**MAUD PIE**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of Sugarcube Corner, seen from the rear, at daybreak. Zoom in on the back door as Twilight Sparkle, Applejack, Fluttershy, Rainbow Dash, and Rarity make their way toward it, all a bit ill at ease; Rainbow is the only one airborne.*)

**Applejack:** Has anypony heard from Pinkie Pie since yesterday? (*Varied negative responses from the others.*)

**Rainbow:** (*yawning*) I don’t see what’s so important we had to meet her here this early. (*gesturing toward sky*) Celestia hasn’t even raised the sun yet!

(*Pan quickly from her to a fence rail, on which a rooster is laid out and snoring heartily, then cut to Twilight on the doorstep.*)

**Twilight:** I hope everything’s okay.

(*Her tentative knocks are met with a great crash and clatter from inside before the door opens. Pinkie Pie stands here, attired in a white chef’s toque and a pair of safety goggles. Mild irritation at being interrupted gives way to giddy relief as soon as she spots the group.*)

**Pinkie:** Thank goodness you’re all here! There’s no time to lose!

(*Jumping out past the step, she throws first Fluttershy and then Rarity bodily into the building and steers Applejack in after them. Twilight follows under her own power, leaving Rainbow hovering by herself; she starts to fly in, but the door slams shut just in time for her to bang into it face first.*)

**Rainbow:** (*rubbing her face*) Hey! (*Door opens; Pinkie grabs her.*) Whoa!

(*It slams again as soon as she has been yanked in. Cut to the five visitors, now cautiously crossing the space inside; a pile of small bluish-gray rocks rests near a window. A crunching noise from below stops them short.*)

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

(*Floor level; they have stepped into a scatter of multicolored fragments, and Twilight shakes a front hoof to dislodge the ones now stuck on it. Tilt up to her face.*)

**Twilight:** What is all this?

(*Cut to just behind her and Fluttershy; they are in Pinkie’s bedroom, and she stands before them, holding a bowlful of the brightly hued minerals and trying her best to mix them with the wire whisk in her teeth. Piles of the material stand behind her. After a few seconds, she tosses the whisk aside.*)

**Pinkie:** My sister Maud’s gonna be here soon and I need your help taste-testing my rock candy recipes. (*Cut to Applejack and Rarity.*)

**Applejack:** Uh, we’re happy to help you, Pinkie Pie, but this seems like an awful lot of candy.

**Rarity:** Even for you! (*Close-up of Pinkie; she has put the bowl down.*)

**Pinkie:** (*smiling sheepishly*) I may have gone a teensy bit overboard.

(*The smile turns into a big squeaky grin just before the camera zooms out quickly to frame the entire room. The vast heaps of the confection in various hues taking up almost every available surface—floor, countertops, bed, stairs, balcony—would be enough to drive any sane dentist into either screaming fits or a catatonic state. Her friends trade puzzled looks before the view snaps to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to the five sitting/standing/lying among the gargantuan array of rock candy varieties and groaning their distress. Clearly they have overindulged, but here comes Pinkie to wheel in a freshly loaded bin. Rainbow’s mouth and cheeks are speckled with crumbs.*)

**Pinkie:** Everypony ready for more? (*Close-up of Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** (*groaning*) My teeth hurt. (*Pan past a moaning Fluttershy and on to Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** I think we’ve had plenty. And shouldn’t you be on your way to pick up Maud from the train station? (*Pinkie gasps.*)

**Pinkie:** But you’ve only tried half of the flavors! (*scooping a hoof-load from the bin*) And we have to choose the perfect ones before she gets here so I have time to make more!

(*She proceeds to scarf down the candy she grabbed, then upends the bin over her head so she can chomp into its contents as well. Applejack and Rainbow recoil in mild horror, the latter’s face now clean, while Fluttershy stares fixedly ahead. There comes the clatter of the bin hitting the ground; a moment later, the pink sugar expert has polished off the lot.*)

**Twilight:** (*crossing to her*) Maud is your sister. I’m sure she’ll love your rock candy— (*looking around*) —and I’m pretty sure you’ve made enough. She’s only staying for the week. (*Pinkie smiles.*)

**Pinkie:** Aw, it’s not just for Maud, silly. I’m making candy for all of us! (*Winces and groans from the other four.*) It’s part of a very important, super-duper-special tradition that only the closest and bestest of friends can share. We’re going to make rock candy necklaces together!

(*She holds one up on the end of this—hunks of the sweet in different colors, threaded on a string—and lets off an ecstatic screech as the camera zooms out slightly. When she continues, she has calmed down again.*)

**Pinkie:** It all started when Maud and I were fillies on the rock farm.

(*During this line, the view turns aside as if it were a page being flipped. Behind it is a colored-pencil drawing of the rock farm homestead from her flashback in “The Cutie Mark Chronicles,” done on lined notebook paper. After the flip, her words are delivered as a voice over. Another flip, and Pinkie watches as Maud, a straight-maned blue-gray filly, empties sugar into a cooking pot from a bag.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) She taught me the Pie family rock candy recipe. (*Maud leaves; she dumps some from the bag into her mouth.*) It has a secret ingredient.

(*An instant after she has put the bag down and backed off, Maud returns, carrying a pile of stones in her forelegs. Page flip: close-up of these as she adds them to the pot.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over, whispering loudly*) It’s rocks!

(*Page flip: the two fillies sit between piles of gravel, threading brightly colored pieces onto a string. Pinkie holds them steady, one by one, as Maud runs a needle through them.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) And she showed me how to string the pieces to make them into a necklace.

