five, now all removed and floating in a circle above the sisters.*)

**Celestia:** As long as that magic remains… (*The Elements descend toward them.*) …it will continue to control and contain all that grows here.

(*Twilight has observed these events from the ground; now her eyes go white and the camera zooms in, then out to put her back in the present time. A head shake clears her mind, and Spike is first to speak up.*)

**Spike:** So what’d you find out?

**Twilight:** I still don’t know what’s happened to Princess Luna and Princess Celestia.

(*Cut to the other four-legged onlookers; as she speaks, the view shifts to Discord—now out of his movie-director garb, sitting in a floating recliner, wearing red/blue 3-D glasses, and munching popcorn from a bag. A soda rests on one arm of the chair.*)

**Twilight:** (*from o.s.*) But I think I know why the Everfree Forest is acting this way.

(*The goofball lowers his glasses to peek over them, suddenly interested; back to Twilight and Spike.*)

**Twilight:** Something’s happened to the Tree of Harmony. (*A round of confused looks among the others.*)

**Rainbow:** The Tree of what, now? (*Cut to Twilight.*)

**Twilight:** It’s where Princess Celestia and Princess Luna found the Elements. I think it’s in danger. (*Zoom out slightly; Applejack walks over.*)

**Applejack:** Well, all right, then! Let’s go save a… (*losing steam, trying to recover*) …tree. Uh…where is it exactly?

**Twilight:** (*pointing ahead*) I think it’s in…

(*Pan quickly ahead to the treacherously overgrown entrance to the Everfree Forest.*)

**Twilight:** (*from o.s., small voice*) …there!

(*Not one member of the crew is wild about the thought of having to venture into that mess. Fluttershy lets off a barely audible cry of fear; Discord, on the other hand, voices a giddy little laugh.*)

**Discord:** (*to camera; zoom in*) I’m going to need more popcorn!

(*He holds up the now-empty bag on the end of this, and the view snaps to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to the forest entrance, the thorny vines creaking ominously as they twine a little tighter around the trees. Pan back to the intrepid septet on the approach, then cut to just behind the hovering Rainbow and zoom out to frame them all. They have stopped just short of the wild flora.*)

**Rarity:** Seems like only yesterday we were heading into these woods to find the Elements of Harmony.

**Twilight:** (*stepping ahead*) Seems like only yesterday I was foolish enough to think I should go after them on my own. I don’t know what we’re going to face in there. (*The others have fallen in behind her; she smiles with newfound courage.*) But whatever it is, I know we need to face it together.

(*Assorted noises of assent from the rest of the gang. Dissolve to an expanse of noxiously bubbling green swamp and zoom out slightly to frame them moving toward its edge. An irregular line of small rocks breaks the surface; pan to frame Twilight eyeing them.*)

**Twilight:** We can use those to cross.

(*She leaps toward them; close-up of the first few as her hooves make contact, causing them to sink slightly into the unwholesome water. She yelps and cries out in surprise, and the camera zooms out as she trots hesitantly in place for a moment. The entire line of stepping stones rises out of the muck; they are in fact ridges on the tail of a long reptilian creature covered with rocky brown hide. Its overall body shape is very similar to a crocodile, and it is plenty angry at finding its tail being used as a pedestrian walkway. Twilight cries out and is flung back the way she came, her accompanying scream fading out over the distance and quickly replaced by its roar, and she lands on her back in front of the others. Rarity voices a shuddery cry of terror; cut to a head-on shot of the approaching beast.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) A cragodile! (*The group again; they bug out in all directions.*) Run for your liiiiiives!

(*It advances slowly over the land, the grating of stone on stone making itself heard to mark the movements of its body. Twilight and Spike find themselves backed up against a tree trunk with nowhere to go; she tries desperately to fly away, but gets nothing but a few haphazard wing flaps for the attempt and thuds back to the earth. Here comes the cragodile with a feral roar—but before it can close those immense jaws on her head, it is suddenly jerked backwards. When mare and dragon get their wits back and look ahead, they find a black vine wrapped around the tail and pulled taut. Assorted grunts of effort are heard from o.s.; pan back along the vine to the source—the rest of the girls, hauling in for all they are worth. Fluttershy pulls with her front hooves, while the others have sunk their teeth in.*)

