**PRINCESS SPIKE**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long overhead shot of the main entrance to Canterlot during the day. The drawbridge over the mountain’s waterfall has been lowered, and ponies cross it to enter the city as the camera zooms in slowly. A banner has been strung over the gate, depicting the sun/moon yin-yang design and the stylized figures of Princesses Celestia and Luna that were first introduced in “Mare in the Moon.” From here, dissolve to the entrance hall of Canterlot Castle, crowded with tables, booths, and new arrivals, and pan slowly toward the stairs as a muffled buzz of conversation asserts itself. A cut/pan at ground level frames several of these individuals, which include a crystal pony and a griffon; all wear badges on lanyards around their necks, the sort that might be given to attendees at a convention. The crowd’s attention gradually focuses on a large, bulky, tarp-covered object standing in the ballroom, but a trumpet fanfare quickly shifts their focus. Cut to a close-up of Luna stepping forward. All lines are magically amplified until further notice.*)

**Luna:** Welcome to the Grand Equestria Pony Summit!

(*Enthusiastic cheering; she steps out of view and is replaced by Celestia. Zoom out slowly to show the two sisters standing on the ballroom stage, joined by Twilight Sparkle, Princess Cadence, and Spike bringing up the rear. Twilight is wearing her tiara for the first time this season.*)

**Celestia:** You delegates have traveled far and wide to represent your cities, as we seek to celebrate and learn from all the unique places that make up our wonderful land of Equestria.

(*Cut to a slow pan through the crowd on the second half of this, then back to the stage.*)

**Celestia:** At tonight’s welcome reception, Princess Cadence will dedicate this beautiful friendship statue made up of gemstones from each of your home cities.

(*The camera zooms out to frame the covered bulk as she mentions the statue. Once she finishes, a burst of her magic lifts the tarp away to expose the work: a stylized pony rearing up on its hind legs and standing on a small sphere, rendered as a three-dimensional mosaic of multicolored jewels. Awed murmurs from the throng as the camera moves here and there to pick out the glimmering details. From here, cut to a close-up of Spike, eyes shining as he licks his chops eagerly at the sight of what, to him, would be a four-star feast. On the next line, Twilight nudges him roughly in the gut to snap him back to reality and the camera zooms out to frame her as he gives an embarrassed grin. This shot is close enough to show faint lines of fatigue under her eyes.*)

**Celestia:** (*from o.s.*) Now we’d like to turn things over to the one who organized the Summit—Princess Twilight Sparkle!

(*She moves toward center stage, greeted by applause. Cut to the edge, the camera pointing out over the crowd, and zoom out to frame her on the start of the next line. The tiredness visible on her face is matched by the somewhat blurred and dulled tone of her words.*)

**Twilight:** Thank you, everypony. With delegates from over fifty cities attending three days of conferences, receptions, and meetings— (*Long shot of the stage; slow pan.*) —this is the largest Grand Equestria Pony Summit yet. And let me tell you— (*Close-up.*) —putting it all together has led to more than one sleepless night. We’re so excited to have you here— (*Long shot.*) —and to learn more about life all across this great land of ours.

(*Cheering and stomping from the attendees; in close-up, Spike reaches into view and tugs at her tail.*)

**Twilight:** And now my faithful assistant Spike would like to say a few words. (*She backs away as he steps up.*)

**Spike:** Um…hello, everypony! I-I’m here to help any way I can. So if there’s anything I can do for any of you— (*The amplification stops at this point.*)

**Stallion voice 1:** We love you, Princess Twilight!

**Stallion voice 2:** We love all the Princesses!

(*A fresh round of cheering; Twilight giggles to herself, but Spike sighs heavily.*)

**Spike:** I guess everypony loves a princess.

(*Another sigh, and the view fades to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to the upper reaches of several of the castle’s towers. Zoom in on one of them and dissolve to the suite within: four-poster bed, full bookcase, vanity, desk and chair placed before a bulletin board covered with tacked-up sheets and notes. Spike is here, gathering up a couple of books off the bed and carrying them to the nightstand, but a knock at the closed double doors stops him. He runs across the floor, arms now unoccupied, and reaches for the handles; just as he gets one door ajar, though, it bursts open and a worried-looking Cadence walks in. The combination of her magic on the handle and his pulling at it pins him against the bookcase.*)