(*Page flip: each puts a necklace on the other.*)

**Pinkie:** (*voice over*) And once we were done, we’d trade.

(*The two crayon ponies nuzzle lovingly before one last flip takes the scene back to her bedroom. She is hunched down over a notebook, pencil in teeth to finish this last drawing, and the camera zooms out to frame Twilight and Rarity looking on. Pinkie straightens up, letting the pencil drop; she is now wearing the necklace she showed to the others.*)

**Pinkie:** Maud and I have been trading necklaces back and forth since I moved to Ponyville. They’re a sign that we’ll always be best friends. (*Big squeaky grin; cut to Applejack/Fluttershy/Rarity.*)

**Applejack:** Aww, what a great tradition. (*Pan to Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** Hold on. The secret ingredient is *rocks?*

**Pinkie:** Yeah! (*crossing to them*) But these are a special kind of rock that Maud discovered.

**Fluttershy:** Oh! What kind of a rock are they?

**Pinkie:** Can’t tell you that, silly. (*whispering loudly*) It’s a secret! (*She gives Fluttershy a pat on the head and crosses back; normal volume.*) Now that Maud is heading out to get her rocktorate in rock science, this may be our last chance to trade them for a really long time. I can’t wait for you all to meet her. (*rearing up*) I just know that my best Ponyville friends and my best sister friend are gonna become bestest friends! We can make “bestest-est friend” rock candy necklaces together!

(*Now she is really caught up in the moment.*)

**Pinkie:** She expresses herself through fashion just like Rarity, and she’s really smart and loves reading just like Twilight! And she’s honest, and loves forest things, and is good at games, and…

(*During this line, she throws one foreleg around Rarity’s shoulders and the other around Twilight’s, and the camera cuts to Applejack and Fluttershy as they are whisked in one by one. Rainbow is last, grabbed out of midair by the tail, and all five find themselves being mashed together by the pink goofball for a vigorous group hug.*)

**Pinkie:** …well… (*Excited little squeak.*) …she’s *awesome!*

**Rarity:** (*strangled*) She sounds amazing, but won’t she start worrying if you aren’t at the train station when she gets here?

**Pinkie:** She sure will.

(*The question takes a second or two to filter its way into the center of her noggin; once it hits, her eyes pop wide open and she sucks in a long gasp.*)

**Pinkie:** I gotta get out of here!

(*Throwing the other five aside, she sheds her toque and goggles and gallops for the door. Dissolve to the shore of a pond outside Ponyville proper; it is now later in the day. Rainbow’s tortoise Tank flies into view with the help of his magic-powered propeller, and the bark of Applejack’s dog Winona is heard just before she bounds after the green aviator. Pan a short distance to a picnic being set up by Twilight and Applejack, with Fluttershy and Rainbow also present.*)

**Fluttershy:** I sure hope Maud has an appetite.

**Applejack:** Never met a pony or critter who didn’t love Granny Smith’s apple spice muffins.

(*As she speaks, Fluttershy’s rabbit Angel makes a run at a basket of these baked goods, only to be pushed away by an orange-tan hoof. This is followed by a cry of despair from the o.s. Rarity, and the camera cuts to her on the way in. On her head, secured by a pale blue sash tied under her chin, is a purple hat whose brim and high rounded crown are studded with chunks of translucent bluish crystal. The whole assembly is so heavy that she is having trouble keeping her head up.*)

**Rarity:** It’s no use! (*sitting on her haunches; her cat Opalescence follows her in*) I simply cannot find anything suitable to wear!

(*One crystal comes loose and plops into the muffin basket; now Tank swoops erratically down past Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** I doubt she’ll notice what anypony’s wearing. So what’s the big deal?

**Rarity:** (*as more crystals fall off*) The big deal is that it will be very difficult to show Maud what a strong fashion presence we have in Ponyville if the most fashion-forward pony here can’t keep her hat from falling apart! (*She pouts; cut to Twilight and Applejack.*)

**Twilight:** I think we’re all a little nervous about Maud’s visit. She’s Pinkie Pie’s sister, and it’s obvious Pinkie really wants us to hit it off. Being able to make those rock candy necklaces together is really important to her. I’m sure everything will be fine.

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s., singsong*) We’re heeeeeere!

(*The two mares glance in the direction of her voice; cut to their perspective of a path through the meadow that drops out of sight over a rise. Pinkie stands here, waving enthusiastically, and starts to hop toward the gathering; she has removed her necklace. Cut to Twilight, who takes a few puzzled steps forward and then stops.*)

**Twilight:** Where’s Maud? (*Pinkie reaches her.*)

**Pinkie:** She’s coming!

(*Blue and purple eyes both swivel to look back along the path, and soon all six mares and their pets—with the exception of Pinkie’s alligator Gummy—have gathered to scope it out. Owlowiscious, Twilight’s owl, sits on an overhanging tree branch. A cut to the group’s perspective discloses a whole lot of nothing going on at the hilltop.*)

**Rainbow:** Uh, you sure? (*Pinkie pops her head into view.*)

**Pinkie:** She’s not quite as fast as me. I asked Gummy to stay with her in case she got lost.

(*She turns her eyes back along the way; cut to the six mares, five of whom start to register assorted degrees of confusion and impatience, then to the path. The distant clopping of hooves on earth makes itself heard, and soon a grayish speck emerges slowly over the rise.*)

**Rainbow:** (*whispering, to Rarity*) Is she even moving?

(*Long side view of the area. From this distance, the approaching pony is seen to have a bluish-gray coat and to wear a garment in a darker hue that covers the entire body and leaves only the head, tail, and the bottom portions of the legs exposed. The green splotch attached to the tail can only be Gummy, marking the new arrival as Maud. Pinkie jumps high and hangs in midair.*)

**Pinkie:** WE’RE OVER HERE, MAUD!!

(*She drops back to the ground, but this shout does not a thing to alter Maud’s dawdling pace. Cut to a ground-level, head-on view of the smiling group, framing a small stone on the path just in front of them; it is dark gray, shot through with lighter streaks. Maud steps into view, framed so that her head and rump are cut off by the edges of the screen; her garment is a dress secured by a black belt around her midsection. The next cut presents Maud in full detail, a grown-up version of the filly seen at the edge of Pinkie’s first-party photo in “Pinkie Pride.” Same bluish-gray coat, blue-green eyes, and dark lavender mane/tail/eyeshadow; same dead-level fringe of bangs and top of head. The collar of her dress is turned down, and her entire face is set in a half-lidded expression of utter emotional detachment.*)

(*She flicks her eyes down at the rock lying in the path, leans down close, and gives it a good sniff. When she speaks, her voice comes in a measured, level monotone.*)