(*Applejack lets go, coming up with a fresh length knotted into a lasso, and lets fly. It is joined by a second airborne loop that snares the cragodile’s jaws and cinches them shut. Here comes a fresh length, which wraps itself around a tree under Twilight’s control; an instant later the thing is being securely roped down—all four legs, tail, snout. The six mares eye it with great trepidation.*)

**Twilight:** That was close.

**Applejack:** (*slightly out of breath*) A little too close, if you ask me. You sure you’re all right?

**Twilight:** (*crossing to her*) I’m fine. (*spreading/folding wings*) I just can’t seem to get these new wings to do what I want them to do, when I want them to do it.

**Rainbow:** Aw, you’ll figure it out eventually.

**Twilight:** (*walking past her*) “Eventually” isn’t soon enough. (*Others follow.*)

**Applejack:** You *have* been havin’ an awful lot of trouble with those things. And…well…who knows what else is gonna come after us? You know… (*Cut to all but Twilight; they stop.*) …maybe it wouldn’t be such a bad idea for Twilight to go back to Ponyville and let us look for the Tree of Harmony without her. (*Twilight, also stopped, glares at her.*)

**Twilight:** What? Why?

**Applejack:** For starters, you just about got eaten by a crago-dilly.

**Twilight:** We all did. He wasn’t after just me!

**Applejack:** Sure, but…well…the rest of us aren’t princesses.

**Twilight:** What’s that got to do with anything?

**Applejack:** Princess Celestia and Princess Luna are gone. (*Cut to just behind her, touching Twilight’s chest.*) If something happened to you, I—I just don’t think Equestria can risk losin’ another princess. (*Cut to frame the entire group on the start of the following.*)

**Rarity:** Applejack does make a valid point. Even if we manage to save the Tree of Harmony, it won’t necessarily mean Princess Celestia and Princess Luna will return. (*crossing to Twilight*) Equestria will need somepony to lead in their absence.

**Twilight:** But the Tree of Harmony! I’m the only one who has seen it and knows what it looks like! (*Rainbow swoops over.*)

**Rainbow:** Huge tree, cutie marks on the trunk, probably being attacked by something hideously awful? (*smiling smugly*) Yeah, I’m pretty sure we’ll know it when we see it.

(*The left-handed reassurance deflates Twilight’s spirits considerably, and tears gather in the purple eyes.*)

**Twilight:** All of you feel this way? (*Cut to a slow pan across the downcast others; she continues o.s.*) Feel like I shouldn’t be here?

**Fluttershy:** It *is* probably for the best.

(*The tears spill over as the Princess walks away; Spike hurries after her, while the other five carry on in the other direction. Dissolve to a close-up of Discord’s taloned forelimb, whose claws he is filing down by using the back of Pinkie’s alligator Gummy as an emery board. He has disposed of the recliner, snacks, and 3-D glasses he used at the end of Act One. His humming drifts down over the unorthodox manicure, which is going on with no visible source of Gummy’s back-and-forth movement. Zoom out to frame all of him, relaxing on a curl of vine; panicked cries for help are heard from o.s., and he looks back toward the source as the camera pans to it. Two ponies, one of whom is Cherry Berry, have been snagged in the crazed overgrowth and are suspended in midair. Here come Twilight and her number-one assistant.*)

**Twilight:** (*irately*) Discord!

(*Realizing that he has been caught in the act, the joker vanishes Gummy and snaps his lion paw to wipe out the vine. The two caught-up ponies hit the ground in very short order and clear out.*)

**Discord:** (*calling after them, sarcastically*) You’re welcome! (*Dry chuckle; he turns to face Twilight, floating in midair.*) No luck finding your Tree?

(*She and Spike start down the street and he whirls around to drift after them.*)

**Twilight:** We ran into some trouble. (*Stop; sit on haunches; he floats down.*) And my friends decided it would be best if I return to Ponyville while they continue the search. Equestria will need me if Princess Celestia and Princess Luna don’t return. (*Discord stands up.*)

**Discord:** I’m just surprised that you agreed to their plan. I never thought you’d be the kind of pony who would think she was better than everypony else.