**Cadence:** Spike!

(*The door swings shut under her control and he slides to the floor, buried by all the tomes as they come down right on top of him.*)

**Cadence:** Spike? (*He gets one hand free.*)

**Spike:** (*weakly, muffled*) Little…help?

(*She levitates him out of the avalanche and sets him down next to her in close-up.*)

**Cadence:** Spike, we need you!

**Spike:** Of course! What can I do?

(*Sound of the other door creaking open; pan quickly back to an exhausted Twilight tottering on her hooves at the entrance, no longer wearing her tiara. Somehow, she manages to stumble in without measuring her length on the floor tiles.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) Whoa. What happened to you?

**Twilight:** (*groaning a bit*) I’m sorry, Spike. I just… (*She reaches Cadence and Spike and yawns cavernously.*) …need a quick nap. (*staggering backwards*) Napkin! (*climbing onto book pile*) Tell the delegates I’ll…

(*She never gets to finish the sentence before completely conking out, lying on her belly.*)

**Cadence:** (*now o.s.*) She’s been awake three straight days preparing for the Summit. (*Twilight gathers up a few books and cuddles them like a pillow.*) We need to make sure she gets some rest today. (*Cut to just in front of the sleeper, framing all three.*) She’ll never be able to attend the welcome reception in this condition.

(*Zoom in slowly on her and Spike as she rounds to face him and rests a front hoof on his shoulder, all business.*)

**Cadence:** Can I count on you to see to it that she isn’t disturbed?

(*He turns a serious look to her, then to his o.s. boss, and salutes with a smile.*)

**Spike:** I promise. I won’t let you down!

(*Dissolve to a close-up of Twilight, now tucked into the bed and snoring quietly; the suite lights have been dimmed. Spike marches back and forth across the floor, a spyglass propped against one shoulder like a rifle. After a couple of passes, he jumps onto a chair placed in front of one open window, twirls the instrument, and lifts it to his eye for a look at the city. Cut to his perspective, shifting from one spot to the next and re-focusing on each. A unicorn mare walking along one street and using magic to push a baby carriage…a stallion seated at a table outside a café to enjoy his coffee…a mime mare performing for a group of onlookers. Back to him; he smiles contentedly and returns the spyglass to his shoulder.*)

**Spike:** Perfect.

(*As he is about to hop down from the chair, a bit of loud twittering stops him cold. His perspective again, lifting the glass to peer at the pinnacle of one tower and the bird responsible for this disturbance. The next shot frames his eye, greatly magnified by the lens, and pans to frame his hard glare as he lowers the spyglass again.*)

**Spike:** Not on my watch.

(*Close-up of the bird.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) Uh… (*Zoom out to show him climbing up to it, no longer carrying the glass.*) …excuse me? Can you keep it down a little?

(*The avian flits away and directly through Twilight’s open window; zoom out to frame Spike watching it on the next line.*)

**Spike:** Oh, no!

(*He slides down and o.s. Cut to just inside the closed doors of Twilight’s suite; there is the sound of his hurrying footsteps, and they burst open to admit him as the birdsong starts anew. One panicked stop and grimace later, the camera cuts to a close-up of the creature and zooms out to reveal that it has lit on the tip of the snoozing Princess’s horn. Its continued chatter has no effect on her sleep. Spike hurries over to her bedside and addresses the bird.*)

**Spike:** (*hushed*) I’ll give you birdseed! Worms! Anything! Just please stop singing before you wake the Princess!

(*Glancing down at said Princess, the fine feathered friend falls silent and backs away, flying out the window.*)

**Spike:** Huh. I can’t believe that worked!

(*The muffled sound of a lively crowd from somewhere outside catches his ear. Cut to an overhead shot of a polo match being played in one of the grassy courtyards. Two-on-two, with the players carrying mallets in their mouths to hit the ball, and spectators cheer them on as the action roves back and forth across the field. Spike watches anxiously, cutting his eyes back toward Twilight as she begins to turn fitfully and grumble in her sleep. The little dragon makes up his mind; an instant later he makes an impressive jumping catch to intercept the ball before it can cross the goalposts. Mallets are dropped, the crowd goes dead silent, and in short order Spike finds four very annoyed players glaring at him from close range. He waits to speak until he has caught his breath.*)

**Spike:** Uh…hi, fellas. Uh, sorry to break up your game, but there’s sort of an important diplomatic summit kinda thingy going on, and it involves a princess needing to sleep, and, uh… (*They move even closer; he gradually crumples down.*) …uh, maybe you could move your game somewhere else?