**Maud:** Hmm. Sedimentary. (*Rainbow lands between Twilight and Pinkie.*)

**Rainbow:** Huh? (*Pinkie grins wider; Maud picks up the rock.*)

**Maud:** This is a sedimentary rock. (*Gummy lets go of her tail.*)

**Twilight:** (*with forced enthusiasm*) That’s really fascinating, isn’t it, girls?

(*Dead silence. Cut to a close-up of Maud and zoom out on the start of the next line to frame Twilight crossing to her.*)

**Twilight:** We’re just so thrilled you could come for a visit before your big trip. Pinkie Pie has told us so much about you. I’m Twilight, and this is Applejack, Fluttershy…

(*The camera pans to each of these other two as she is named; Applejack tips her hat while Fluttershy waves. The next shot is of all seven, with Twilight gesturing to the next two.*)

**Twilight:** …Rainbow Dash, and Rarity.

**Fluttershy:** We’re ever so glad to meet you.

**Applejack:** We’re just gonna have the best time!

(*Dead silence from Maud, broken only by the steady whir of Tank’s propeller. Finding herself pinned by Twilight’s “get on with it” glare and Pinkie’s hopeful smile, Rarity stitches on a smile and steps forward.*)

**Rarity:** Pinkie Pie tells me you share my love for fashion.

**Maud:** I’m really into expressing myself through my wardrobe.

**Rarity:** A-And what is the delightful frock you’re wearing now saying? (*Long pause.*)

**Maud:** It doesn’t talk. It’s a dress.

**Rarity:** (*forcing a smile*) Oh, yes, of course. (*stammering, backing up*) I just meant, the frock is…it doesn’t speak…

(*She trails off into gibberish; now Winona circles Maud, barking happily.*)

**Applejack:** (*stepping up*) Uh…so this here’s Winona… (*Cut to Owlowiscious, flapping off his branch; she continues o.s.*) …that’s Owlowiscious… (*The movement exposes…*) …Tank… (*Cut in turn to…*) …Opal, and Angel.

(*The rabbit pops out from the muffin basket, his cheeks stuffed. Back to Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** Pinkie Pie told us you have a pet too.

**Maud:** He’s in my pocket.

**Fluttershy:** Oh! You have a pocket pet? (*Angel reacts with growing disgust as she continues.*) Like a tiny mouse, or a baby bird, or a trained butterfly?

**Maud:** It’s a rock.

(*A bit of fishing around in a fold of her dress; cut to a close-up of a small, unremarkable stone fragment being tossed onto the path. Fluttershy grimaces mightily.*)

**Maud:** His name is Boulder. (*Long pause.*)

**Pinkie:** (*jumping in place*) This is going to be the best, most awesome, funnest week ever! (*Close-up.*) I can’t wait for us all to become bestest friends!

(*A zoom out and pan shifts the view to her five friends, who smile and chuckle weakly but are clearly not crazy about having to spend more than thirty seconds with this wet blanket. Snap to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to the group, ponies and pets, partaking of the picnic. Zoom in slightly and cut to Maud, who has placed Boulder in front of herself ;she sets down the sandwich she has been eating and shifts her “pet” closer, as if it might want a bite as well.*)

**Applejack:** (*from o.s.*) Maud? (*Cut to her, pushing the muffin basket forward.*) Would you care to try one of Granny Smith’s famous apple spice muffins?

(*The visitor leans in close, sniffs deeply of the contents, and opens her mouth—over the crystal chunk that fell of Rarity’s hat and landed in the basket. Cut back to a very surprised Applejack in time with a loud crunch of teeth against mineral.*)

**Applejack:** Oh! Uh… (*Chuckle. Back to Maud, now chewing; she continues o.s.*) …that’s not, um…

(*She takes her time working over the mouthful, to the consternation of every mare except Pinkie.*)

**Maud:** (*mouth full*) It’s crunchy. (*Her sister bites into a muffin.*)

**Pinkie:** (*mouth full*) Maud’s right! They *are* crunchy! (*She licks her lips clean of crumbs.*) Yum! (*Cut to Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** So, uh, Pinkie Pie tells us you like games. (*Back to Maud; she has swallowed.*)

**Maud:** Boulder and I sometimes play a game called Camouflage. It’s kind of like hide and seek, but waaay more intense.

**Rainbow:** (*uncertainly*) Awesome?

(*Pinkie has now swallowed her mouthful as well. Dissolve to a scatter of stones on the grass. One is hoisted away in Twilight’s magic, and she leans down to levitate a few others. After a bit of inspection, she lets them drop and straightens up; cut to frame the Ponyville contingent out here, save Pinkie. Stones litter the ground and are piled up near the bushes, and Rarity magically shifts one aside.*)

**Twilight:** Any luck?

**Fluttershy:** I truly wish I had spent more time with Boulder, because— (*lifting a stone; close-up*) —I’m having a very hard time remembering what he looks like. (*Toss it aside; cut to Applejack on the start of the next line.*)

**Applejack:** It’s like lookin’ for a pebble in a haystack! (*She kicks one; Rarity walks over.*)

**Rarity:** (*petulantly; a crystal falls off her hat*) More like in a pile of pebbles! (*Applejack eyes it testily, then her.*)

**Applejack:** Well, you don’t have to make it even harder!

**Rarity:** (*groaning loudly*) I give up! This is impossible!

**Twilight:** It’ll hurt Maud’s feelings if we all stop playing. (*smiling*) Besides, look how much fun Pinkie Pie is having. (*Pan quickly to Pinkie, holding a rock up for Maud.*)

**Pinkie:** Is this him? (*A jumble on the ground; she points to one and continues o.s.*) Is this him?

(*Next she pops up behind a bush and holds up another one.*)

**Pinkie:** Is this him? (*Duck away; emerge from under a large rock, holding it up.*) Is this him? (*Pan quickly back to the other five.*)

**Twilight:** Just a little longer, okay? (*Grudging agreement from the rest of the gang.*)

**Maud:** (*from o.s.*) Found him.

(*All look up with some surprise; cut to her, holding up the ordinary gray pebble on a hoof. Pinkie leans in close; excitement writ large across her face.*)