(*He shifts into a subtly needling tone on the end of this, glancing sidelong in her direction. It has the intended effect.*)

**Twilight:** I don’t think I’m better than anypony! (*He leans down over her.*)

**Discord:** Oh, well, how silly of me to assume that you would think that.

(*He conjures a royal purple robe, trimmed in purple-spotted white fur, onto her back.*)

**Discord:** All you did was choose to keep your precious Princess self out of harm’s way while your friends thrust themselves right into it.

(*Accompanied by the following actions. Create a gold scepter in her grip, topped with a red gem at one end and a sculpture of her own head at the other; make air quotes on “Princess self”; gesture toward the forest and the thorny tangles framing it now. The new finery does not please Twilight a bit, and she promptly throws both items aside in close-up. Zoom in slowly.*)

**Discord:** (*from o.s.*) I’m sure you’ll all be the best of pals again— (*He reappears, greatly shrunken, protruding from one ear, and hams it up.*) —when they return from their terrifying yet deeply bonding experience that they’re having without you.

(*On the latter part of the previous, he retreats into her head and peeks out from the other ear. Following his nasty little chuckle, Twilight mulls it over, then looks daggers at him and gallops away, causing him to pop loose. Spike hustles after her.*)

**Twilight:** I never should have agreed to come back here!

**Spike:** Come on, Twilight. Discord may be reformed, but he’s not *that* reformed. He’s just trying to get under your skin.

**Twilight:** Well, it’s working!

(*One magical heave deposits the dragon on her back, and the race toward the forest primeval is on. A full-sized Discord poofs into view to watch them go and wave goodbye. Wipe to the other five, now proceeding through a dimly lit tract of wild woodland.*)

**Rainbow:** Anypony else starting to think this is a lost cause? We’re almost at Celestia and Luna’s old castle. Maybe whatever Twilight saw when she took that crazy potion wasn’t real. Maybe there is no Tree of Harmony. Maybe— (*Stop; Applejack points ahead.*)

**Applejack:** Maybe it’s right down there!

(*Long shot. They have reached the edge of a deep ravine; Rainbow gasps softly.*)

**Rainbow:** It can’t be!

(*Cut to their perspective of the depths. The old ruined castle stands on the opposite side, and masses of vines stretch along the length of the gulf toward a glow issuing from a cavern mouth in one of the walls. Zoom in on this, then cut back to all but Pinkie.*)

**Rarity:** How are *we* supposed to get to it?

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s.*) Whoa!

(*Followed by a string of thumps and yelps. The others look toward the noise, and the camera cuts to a very long shot of them—and the steep flight of stairs leading down to the floor of the ravine. The pink wacko is busy tumbling down them and does not speak until she reaches the bottom.*)

**Pinkie:** Take the stairs, silly!

(*Dissolve to Twilight and Spike, now making their way through the forest as well.*)

**Spike:** Are we there yet?

**Twilight:** I don’t know where we are! (*Stop.*) We’re lost! (*Sit on haunches; zoom out slightly.*) I never should have left my friends. (*He hops off her back…*)

**Spike:** We can’t just give up. (*…and spots a vine-wrapped tree.*) Maybe if I get up there, I’ll be able to spot ’em.

(*Cut to a high branch and pan to follow him as he scurries toward its end. Through a gap in the leaves, the castle is visible in the blurry distance; he pushes the foliage aside, the scene coming fully into focus. Now he can also see the ravine and the rest of the gang, with Applejack starting down the stairs and Rainbow descending with her wings.*)

**Spike:** Well, what do you know. (*He backs off to call down to her.*) Twilight?

(*What he finds on this side is a good bit less disheartening: Twilight hemmed in by four black flowers on long flexible stems that take turns ejecting bursts of vapor over her. She coughs as the stuff hits her lungs, and he sucks in a wide-eyed gasp. Wipe to a long shot of the Tree in its cavern and tilt up slightly to frame the devastation that the unwanted plant growth has wrought in this area. Vines snake every which way across the ground and over the Tree, and the otherworldly glow of its bark and fruit is gone, replaced by diseased grays and blacks.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s., gasping in shock*) I think it’s dying! (*Cut to the five, now at the mouth of the cavern.*)