(*The sound of a chainsaw scares him into dropping the ball. Pan quickly to a pegasus stallion attired for landscaping work and flying up to use this implement on a tree whose deep red foliage includes large red-orange flowers. He cuts through one branch, letting it fall.*)

**Spike:** (*panicked, to polo players*) Uh, the Princess thanks you for your understanding!

(*He races away and is up at the landscaper’s eye level in a blink, prompting the latter to shut off his chainsaw.*)

**Spike:** Excuse me. Do you have to do this right now?

(*This is all he can get out before letting go with a violent flaming sneeze, his eyes instantly going bloodshot.*)

**Spike:** (*looking up*) Oh, no!

(*Tilt up to follow his gaze and stop on the flowers, putting him o.s.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) Are those…Dragon Sneeze trees?

(*Back to him, rubbing his eyes and trying to hold back another sneeze.*)

**Landscaper:** Duh, these are too top-heavy. (*descending*) Wouldn’t take much to bring these beauties down.

(*Pan away from him on the end of this, framing a couple of adjacent trees that are indeed swaying and rocking dangerously under the weight of their own branches.*)

**Spike:** Can’t you just wait a few hours? (*The pegasus has now touched down and set his saw aside.*)

**Landscaper:** Sorry, it’s a public hazard. (*Spike slides down the trunk; his eyes are clear again.*) I got my orders.

**Spike:** Well, I’ve got my orders too. (*trying not to sneeze; close-up*) Pr-Princess Twi…Twi…Twilight! (*Here it comes.*)

**Landscaper:** (*from o.s.*) Princess Twilight? (*Cut to him, face/cap/mane badly singed; he laughs.*) Why didn’t you say so? (*He pushes his goggles up and glances toward the trees.*) Gee, I reckon they’ll keep a few more hours. (*He walks off.*)

**Spike:** (*to himself*) Hmph. Good thing I got the Princesses on my side.

(*The rumbling of a jackhammer causes him to jitter backwards into the street along which these trees are growing. Orange traffic cones have been set up here to fence off a rather large hole in the roadbed, and a unicorn stallion construction worker is using his magic to ply the tool against another spot.*)

**Spike:** (*briefly covering ears*) Aw, come on! (*Close-up of the stallion; he continues o.s.*) EXCUSE ME! EXCUSE ME, SIR? (*Back to him.*) I REALLY NEED YOU TO STOP RIGHT NOW!!

(*On these last three words, the jackhammer cuts out and the camera zooms out to frame pony and dragon.*)

**Spike:** Oops. (*The device falls to the ground.*)

**Construction worker:** LET ME GUESS, THE NOISE? (*turning to Spike*) SORRY, BUT WE CAN’T HAVE A BROKEN WATER MAIN!

(*On the end of this, tilt down to the hole, which has been dug to expose a cracked and leaking section of pipe.*)

**Spike:** What, you couldn’t do this yesterday? (*Cut to the worker.*)

**Construction worker:** HEY, PAL! I’M JUST TRYING TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING RUNS SMOOTH FOR THE SUMMIT! (*Back to Spike on the start of the next line.*)

**Spike:** But there *is* no Summit without Princess Twilight, and she needs things to be kept quiet around here! So if you don’t mind, I—

**Construction worker:** ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, IF THAT’S HOW SHE WANTS IT! (*He walks off, then instantly gets back in Spike’s face.*) BUT IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, IT AIN’T MY FAULT!