**Pinkie:** Ah! Where was he?

**Maud:** He was hiding in my pocket.

**Rainbow:** (*scattering a pile*) Oh, come on!

(*She sits grumpily on her haunches; next Angel hops over to Fluttershy, pokes her leg for attention, and points elsewhere. Tilt up to her, following his gesture, then cut to the other five pets all bored out of their skulls. All but Owlowiscious have sprawled listlessly in the grass; the bird has perched on Tank’s propeller, which has lost its magic and is rotating slowly and creakily.*)

**Fluttershy:** I don’t mean to interrupt, but we really should get these little critters home. It’s getting awfully late and they’ve had a very busy day. (*Gummy crawls up on Maud’s head.*)

**Pinkie:** Maud and I’d better get going too. I want her to taste the rock candy we’re gonna use for our… (*rising onto hind legs*) …“best friends” necklaces! (*pumping a foreleg; Gummy climbs partway down*) Aw, yeah!

(*She walks off beaming, her impassive sister following as Gummy climbs back up to the top of her head. The other five goggle after the pair for a moment.*)

**Applejack:** She sure is…different from what I expected.

**Rainbow:** We spend all day digging in the dirt, and he was in her pocket *the whole time?!?*

**Fluttershy:** On the bright side, Boulder seemed really sweet.

(*For a moment, the blue pegasus appears as if her brain is about to burn itself to cinders.*)

**Rainbow:** HE’S A ROCK!! (*Tank gets his propeller going again; Owlowiscious is off the rotor.*)

**Twilight:** Come on, girls. I’m sure Maud was just nervous about meeting all of us.

**Applejack:** Maybe she was just actin’ a little off because she’s shy or somethin’.

**Twilight:** Exactly! It must be awfully intimidating to meet all of us at once, especially since we’re already such good friends.

(*Varied affirmatives from the other four mares. As she continues, Rarity magically undoes the sash under her chin and floats her hat away.*)

**Twilight:** Maybe, if we spend some time with her one-on-one to try to get to know her better, I’m sure we’ll be making those “best friend” rock candy necklaces in no time.

(*A salvo of rocks tumbles down the screen; behind them, the view wipes to the exterior of the Carousel Boutique. Zoom in slowly.*)

**Rarity:** (*from inside*) Where shall we start?

(*Cut to her at the fabric rack in her upstairs workroom/living quarters.*)

**Rarity:** I’ve chosen a few fabrics that I think will be stunning with y—

(*She cuts herself off, having suddenly lost her power of speech. A different camera angle shows that Maud is up here as well, eyeing a soiled scrap of fabric on a worktable. Gummy is no longer riding on her head.*)

**Pinkie:** (*hopping into view*) Choices, choices, choices!

**Rarity:** (*a bit hesitantly*) Of course, if you don’t see anything that speaks to you, I would be happy to suggest a— (*Cut to Maud.*)

**Maud:** I like this one.

(*She holds up the cloth, prompting an airy giggle from the o.s. Rarity; cut back to her.*)

**Rarity:** Pinkie Pie didn’t tell us you were so funny!

(*All she gets in response is a quizzical gaze accompanied by a slow blink.*)

**Maud:** What do you mean?

**Rarity:** (*taken aback, floating cloth to herself*) Oh, well, it’s just…I believe that is a dish towel.

(*Another deadpan stare from the newcomer, thrown into sharp relief when Pinkie grins from ear to ear alongside her.*)

**Rarity:** (*really flustered*) B-B-But i-it does go very well with your complexion. (*walking off, floating it along*) I’m sure I could work my magic and turn it into something fabulous.

**Pinkie:** Rarity and my sister, working together to design something amazing! (*hugging Maud*) This is the best day ever!

(*Now the designer crosses back to them, floating several bits of dirty/remnant fabric.*)

**Rarity:** Perhaps I could sew all of these together and make you something you would like.

**Maud:** No, thanks. (*She plucks the dish towel away.*) One is enough.

(*It goes across her shoulders, and the other pieces are levitated away.*)

**Pinkie:** Doesn’t Maud make the coolest scarves?

**Rarity:** (*aghast*) Quite.

(*Somehow, she manages to get a humoring little grin in place without having her entire face split down the middle. Wipe to Fluttershy trotting along a slightly foggy forest path, with Angel hopping to keep up. Pinkie sticks her head up from the bushes on one side and, in one huge bound, launches herself into those at the opposite edge. Fluttershy slows to a stop, letting Angel race ahead, as a twittering hummingbird swoops down to eye level.*)

**Fluttershy:** Hello there, Hummingway. I’m ever so happy to see you. (*Pinkie zips over.*)

**Pinkie:** What’s he saying?

**Fluttershy:** He says hello, and he’s happy to see us too.

(*Recall that Hummingway was last seen in “A Bird in the Hoof,” as one of Fluttershy’s former patients. The pink pony’s eyes shine at the sight, and she bites her lower lip to hold in the happy before the little guy zooms away.*)

**Pinkie:** I wish I could speak Hummingbird. (*hopping away*) Hummm, hum-um-um-um-ummm, hummm…

(*Back to Fluttershy during this last; she glances back the way she came and spots Maud on the path, no longer wearing Rarity’s dish towel. A loose rock has caught the mare’s attention, and a close-up of the spot picks out the spider that is crawling slowly up onto it. Zoom out slightly as Fluttershy walks up.*)

**Fluttershy:** These spiders only live in Ponyville, and even though they may look a teeny bit scary, they’re actually very sweet and help keep other, more dangerous insects away.

(*About a third of the way through this line, the camera cuts to a close-up of the arachnid—gray-brown body, two glaring red eyes surrounded by several smaller ones, pincers dripping saliva. It is a menacing-looking beast, but it quickly takes on a much sunnier countenance as it pulls out a flower and offers it to the pair. Cut back to Fluttershy and Maud on the end of the line.*)

**Maud:** I was looking at the rock. (*She walks away.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*deflated*) Oh.