**Applejack:** (*leaping ahead*) So let’s save it already!

(*She grabs a tendril in teeth and pulls, but it just whips her off so that she tumbles down on the rock flat.*)

**Rainbow:** Nice try.

(*Up she goes, angling one hind leg for a flying kick; a vine slaps her out of the air.*)

**Rainbow:** Whoooaaa…

(*One graceless touchdown and bounce/skid on her back later, and the camera pans to Fluttershy and Rarity with the still-dazed Applejack.*)

**Rarity:** Valiant efforts on both your parts, but the Tree remains in jeopardy.

**Applejack:** And I suppose you’ve got a better idea?

(*The fashion-conscious unicorn mentally chews it over and grimaces ever so slightly. Fluttershy helps Applejack stand.*)

**Applejack:** That’s what I thought. (*Close-up of Fluttershy.*)

**Fluttershy:** I know who would know what to do! (*dejectedly*) But we sent her home.

(*Zoom out slightly and pan across the group, heads dropping and faces falling as the full meaning of her words sinks in. Rainbow is back on on her hooves. Fade to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to the sun and moon in the split sky and tilt down into the ravine. Applejack faces down the hovering Rainbow as the other three Element bearers watch. Zoom in slightly.*)

**Rainbow:** It was your idea, *Applejack!* (*She lands on this last word; Applejack gets in her face.*)

**Applejack:** We all agreed it was the best thing, *Rainbow Dash!* We were tryin’ to protect her!

(*The confrontation is interrupted by a loud grunt from the o.s. Spike; cut to him, tumbling to the bottom of the stairs. One badly scuffed baby dragon rolls to a stop on his belly, and five pairs of equine eyes pop in surprise at his arrival. Their owners gallop over, Applejack hunkering down to cradle him.*)

**Spike:** Twilight! Trouble! HELP!

(*He passes out; the apple farmer glances worriedly up from the limp form in her hooves. Snap to black and tilt up to bring Twilight into view—now at the mercy of five vapor-spitting flowers rather than four as before. She is stretched out insensate on the forest floor, and the malevolent blooms are slowly closing in, their petals extended like grasping pincers. One of them fires a fresh burst into her face; another one hisses and prepares to dive on her, but a vine lasso cinches it shut and drags it to the ground. Another yank on the line ties it into a compact ball; tilt up slightly to frame the other end in Applejack’s teeth. Her hat is tilted down over her eyes, but it flips back to its normal position as she spits the vine away.*)

**Applejack:** Listen here, you rabid rhododendrons! You mess with one of us…

(*Zoom out; the other four non-Princesses are with her, ready to throw down. Pinkie has a party favor in her teeth.*)

**Applejack:** …you mess with all of us!

(*The favor gets a hearty blow, but two of the black flowers take it as an insult and spit their vapor at the group. Rainbow rises a bit higher behind the gang.*)

**Rainbow:** Up here!

(*She charges in, the flowers’ next shots hitting nothing, and buzzes past close enough to set them whirling and tangling into each other. Down they go; now Pinkie hops past, another one close behind. She has disposed of the party favor.*)

**Pinkie:** Yoo-hoo! Come and get me! (*Rarity does likewise.*)

**Rarity:** (*singsong*) Don’t forget about me!

(*Even Fluttershy gets in on the action, flying a tight turn around a tree so that the flower chasing her ends up looped around its trunk. Applejack slides across, going over/under/over the stems in her way as this one shifts its attention to her. When she comes to a stop, the flower strains to get at her but cannot due to all the tangles in its stem; it snaps backward, winding up in a pile with all the others. Pinkie pops up out of nowhere, throwing a hoof-load of confetti and streamers.*)

**Pinkie:** Ta-da!

(*The sound of a cheering crowd is heard under her words, but of more importance is the flower rearing up behind her—which she does not notice. She does, however, give consideration to the beam of magic lancing into view and ducks so that it wipes out the flower instead of her. Two disbelieving blue eyes look back the way it came; cut to a dazed Twilight half-sprawled on her belly. Spike is at her side in an instant to help her up, having put himself back in order from his earlier tumble down the stairs, and the rest of the group soon clusters around as well.*)