(*Off he goes again. Spike glances to one side, the camera panning quickly in that direction to stop on a stretch of quiet, empty street. Back to him, looking to his other side; a quick pan shows nothing going down over here either, and he grins proudly.*)

(*Dissolve to the upper end of the leading up to the doors to Twilight’s suite. Zoom in slowly as Spike gains the balcony, then cut to him taking a seat in front of the entrance.*)

**Spike:** (*smugly*) Hmph. Princess Twilight will be rested, Princess Cadence will be proud, and… (*reaching behind himself, pulling out a red gem; zoom in*) …Princess Spike deserves a little reward. Heh! Princess Spike.

(*Chuckling, he licks his chops and prepares to bite down on the treat. He is cut off by the sound of two approaching, arguing voices: one male with a heavy New York accent, one female with a Minnesota accent. The owners of these voices come up the stairs; the male is a heavyset tan earth pony stallion with a short, three-tone dark gray mane/tail, sideburns, green eyes under bushy eyebrows, and a slice of pizza as a cutie mark. He wears a blue suit jacket, white shirt, and yellow necktie. The female is an off-white earth pony mare: red-violet eyes, two-tone blond mane/tail, and a cutie mark of a steaming cup of coffee. She wears a heavy, fur-lined, brown winter jacket and a matching cap with flaps pulled down to cover her ears, along with a khaki shirt and black necktie. Both have attendee badges hanging around their necks—delegates from Manehattan and Whinnyapolis, respectively, or MA and WH for short. The next two lines overlap.*)

**MA delegate:** Hey, let me tell you somethin’, all right? I worked forever on this speech, and I know I have more—

**WH delegate:** I got the school slip right here. If you just take a look, it says we have the authority. You know what? I think I would give a—

(*Spike gets out a “Huh?” underneath this cacophony, his face falling at the interruption of his snack, but puts a smile in place once the two delegates reach the balcony.*)

**Spike:** Uh, hi! Uh, can I help you?

**WH delegate:** My friend here, the distinguished pony from up Manehattan, and I are—are in a bit of a pickle. And we need the Princess Twilight to resolve it.

**Spike:** Uh, can you talk a little quieter, and maybe come back later?

**WH delegate:** Oh, sure now, gosh, I wish we could, but, uh, we’re both supposed to give speeches about our local economies in five minutes, and we’ve been booked in the same hall!

**MA delegate:** I had the room first! And let’s be honest, my speech is more important.

**WH delegate:** Point of order there, sir, but I think you’ll find that my speech is the more important one, dontcha know.

**MA delegate:** (*to Spike*) Look. Youse is gonna have a lot of unhappy delegates on your hooves unless we get a rulin’ from Princess Twilight right now!

(*The dragon-on-the-spot chews his lower lip, looks fearfully from one pony to the other, and voices a heavy sigh.*)

**Spike:** Let me see what I can do.

(*He heads for the doors. Cut to inside the suite as he opens one door and peeks in; the resulting shaft of sunlight falls across the slumbering Twilight just long enough for him to close it. He tiptoes over to the bed with infinite care and climbs onto a chair so he can look her straight on. After a moment’s hesitation over whether to wake her up, she solves the problem by sitting up in bed—and startling him into a shrill scream to boot. Her next two lines are delivered in the drowsy tone of someone who is at least thirty winks short of their usual allotment of forty.*)

**Twilight:** Does something need scheduling?

**Spike:** Oh, uh…uh, yeah. Two delegates have speeches booked in the same hall. What do I do?

**Twilight:** Okay, no problem. Just put the hay in the apple and eat the candle, hmm?

**Spike:** Huh?

(*The sleep-deprived Princess yawns and goes right back to dreamland in close-up. Zoom out to frame Spike, on the verge of tearing his scales out.*)

**Spike:** (*sputtering*) Oh, I need an answer, but Twilight can’t even think straight! (*Close-up; zoom in slowly.*) Oh, my gosh. What am I supposed to do?