(*A blush and embarrassed little smile. Dissolve to the exterior of her cottage; she and Angel stand at the front door, while Pinkie and Maud are on the far side of the brook. The older sister walks away as the younger waves goodbye.*)

**Pinkie:** Thanks again, Fluttershy! Start thinking about which flavors you want to put in your “best friend” rock candy necklace!

(*With that, she hops after Maud, leaving a slightly perplexed pegasus on the step.*)

**Fluttershy:** Oh, gosh. I’m not sure we’re even friends yet.

(*The white rabbit starts to ponder the events as well. Wipe to a close-up of one of the window ledges in the library’s reading room. A book is levitated out of the jumble covering it.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s.*) Maud is a total bookworm.

(*Floor level; Twilight has the tome in her control, and Pinkie rolls past on the ladder Spike sometimes uses to get at the higher shelves.*)

**Pinkie:** She loves poetry! (*Maud walks into view.*)

**Twilight:** (*to her*) I’ve got lots of poetry. Do you read anything by Quill and Ink? (*Another book floats over.*) Or Flourish Prose? (*Maud is poking at another section.*)

**Maud:** I prefer to read my own poetry. (*The two books are tucked away on a shelf.*)

**Twilight:** Oh, I’d love to hear some of it.

(*The earth pony takes a couple of steps closer, coughs into a hoof, and begins to recite.*)

**Maud:** Rock. You are a rock.

Gray. You are gray.

Like a rock. Which you are.

Rock.

(*The winged unicorn can do nothing but stare in mingled shock and brain-paralyzing confusion. However, Pinkie rolls by behind her on the ladder, grinning and clapping.*)

**Maud:** I’ve written thousands.

**Pinkie:** (*rolling by*) She’s so prolific!

**Maud:** This next one is about rocks. (*Extreme close-up of her face.*) They’re all about rocks.

(*And that is enough to set Twilight chewing on her lower lip and wondering exactly what she has gotten herself into.*)

**Maud:** Rocks. These are my rocks.

(*Zoom out slowly from the two; Twilight drops gloomily onto her haunches.*)

Sediments make me sedimental.

(*The exterior of the library; zoom out slowly. Maud is heard from inside.*)

Smooth and round, asleep in the ground.

(*fading out*)

Shades of brown and gray.

(*Wipe to the main barn at Sweet Apple Acres, seen from a nearby hilltop. Pinkie races up and climbs the nearest apple tree, disappearing into the foliage and leaving a trail of pink dust behind herself. There follows a quick shake of the branches, after which the blur streaks down and back to the barn. Inside, she arrives in the kitchen, holding an apple by its stem in her teeth; Applejack is at the stove, minding a pot, and the end of Maud’s tail is barely in view. Several other apples are laid out nearby, and Pinkie adds hers to the pile before zipping off again. As Applejack speaks, the camera pans slightly to frame Maud eyeing the fruit and some other ingredients laid out on a countertop before her.*)

**Applejack:** (*crossing to her*) You ’bout done peelin’ them apples for the cider, Maud? (*Her perspective of Maud, looking back over a shoulder.*)

**Maud:** I think this one is done.

(*A slight pan/tilt down tells the story: she has used a rock to crush one of the apples. Although the peel has certainly been removed, the rest of this particular fruit has been reduced to mush as well. Back to Applejack, who briefly recoils in teeth-locked horror at the sight of such violent treatment of innocent produce. She quickly regains her composure.*)

**Applejack:** (*smiling nervously, backing away*) Oh, uh, yep. That’s a very interestin’ method you got there. (*Stumble over the stove bellows; she chuckles weakly.*)

**Maud:** (*lifting rock*) Should I peel another?

**Applejack:** No! (*catching herself*) I mean, nah. I’m sure there’s plenty apples in it already.

(*Pinkie puts her head into view from above to sniff the steam coming off the pot. Tilt up to show her perched atop the cabinet into which the stove is built.*)

**Pinkie:** Can we taste it now? (*Longer shot, framing all three.*)

**Applejack:** Sure, why not?

(*The contents of the pot are ladled into two waiting mugs, and Pinkie instantly jumps down to stand next to Maud, who has put down her rock. Applejack passes them the mugs; while Maud slides a hoof through the handle and eyes the brew, Pinkie takes a more direct approach. Namely: she wraps her mouth all the way around the edge of her mug, flips her head back, and simply lets the cider pour down her throat. It takes her less than two seconds to empty the mug and drop it on the stove with a happy little gasp.*)

**Pinkie:** *Wow!* That’s the best apple cider I’ve ever had!

**Applejack:** What do you think, Maud?

(*Now, and only now, does Maud finally have a sip.*)

**Maud:** It tastes like apples.

**Pinkie:** Told you she was super-honest! (*She zips over to give Applejack a forceful nuzzle.*) Just like you!

**Applejack:** (*woodenly*) We’re practically twins.

(*Her leaden chuckle goes completely unnoticed, as does the grimace that follows it. Wipe to a patch of blue sky; Rainbow loops into view, whirls in place fast enough to turn herself into a Technicolor blur, and lets fly with a rock. The camera cuts to ground level, positioned across a pond from her, Pinkie, and Maud, and the projectile slams down in the foreground to half-bury itself in the dirt.*)

**Rainbow:** (*pumping a hoof*) Yeah! (*Close-up.*) Let’s see you beat *that!* (*A much larger rock is flung past her.*) Whoooaaa!

(*On the end of her exclamation, cut to a very long shot of the area. The second stone, flung by Maud, flies in a high arc over the pond and all the terrain beyond it—clearing, trees, hills—and drops out of sight. One long, tense, silent moment later, its touchdown is marked by a booming crash and a mushroom cloud of gray dust boiling up from the great distance. This dissipates in the face of a shock wave that rushes out from the point of impact, shaking all the trees and driving the pond water into a tsunami that crashes down on all three ponies and covers the screen. After it drains away, Pinkie surfaces dazedly, standing on a log. She quickly comes to and smiles hugely, rising to her hind legs so she can roll the timber across the water.*)

**Pinkie:** That was *amazing!* (*Rainbow’s head breaks the surface.*)

**Rainbow:** Whoa! (*She glances back to Maud, still on the shore.*) How’d you do that?

**Maud:** I threw it.

(*The blue flyer scowls—directed in equal parts at Maud and herself—and Pinkie hops the log across the pond behind her.*)

**Rainbow:** I guess you won this one, Maud. (*Smile.*)

**Maud:** I’m not really into winning.

(*That smile turns into a disbelieving gasp; meanwhile, Pinkie has forgotten to walk or hop, and the log is now whirling her through the water as it keeps spinning. Wipe to a close-up of the sign that marks Sugarcube Corner. As the camera zooms out to frame the front of the building, Rainbow—now dry—flies into view and stops near the dispirited gathering of Twilight/Applejack/Fluttershy/Rarity at the mailbox. Pinkie, also dried off, opens the door from inside.*)

**Pinkie:** Great! You’re all here! Maud is off looking for rocks, so this is the perfect time for us to set up everything we’ll need to make our “best friend” rock candy necklaces!