**Applejack:** I sure am glad you came lookin’ for us.

**Twilight:** Not as glad as I am that you found me.

**Rarity:** The truth of it is, Twilight, we’re simply lost without you.

**Rainbow:** Yeah. Equestria may need its princess…

**Fluttershy:** (*touching Twilight’s shoulder*) …but we need our friend.

(*A seven-way group hug ensues. Dissolve to a long shot of the afflicted Tree, then cut to the group in the cavern. Twilight steps forward, regarding the impenetrable knots of vines that have encased it, and flies up for a closer look. As she eyes the large six-pointed star on the trunk, a vine whips out to snare both forelegs; a gasp, and she begins to pull against their grip, finally cutting herself free with a spell. Within seconds, the vines have extended to block another approach at the star.*)

**Celestia:** (*Twilight’s memory*) Even without these Elements— (*Close-up of the spot from which one Element was removed.*) —the Tree of Harmony will possess a powerful magic. (*Twilight eyes the Tree again; zoom in slowly.*) As long as that magic remains, it will continue to control and contain all that grows here.

(*Glancing up at her tiara, Twilight lets her features rearrange themselves into a look of grim determination and flies down to her friends.*)

**Twilight:** I know how we can save the Tree. We have to give it the Elements of Harmony. (*Shocked silence from the others.*)

**Rainbow:** Whoa, whoa, whoa. (*Chuckle; she lands in front of them to face Twilight.*) How are we supposed to protect Equestria? (*Rarity steps up next.*)

**Rarity:** How are we meant to rein Discord in if we can’t use the Elements to turn him back to stone? (*Applejack is next.*)

**Applejack:** Twilight…the Elements of Harmony. (*Closse-up of her chest; she touches her necklace. Tilt up to her face.*) They’re what keep us connected, no matter what.

**Twilight:** You’re right about one thing, Applejack. The Elements of Harmony did bring us together. (*smiling*) But it isn’t the Elements that will keep us connected.

(*Cut to a slow pan across the line, starting at Pinkie and ending at Spike. Understanding smiles steal across every face.*)

**Twilight:** (*from o.s.*) It’s our friendship, and it’s more important and more powerful than any magic. (*Back to Twilight and Applejack.*) My new role in Equestria may mean I have to take on new responsibilities— (*touching Applejack’s shoulder*) —and our friendships may be tested.

(*The rest of the group again, now stepping a bit closer.*)

**Twilight:** (*from o.s.*) But it will never, ever be broken. (*Back to her and Applejack.*) There’s no time to lose. (*Brace for liftoff.*) Everypony ready?

(*Up she goes; the blond mare backs up to join the rest of the crew.*)

**All mares but Twilight, Spike:** Ready!

(*The hovering Princess puts her horn in gear and floats the apple jewel free of its setting in Applejack’s necklace. The other four come loose as well and drift upward under Twilight’s control; all five end up circling around her, and she adds the one from her tiara last. Just as when Celestia used them against Nightmare a thousand years ago, they whirl around her form so rapidly that they are lost in a band of rainbow light.*)

(*Several of the strangling vines lash out and wrap around her midsection, prompting a round of gasps from below and stopping the Elements in mid-spin. Twilight, straining against them, can only watch as one shoot curls around Magic—that is, until she kicks her horn into overdrive and wrenches the gem loose. All six of them float down toward the tree; in close-up, Kindness, Laughter, and Loyalty nestle themselves into the depressions on the branch-ends from which Celestia retrieved the original Elements. There is a brief glimmer of white light around each gem as it settles in.*)

(*The vines wrapping Twilight work their way up to cover all of her, including her still-glowing horn, and the five mares’ jaws drop open in shock while Spike grimaces mightily. The star on the trunk opens, revealing the same compartment from which Magic first emerged, and the gem floats into place. When the star’s facets close, they do not cover it over, but instead seal themselves around it so that the gem ends up embedded in the trunk. It too glows white, the others responding in kind as the bark seals to them as well, and the camera zooms out as a sudden flash of brilliance radiates out from the Tree to white out the screen and tear the intruding vines to pieces.*)