(*Fearful shivers run up and down the reptilian body before the view snaps to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to the two delegates standing outside the doors. Spike lets himself out and closes them again.*)

**MA delegate:** Well, what did she say? (*Close-up.*) She picked me, right? (*Zoom out to frame his colleague.*)

**WH delegate:** Hey, hey, hey! Let’s not be too hasty there, good sir. I got a feeling she went with me. (*Cut to Spike.*)

**MA delegate:** (*from o.s.*) Hey, hey, if she didn’t pick me, it ain’t hard to see that— (*Back to him.*) —as an insult to all of Manehattan! You know what I’m sayin’? (*To Spike, now sweating and shaking; zoom in slowly.*)

**WH delegate:** (*from o.s.*) And it’d sure be a shame to see something like a scheduling issue— (*Back to her.*) —create a nasty old rift between Whinnyapolis and Ponyville. (*Spike again.*)

**MA delegate:** (*from o.s.*) So? (*Both ponies.*) What did the Princess say?

**WH delegate:** Come on now. Spit it out.

(*Ground level, framing Spike through both sets of forelegs; zoom in slowly.*)

**Spike:** Um…she said that…well…she said that she…she wants you to… (*small voice*) …share it?

(*He cringes as if expecting a blow from one or the other, but none is forthcoming. In fact, the quarreling delegates have fallen completely silent; it takes a moment for the stallion to speak.*)

**MA delegate:** If that’s what the Princess wants… (*offering a front hoof to the mare*) …what are you gonna do?

**WH delegate:** (*smiling, shaking it*) The Princess is always right.

(*He returns her smile as they head back down the stairs. The next two lines overlap, fading out.*)

**MA delegate:** Listen, no hard feelings. This is not about you or me, right? I mean, this is a…

**WH delegate:** Now there you go. We got a solution. I have no hard feelings…

(*Spike sits down with a relieved sigh. A moment later he is back on his feet and pulling a bowlful of gems out from behind himself.*)

**Spike:** Now, back to more important things.

(*One of which consists of munching down on the first precious stone he can fish up. Dissolve to him sitting at the doors and patting his full belly; the now-empty bowl rests alongside, a few jewel crumbs scattered around it. His respite lasts only as long as it takes for a set of hooves to hurry upstairs and the camera to zoom out. The new arrival is an angry delegate: earth pony stallion; light blue-gray coat; blue eyes; short, medium blue mane/tail/mustache; cutie mark of a raining cloud; gray shirt collar; pink bow tie.*)

**Bowtie:** Combining those two talks was a disaster! (*Spike’s eyes pop; close-up.*) The hall was overcrowded and the speakers just shouted over each other!

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) Huh? (*Back to him, standing up.*) But— (*Bowtie gets in his face.*)

**Bowtie:** Why would the Princess have made such a decision?

(*A question to which the one who actually made it has no immediate answer. Here comes the sound of more irate voices, and the delegates belonging to them start up the stairs toward the balcony. Flying behind them is Fluffy Clouds, the white-maned blue pegasus who appeared briefly in “Tanks for the Memories.”*)

**Spike:** Uh-oh.

(*The new arrivals quickly close in on him, leaving no escape route thanks to the closed doors at his back. Zoom in on his apprehensive visage; after several seconds, he gathers his courage.*)

**Spike:** Uh… (*voice raised*) …by order of Princess Twilight…*BE QUIET!!*

(*That gets them to put a sock in it; his voice echoes over the lands far below in the sudden stillness. He claps his hands to his mouth as the camera zooms out slowly, after which the view cuts back to a close-up and Fluffy touches down with the group.*)

**Fluffy:** I was really looking forward to the “Don’t Spend All Your Bits” speech— (*voice breaking*) —but when I went into the hall— (*sitting on haunches, starting to cry*) —a pony had taken my seat. (*sobbing*) A pony who used to be my friend! (*Close-up of Spike.*)

**Spike:** Your friend took your seat? Heh, big deal! Why don’t you just—

**Fluffy:** (*from o.s., composed*) No offense— (*Back to him, wiping his eyes.*) —but I don’t need some random dragon’s opinion. I-I want to hear what Princess Twilight thinks.