(*On the end of this, cut to a slow pan across the other five, trading glances of concern. The camera shifts back to her, reared up and rubbing her front hooves together with an expectant smile, but she soon drops back to all fours.*)

**Pinkie:** What’s wrong?

(*No immediate response. Twilight does a little uneasy poking at the ground with a hoof until Applejack shoves her forward and gives her a look—“try not to break her heart.”*)

**Twilight:** (*not looking Pinkie straight on*) Well…I’m not sure it’s the best time to make “best friend” rock candy necklaces.

**Pinkie:** Why not?

**Twilight:** Uh…

**Rarity:** Well, darling, you see… (*She grimaces a bit and backs off.*)

**Fluttershy:** You’re ever so thoughtful to share your special bonding ritual with us, but…uh…

**Pinkie:** (*smiling, coaxing*) But what?

**Applejack:** (*sighing heavily*) The truth is, we’ve all been tryin’ real hard to get closer to Maud. But, well, maybe some ponies just don’t click the way others do. (*Dejected agreement from the other four.*) We just wouldn’t feel right makin’ somethin’ that means we’re best friends if…well…we aren’t.

(*Now the pink pony’s perky demeanor saddens and her mane/tail deflate like balloons. The magenta tufts of hair do not go completely straight as they did in “Party of One,” but their limpness speaks to how far her spirits have fallen in just a few seconds. She squeezes her eyes shut for a moment and manages not to let any tears leak out.*)

**Pinkie:** Oh. Okay. (*backing slowly through door*) If anypony needs me, I’ll be in here trying to figure out what to do with two hundred pounds of rock candy.

(*Getting the knob in her teeth, she pulls the door shut. Cut to a slow pan across five equally downhearted friends, heads and eyes dropping as they realize just how much this has hurt Pinkie, and snap to black.*)

[*Continuity error: This shot frames her bedroom as being on the ground floor of the building, rather than in the cupcake-shaped upper stories as seen in earlier episodes.*]

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to the exterior of the library. Zoom in slowly.*)

**Rarity:** (*from inside*) I feel awful!

(*Close-up of her in the reading room; Twilight, Applejack, and Fluttershy are partly visible behind her.*)

**Rarity:** Just awful!

(*She trots away, fully revealing the other three mares as well as Rainbow, who sits up on a window ledge. Twilight and Fluttershy are at the center table, the latter feeding Owlowiscious as he perches on the edge, and Applejack sits on her haunches at the bottom of the staircase. Zoom in on Applejack and Fluttershy.*)

**Fluttershy:** Maybe we should have just pretended we were friends with Maud. (*Cut to Twilight and Rainbow; a book stands open before Twilight, showing drawings of rocks.*)

**Twilight:** (*levitating/closing it*) If we didn’t tell Pinkie Pie that we hadn’t all become the best of friends, I think Maud would have.

**Rainbow:** Maybe. (*Book hits the table.*) But who really knows? (*Close-up; she is idly nudging a stone back and forth.*) That pony is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an igneous.

**Rarity:** Don’t you mean “inside an enigma”?

**Rainbow:** Nope. I mean “igneous.” (*dryly, hefting stone*) It’s a kind of rock. Ask me how I know *that*.

(*She sets it down and eyes turn toward the door at the sound of knocking. Close-up; it is magically pulled open to show Pinkie, all exuberance and with her mane/tail fully restored.*)

**Pinkie:** (*hopping in, bounding about*) I’ve come up with just the thing to bring everypony closer together!

(*She zips away as Rainbow flies down from the ledge to trade stymied glances with the others. Dissolve to a close-up of Maud standing stolidly outside, now dried off after the pond tidal wave that hit her in Act Two, then zoom out to the sound of approaching hooves. She is somewhere outside the village proper, and Pinkie bounds past while the others bring up the rear. Hooves stop, eyes pop, and jaws drop; cut to a long shot of the meadow in front of them. An obstacle course has been set up here, and the camera pans slowly from end to start. The obstacles, in reverse order, are as follows. A tall mound of boulders, with a gigantic slab balanced precariously at the top; a hoop to jump through; an enclosed slide; a wall of books underneath a tightrope leading to the top of the slide; a spiraling, tubular tunnel leading up to a transparent dome whose exit gives onto the tightrope; a pile of assorted fabrics beneath the tunnel; a giant hamster wheel; a second enclosed slide, the start of the course, whose entrance has a ladder leading up to it and whose exit empties out into the fabric pile. Some sort of sludgy material can be seen through its translucent walls. Pinkie pops up in front of this.*)

**Pinkie:** I call it “Pinkie-Rainbow-Rari-Twi-Apple-Flutter-Maud Fun Time”! (*Big squeaky grin, met by total confusion from her friends.*)

**Rainbow:** Huh? (*Pinkie shoves in among them.*)

**Pinkie:** It combines everypony’s interests into one giant activity that we can all enjoy together— (*She whips over between Fluttershy and Maud.*) —and that will totally bring all my bestest friends together— (*pulling them close*) —as bestest-est friends!