(*The zoom stops on a long shot of the entire Tree, now blazing white, and rainbow-tinted pulses race along the ground to burn away the remaining tendrils. A similarly colored wave washes through the entire forest, purging it, and more pulses obliterate the vines that have invaded Ponyville proper. One of them is being used as a lounge chair by Discord, who has donned a Hawaiian shirt and sunglasses and is sipping a drink from a coconut shell. He does not notice anything amiss until the vine beneath him has burned away, dumping him to the ground.*)

**Discord:** Oh, poo!

(*In the cavern, enough of the glare fades away to expose the fully healed Tree, fruit and all—but two piles of vines still remain, one on either side. Flying back to her friends, Twilight lands in their midst and squints ahead; in due time, these last masses of plant debris are consumed by rainbow light from the top down. Luna’s figure appears within one, Celestia’s in the other, and seven faces light up at the sight. Now fully free, the two royals cross the cavern floor as the Tree’s glow fades back to normal. Twilight gallops over and into a warm hug from both.*)

**Celestia:** We know how difficult it must have been for you to give up the Elements. It took great courage to relinquish them.

(*Smiles all around, the biggest being that of the violet winged unicorn. It turns into a look of sudden concern as a spark of light dances across her pupils—a reflection from the o.s. Tree. Looking up, she sees it begin to glow again and breaks the hug to move a bit closer. Ribbons of colored light snake along five branches, working inward from the Elements embedded in them, and come together at the exposed Magic. A sixth, varicolored light thread courses down from this, touching first the sun and moon marked on the trunk; each lights up in turn, and the light continues down along one root to end in a brief flare of white.*)

(*From this spot emerges a magenta flower, its petals tightly folded together. It grows to reach the level of Twilight’s head; she extends a hoof to brush the bloom ever so gently, and it opens in a multicolored aurora that forces her to avert her gaze. Resting within is a blue box shaped to resemble a large jewel or crystal; top and bottom halves each have six lateral faces, whose edges come together in hexagonal top and bottom panels. The three lateral faces on the top half that are visible from this angle are each set with a keyhole. Zoom out slightly as Celestia and Luna step up to look it over along with Twilight.*)

**Twilight:** What’s inside it? How am I supposed to open it?

(*Overhead view of the box, rotating slowly. Now all six top lateral faces can be seen to have keyholes.*)

**Luna:** (*from o.s.*) Six locks…six keys.

(*Cut to her and Twilight; they glance toward Celestia, and the camera cuts to her.*)

**Celestia:** I do not know where they are. (*smiling, stepping away to frame the others*) But I do know that it is a mystery you will not be solving alone.

(*Her sister walks away, leaving Twilight to smile placidly at these words. Dissolve to the forest entrance, now back to its normal semi-wild self. The seven travelers emerge into the bordering grassland, no longer wearing the stripped necklaces and tiara, and are greatly surprised to see banners drop down and signs pop up from nowhere. The former are marked with “#1” and pictures of the mares’ faces, and the signs show “#1,” one showing an arrow that points to them; confetti, party horns, and cheers accompany these. Discord winks into existence, a giant “#1”foam finger on his lion paw and a pennant striped with the group’s coat colors in his taloned grip. He has done away with the Hawaiian shirt and shades from his previous appearance.*)

**Discord:** Bravo, ladies, bravo! (*He leans over to Rainbow.*) However did you save the day this time? (*dropping gear, waving fingers*) Blast the beastie with your magic necklaces, I presume?

(*An instant later, he appears on Applejack’s back, miniature-sized and dressed as a cowboy.*)

**Discord:** (*peeking under her mane*) Where are those little trinkets of yours? You know, the ones you used to send me back to my *extremely* uncomfortable stone prison.

**Applejack:** (*sighing*) Gone.

(*A flash, and he is back to his normal dimensions and out of the duds.*)

**Discord:** (*gleefully*) Gone? (*thoughtfully, twiddling paw/talons*) Gone? (*Fluttershy flies over to him.*)

**Fluttershy:** But our friendship remains. (*glaring at him*) And if *you* want to remain friends, you’ll stop thinking whatever it is you’re thinking and help us clean up.

(*He shrinks down on the latter part of this, having had his plans thoroughly punctured, and winks out only to reappear—full size, in a French maid outfit and holding a feather duster.*)

**Discord:** Fine. (*walking toward Ponyville*) But I don’t do windows. (*The group follows him; cut to Twilight and Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** One thing I don’t get. Why’d all this happen now?