**Spike:** (*groaning*) Fine.

(*Cut to just inside the suite as he lets himself in and closes the door. He stops short, noting Twilight sleeping like a rock, and opens the door again to step back out while keeping an eye on her. Cut to the balcony as he pulls his head out to address the group.*)

**Spike:** Uh… (*closing door*) …the Princess says no friendship should end over a seat. You should forgive your friend.

**Fluffy:** (*gasping deeply*) Of course! (*standing up*) Oh, the Princess is so wise.

(*He trots happily away, and the others fall to talking among themselves in considerably better spirits than when they came up.*)

**Spike:** (*to himself*) I could tell these delegates anything, as long as they think it came from Twilight.

(*An idea hits him upside the head, the camera briefly zooming in to an extreme close-up of his face as a shrewd grin takes root on it. Next he turns to face the ponies, who have gone quiet.*)

**Spike:** All right! Who’s next?

(*Dissolve to a close-up of him and zoom out. Matilda has brought a problem to him; he ducks inside the suite, then pops back out a second later with a big smile and a thumbs-up. She beams at this and gallops away, to be quickly replaced by a mare seeking his advice. Pan away from her and down the stairs, framing the inordinately long line of ponies waiting their turn, then dissolve to a close-up of a stallion and mare arguing vehemently on the balcony. Spike listens, darts into the suite, and reappears a second later. He points at them with separate hands, then crosses his arms in a “trade places” gesture. This solution sits well with both, if their smiles are any gauge.*)

(*Dissolve to a close-up of the proud baby dragon at his post, then zoom out to show Bowtie stepping up with a matter to discuss. He ends by pulling his badge out on its lanyard as far as it will go, as if to give Spike a better look; the latter steps in, but comes out with a downcast look. Whatever idea Bowtie had has been shot down; he walks off dejectedly, and a griffon flies down and lands on the balcony as the next one. Spike enters the suite and quickly returns a thumbs-up, causing the beaked face to split into a broad grin.*)

(*A quick series of cuts brings up the following supplicants at the hallowed doors. A well-dressed unicorn stallion, who gets an “A-OK” gesture…a crystal pony mare, thumbs down…a frizzy-haired earth pony stallion, thumbs up. From here, cut to a stretch of the stairs, on which Jet Set—one of the upper-class snobs Rarity met during “Sweet and Elite”—and Minuette are among those waiting in line. Frizzy makes his way down past them, all smiles. A dissolve shifts the view to another bit of the staircase; among this group are Lemon Hearts and a skinny, bucktoothed, bespectacled earth pony mare. Blue-violet coat; two-tone curly orange mane/tail, the former tied in a high ponytail; birdcatcher spots under blue eyes; cutie mark of several scattered pages of notes; off-white, short-sleeved dress shirt and brown sweater vest. She wears eyeglasses that have been broken at the bridge and taped back together. Yet another dissolve shows Jet’s wife, Upper Crust, impatiently whiling away her time.*)

(*Cut to Fluffy on the balcony, his face brightening when Spike delivers a thumbs-up. As he flies back downstairs, Spike brushes some dust off his hands and does not immediately notice that Fancypants has made it up here and is waiting right behind him. He turns to face the dapper unicorn—whose badge is clipped to his morning coat, rather than on a lanyard—without missing a beat.*)

**Spike:** So, how can Princess Twilight be of service?

**Fancypants:** Well, as host city, the Canterlot delegation feels it’s only right that we should get passes to every meeting and party, yes?

**Spike:** Well, that doesn’t seem fair. (*catching himself*) I-I mean, uh, Princess Twilight doesn’t think that seems fair. (*Fancypants lets out a long, disappointed breath.*)

**Fancypants:** Yes, yes, eh, very well. (*smiling*) It was worth a try, though, wasn’t it, old chap, hm? (*He descends the stairs.*)

**Spike:** (*to himself*) This is great! I just took care of a whole bunch of stuff that Twilight won’t have to worry about when she wakes up! (*smiling shrewdly*) Wonder if anypony else needs the Princess's help.

(*Cut to inside the suite as he lets himself in. A glance at the note-covered bulletin board hanging by the desk, and he spots and pulls down a scroll of some length. Outside again; he drags this document after him and shuts the door.*)

**Spike:** If I can check a few of these meetings off Twilight’s schedule, then when she wakes up, she won’t have to think about anything but the reception.