(*Big grin; close-up of her, now standing next to a pony mannequin that wears a spike-topped helmet on its head.*)

**Pinkie:** You’ll need these.

(*Zoom out. The mannequin is one of a row of five, all attired in ludicrous forms of headwear and knee padding; in addition, all but the helmeted one have very silly types of eye protection. Pinkie leans nonchalantly against this one.*)

**Rainbow:** Like I said…huh?

(*The pink nut comes up in a football helmet, pads on all her knees/hocks, and a set of swim goggles with attached snorkel propped on her forehead.*)

**Pinkie:** Probably better for me to show you.

(*She pulls the goggles down over her eyes; cut to her still-uncomprehending audience.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s.*) Watch this!

(*Comes now the sound of her rushing off, and in no time she is crawling to the top of the first slide. Her first words reverberate slightly within the enclosure.*)

**Pinkie:** Applesauce tunnel for Applejack… (*Down she goes, launching herself into the fabric.*) …pretty shiny stuff for Rarity… (*Gallop off.*) …reading material for Twilight… (*Jump and plow through the book wall; close-up.*) …critter time for Fluttershy…

(*Zoom out. She is playing cards with several animals and lays down four aces, prompting disgusted reactions from them. Next, in extreme close-up, her hoof punches a button on a control panel; cut to the transparent dome, in which she stands amid a great many cupcakes that are riding air currents from the blower she has just activated. The next four words reverberate as in the applesauce tunnel.*)

**Pinkie:** …cupcakes for yours truly… (*She eats one out of the air and emerges onto the tightrope.*) …and it’s a race for Rainbow Dash! (*Cut to the others.*)

**Twilight:** (*panicked, pointing*) Pinkie Pie, what is *that?*

(*Cut to the final rock pile, the camera angled to point up at the teetering monolith, and pan back to Pinkie. She has reached the tightrope end leading to the final slide.*)

**Pinkie:** A rockslide, of course! For Maud!

(*Who just gives her a 100% emotion-free blink; back to Pinkie.*)

**Pinkie:** First you climb, then you slide! (*She ducks in.*)

**Applejack:** (*to Fluttershy*) I’ve got a bad feelin’ about this.

(*Pinkie clearly does not, if her giggling, bounding ascent of the jagged slope is any clue. As she works her way up, one stone shifts a bit, trapping a hind leg in a crevice before she can pull it out.*)

**Pinkie:** Huh?

(*She strains to get free, but her efforts only set the entire pile vibrating and rumbling. As the rocks begin to slide down, tilt quickly up to the big one at the pinnacle, which starts to wobble far more severely than before. Rarity gasps and cries out in fright; cut to just behind her, Twilight’s, and Applejack’s heads.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s.*) Oh, goodness!

(*Pinkie bangs a front hoof ineffectually against the chunk holding her in place—and then the monolithic mass starts coming down at her.*)

**Applejack:** Watch out!

**Pinkie:** Huh?

(*Taking full notice of it for the first time, she lets out a scared yelp and lets it turn into a scream.*)

**Pinkie:** HEEEELLLLP!!

(*Before any of the others can react, Maud’s eyes narrow in steely determination and she is off like a shot, flashing past the helmeted mannequin and appropriating its articles for herself. Through the applesauce tunnel and fabric pile, with a speed that causes the five onlookers to stare with gaping jaws and bugged-out eyes; a moment later she is sailing through the air with one foreleg extended. As the huge rock bears down on Pinkie, her sister angles herself to pin it against the slope with her impact and puts her front hooves to work. The two limbs chew into the stone as if they were twin jackhammers, prompting a fresh round of disbelieving stares from the five on the ground, and within seconds she has reduced it to harmless gravel. As she slides down to Pinkie, the movement causes her dress to shift slightly and reveal her cutie mark: a gray rock cut into the shape of a diamond. She breaks the imprisoning rock with one blow, then resumes her impassive demeanor as the latter throws her a relieved grin. Cut to Twilight/Applejack/Fluttershy/Rarity, all of whom voice relieved sighs, and pan/tilt up to Rainbow hovering above them.*)

**Rainbow:** What—how—*what?!?*

(*Pinkie jumps down to the ground, followed by Maud, and gets a hug from the latter—whose voice shows a spark of genuine emotion for the first time since arriving in Ponyville. The emotion in question is a deep worry.*)

**Maud:** Pinkie Pie, what were you thinking? (*Close-up of Pinkie.*)

**Pinkie:** I guess I wasn’t.

(*Zoom out slightly. Maud lifts the pink chin and resumes her deadpan speaking, having taken off her helmet and pads.*)

**Maud:** I know how important it is to you that your friends become my friends, but I just don’t think it’s going to happen. (*Pinkie removes her safety gear.*) I think it would be best if I just go back to the rock farm and spend the rest of the week there.

(*Now it is Pinkie’s turn to let her jaw fall open in shock and hurt; Maud crosses to the others.*)

**Maud:** It was nice to meet you all. (*walking past them*) Makes me happy knowing Pinkie Pie has such good friends. (*Pinkie comes over.*)

**Pinkie:** But… (*voice breaking*) …we never even got to make our rock candy necklaces.

(*Maud does not stop.*)

**Pinkie:** Wait, Maud! (*galloping after her*) I’ll come with you! (*Close-up of Twilight/Applejack/Rarity.*)

**Twilight:** (*to the others*) I can’t believe Maud cut her trip short.

**Rarity:** I can’t believe we nearly lost Pinkie Pie to that ridiculous obstacle course. (*Pan to Fluttershy.*)

**Fluttershy:** Thank goodness Maud was able to reach her in time! (*Rainbow flies down to them.*)

**Rainbow:** (*with gusto*) Did you see how fast Maud moved?

**Rarity:** And the way she smashed that huge rock into dust? (*Cut to Twilight; she continues o.s.*) How in Equestria did she do *that?* (*The wheels start turning in the Princess's head.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*from o.s.*) Pinkie Pie was in trouble. (*Cut to her.*) Maud would move mountains for her if she had to.

(*All five ruminate on this for a moment; Twilight is first to get a brainstorm.*)

**Twilight:** That’s it! I think I’ve finally realized what we all have in common with Maud! Something that just might be worthy of a very important, super-duper-special tradition that only the closest and bestest of friends can share!