**Discord:** (*from o.s.*) I have no idea.

(*Zoom out; he has stopped and disposed of the outfit. The two mares stop behind him, as does Rainbow.*)

**Discord:** Those seeds I planted should’ve sprouted up ages ago.

**Twilight:** *What did you say?!?*

**Discord:** Oh, why should I try to explain it when you can see for yourself?

(*And with a blip of light, Zecora’s white potion is in his grasp. The irked young Princess floats the bottle over and takes a chug; her eyes flare white, the camera zooming in quickly. Fade in to Celestia and Luna stepping up to face down Discord—a return to the flashback of his defeat.*)

[*Animation goof: Unlike the original sequence, Celestia has her tail back on by this point.*]

**Celestia:** Playtime is over for you, Discord!

(*Cut to him, now messily scattering seeds from his bag.*)

**Discord:** Oh, I doubt that. (*He chomps one and offers them.*) Hungry?

(*One bounces off each regal forehead, improving their moods not a fraction.*)

**Discord:** (*voice over*) Well, obviously things didn’t go according to my original plan.

(*The seeds hit the ground and tunnel in, sending out their first black shoots.*)

**Discord:** (*voice over*) My plunder seeds should have stolen the magic from the Tree of Harmony and captured Princess Celestia and Princess Luna thousands of moons ago.

(*Those tendrils encounter a shimmering sheet of subterranean magic and are repulsed; tilt up to show the source as the Tree itself, its Elements removed.*)

**Discord:** (*voice over*) Alas, it seems, the Tree had enough magic to keep the seeds from growing up big and strong.

(*The tilt continues until the Tree is out of view and only the dark ceiling of its cavern is visible.*)

**Discord:** (*voice over*) Until now, that is.

(*Fade to white, then zoom out to frame Twilight in the here and now. She shakes the light out of her eyes and uses them to aim her most hostile glare his way.*)

**Twilight:** You realize this is information we could’ve used hours ago?!?

**Discord:** And rob you of a valuable lesson about being Princess? (*pinching her cheek*) What kind of friend do you think I am?

(*A joking pull at the violet hide, and he lets go so that her cheek snaps back; she glowers while he just smiles and extends the little finger of his taloned forelimb. Dissolve to a long shot of Canterlot, resplendent under a fully normal night sky and moon, and cut to squads of unicorn guards blowing a brass fanfare. They stand at the front edge of an outdoor stage on which a golden sun and silver crescent moon are displayed on stands. The scenario is identical to the Summer Sun Celebration that Twilight witnessed as a filly, detailed in her flashback during “The Cutie Mark Chronicles,” with the exception of the stage decoration. The sun stands to the left of the gathered crowd, the moon to their right. A second difference emerges when the camera pans through the spectators: Twilight’s five friends and Spike are here for this one.*)

(*Somewhere offstage, a nervous Twilight watches and smiles as Celestia and Luna walk past. The violet mare now wears a small gold tiara tipped with pink gems in place of the one that had held her Element. The two sisters step up, each in front of her symbol, and spread their wings.*)

**Celestia:** Citizens of Equestria, it is no longer with a heavy heart, but with great joy that I raise the summer sun. For this celebration now represents not the defeat of Nightmare Moon… (*Close-up.*) …but the return of my sister… (*Zoom out to frame both.*) …Princess Luna!

(*A cheer goes up from the multitude, and Luna rises in front of her stage prop with horn glowing. A lowering of her forelegs and wings causes the moon to sink slowly toward the horizon; the crowd shifts to awed murmurs, and now Celestia copies the move but raises her forelegs/wings. The sun slowly rises in time, and Twilight takes this as her cue to go airborne. As the two heavenly bodies pass one another, she rockets over the sisters to send out a bright pink burst of light in the shape of the central star in her cutie mark. It washes over both the courtyard and all of Canterlot, which now stands under a bright blue morning sky and rising sun. More ooh’s and ahh’s from the crowd; Twilight loops back as Celestia and Luna descend back to the stage and touches down next to them. She directs a grateful smile at the pair, who return it, then aims a grin toward the crowd before the view fades to black.*)