(*Cut to the others on the end of this. Hearing Pinkie’s words come out of this mouth throws them for a loop, but soon there are smiles all around as they warm up to the idea. Dissolve to a train rolling through the green countryside, then cut to just outside one window. Pinkie sits here, staring moodily out with her head propped on a front hoof; behind her, Maud is seated and wearing a saddlebag, turned to hang from her neck rather than her flank.*)

**Maud:** Thank you for coming with me. (*fishing in bag*) I don’t know how long I’ll be gone on my rock research trip. (*She pulls out Boulder and strokes it; Pinkie smiles.*) I’m glad I still get to spend some time with you before I go.

**Pinkie:** Me too. I’m sorry I put so much pressure on everypony to bond. I only wanted my friends to get to know my amazing older sister.

(*She snuggles her head beneath that sister’s chin with a smile, but her face falls somewhat at the realization that this moment cannot last forever. Maud has put Boulder away now. Dissolve to the two walking side by side through a stone-strewn field under a sky filled with gloomy gray clouds—they are back on the family rock farm. Maud has her bag properly slung now. After a short distance, she puts out a hoof to stop Pinkie and points straight ahead; the blue eyes pop in surprise, and the camera cuts to the pink pony’s perspective. Her five friends are here, all smiles and standing around several bulging bags, one of which has fallen open to reveal the multicolored rock candy inside.*)

**Pinkie:** What are *you* doing here?

**Twilight:** Pinkie Pie… (*profile view, crossing to her*) …we’re so sorry we hurt your feelings by not bonding with Maud right away. And Maud, we’re sorry that you felt the only way to spare Pinkie Pie’s feelings was to leave Ponyville early.

(*Varied agreement from Applejack/Fluttershy/Rarity; Rainbow lands next to them.*)

**Applejack:** We’ve seen how much you care about Pinkie Pie, first-hoof. (*Back to Twilight/Pinkie/Maud.*)

**Twilight:** Pinkie Pie’s happiness means as much to us as it does to you, and we’re sorry we couldn’t see it sooner. The thing that makes us click and creates a special bond between us is how much we all love Pinkie Pie.

(*On the second half of this, zoom out to frame the other four approaching.*)

**Pinkie:** Aw, shucks. (*Cut to Twilight and pan slowly across the others.*)

**Twilight:** That’s a pretty great thing to have in common, if you ask me. (*now o.s.*) What do you think, Maud?

(*A beat of silence, broken only by the lonely wind playing across the stark landscape.*)

**Maud:** Sure.

(*Five mares are left at a loss at this monosyllabic response.*)

**Pinkie:** (*to them*) What’s wrong?

**Rarity:** Sorry, darling. I think we all just thought she’d be a bit more excited about this. (*Close-up of Pinkie.*)

**Pinkie:** (*smiling hugely*) Are you kidding me? (*Zoom out slight; she points at Maud.*) I’ve never seen her more excited in my entire life! (*She drops o.s.*)

**Maud:** I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but I don’t show my enthusiasm for things quite in the same way my sister does.

(*The understatement of the decade, perhaps, and it is further underscored by Pinkie turning cartwheels behind her as she finishes.*)

**Rainbow:** Uh, we noticed. (*Relieved smiles from the five.*) And we’re totally cool with it.

(*Another round of cheerful concurring noises; meanwhile; Pinkie does a quick pirouette behind Maud, drops to her hocks, and throws a load of confetti and streamers into the air. Dissolve to a train station that, except for its thatched roof, has either been built from rock slabs or carved out of a single gigantic monolith. A stone sign carved with the image of a mountain peak surrounded by clouds hangs over the platform, and the building stands in an arid landscape under an orange-brown afternoon sky. All seven mares wait on the platform as a train pulls in; cut to them once it stops. Twilight wears a set of open saddlebags.*)

**Twilight:** Maud, we’d like to give you something to take on your trip, so that you remember all your friends from Ponyville.

(*She levitates a roughly made rock candy necklace from her bags and settles it around Maud’s neck. The blue-green eyes flick off in another direction, drawn by the sound of approaching hooves; cut to Applejack, Fluttershy, and Rarity, each bringing their respective creation, all having fared better at it than Twilight. The first two have the necklace strings in their teeth, while the third floats hers along. Rainbow thumps down from above, almost knocking down the unicorn, and straightens up with pearly whites clamped onto her own offering. This is a large red/yellow/blue lightning bolt matching the one in her cutie mark, so heavy that she can barely lift it; the tip cuts a long scratch into the platform’s surface. The four drape their necklaces onto Maud, who easily remains upright under their combined weight. Rarity is last in the procession.*)

**Maud:** Thank you. (*Pinkie leans in next to her.*)

**Pinkie:** Try not to eat all the candy before you leave!

(*She holds up her own bit of sugar-based jewelry; Maud responds by pulling one from her saddlebag, and the two toss them to each other. The older sister catches hers in her teeth, while the younger snags hers on the end of her forelock and starts licking at the candies strung on it. She walks away; as Twilight takes her place, Maud brings a small box out of her bag and sets it down. The sight of this surprises the winged unicorn a bit; in close-up, the lid is flipped open to reveal it stuffed with necklaces. Maud drops in the newest one; cut to just inside the box, the camera pointing up at the two. She regards the lot coolly, but Twilight goggles at the sight.*)

**Twilight:** Are those all the necklaces Pinkie Pie sent you?

**Maud:** Mmm-hmm. (*She shuts the lid, blacking out the screen; snap to Twilight.*)

**Twilight:** You haven’t eaten any of them?

**Maud:** I don’t really like candy.

(*Cutting her eyes to one side, she smiles for the first, last, and only time in this episode.*)

**Maud:** But I do love Pinkie Pie.

(*Zoom out to put this particular pony in the foreground. She has already dispatched every piece of rock candy from her necklace save one, and her tongue is working on it as Twilight and Maud both smile. A couple of swings of her head bring it to her mouth, and she crunches into it and lets the now-denuded string drop from her forelock.*)

**Pinkie:** (*mouth full*) Mmm-mmm…mmm!

(*She licks her lips and grins widely, exposing the bits stuck to her teeth. “Iris out” to black, centered on her mouth.*)