(*He squinches his eyes and taps one clawed finger against his chin in deep thought. Dissolve to a group of tables outside a café, set up with cushion seats; at one of them sits the skinny blue-violet mare who was in the line to see Spike. She bends down to sip from her cup of coffee in close-up. On the start of the next line, zoom out to frame Spike now standing directly across from her, scroll in hand.*)

**Spike:** Uh…says here you have a meeting with Princess Twilight?

(*A longer shot reveals that he has stacked a couple of books on his cushion to reach the level of the table. The geeky delegate speaks up with a nasal voice and a serious lisp.*)

**Geeky mare:** Uh, yeppers. (*pulling out a document*) She wanted me to prep her on all the different gemstones in the “Citizens of Equestria” statue before the reception tonight.

(*On the end of this, cut to a close-up of the sheet as she slides it across the table: a drawing of the statue unveiled in the prologue, with additional detail sketches to point out colors and shadings. Tilt up to frame Spike, rolling up the borrowed scroll and running a casual eye over the pictures.*)

**Spike:** Okay, go ahead.

**Geeky mare:** Um, well, I’d rather, um, tell the Princess directly.

**Spike:** Well, if it helps, you can call me Princess Spike.

(*He bats his eyelashes at her, but the only effect is to make her look uneasily around as if Twilight might suddenly materialize on any random cobblestone.*)

**Spike:** No, no, no, it—it’s all right. Uh, the Princess asked me to take care of a few things for her. That’s why I came to find you.

**Geeky mare:** (*nervously*) Well…if you say so.

**Spike:** (*smiling knowingly, pointing at scroll*) The Princess says so.

**Geeky mare:** Well…okay. Let’s start with topaz.

(*Dissolve to a close-up of the construction worker unicorn who had been digging to get at the water main in Act One. He is leaning idly on a portable safety barricade and munching an apple held aloft in his magic.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) I’m here for your two o’clock.

(*The fruit drops, forgotten, and the stallion turns in surprise as the camera zooms out to frame Spike on the scene. He does not shout as before, but speaks at a normal volume.*)

**Construction worker:** *You?* But I’m supposed to be briefing Princess Twilight on the progress with the water main.

**Spike:** *I* speak for the Princess.

**Construction worker:** Oh, well, uh— (*turning to the hole*) —can I start fixing it again? I’m getting a little worried, to be honest.

(*On the end of this line, tilt down to the damaged pipe, which has begun to rumble and creak audibly.*)

**Spike:** Actually, Twilight still needs her rest, and her “no noise” policy is still in effect for a few more hours. Sorry.

(*The unicorn glumly walks away, floating his jackhammer ahead of him; Spike heads across the street in the opposite direction, where Cadence is standing and looking on.*)

**Cadence:** Hey, Spike. (*He stops short, surprised.*) What’s going on?

**Spike:** (*quickly recovering himself*) Ah, you know, just settin’ ’em up and knockin’ ’em down.

**Cadence:** What do you mean? (*He tucks the scroll behind his back.*)

**Spike:** Not only have I kept things quiet so Twilight could sleep, I also took care of all her afternoon meetings so she won’t have to worry about ’em when she wakes up. (*Grin; close-up of Cadence.*)

**Cadence:** (*skeptically*) Are you sure she’d want you doing that? There are so many things to keep track of at this summit. (*Zoom out to frame Spike.*)

**Spike:** (*dismissively*) Nah, don’t worry. I got it covered. I know Twilight so well, it’s easy to make decisions like her.

**Cadence:** (*not convinced*) Oh…okay. (*walking away*) Well, thank you for keeping Twilight’s stress level down… (*Stop; glance pointedly back toward him.*) …as long as that’s the real reason you’re doing it.

**Spike:** Well, why else would I be doing it? (*She steps over to him.*)

**Cadence:** (*lifting his chin*) You’re not enjoying speaking for Twilight a little bit?

(*He grimaces to himself, then manages a shaky smile as she lowers the hoof.*)

**Spike:** Enjoying it? (*Chuckle.*) No way! The only things I’m doing by order of the Princess are for the good of the Summit.

(*The grin that he slaps on somehow fails to be totally convincing, but Cadence holds her tongue and instead walks off after giving him a searching look. Once she has spread her wings and lifted off from the street, he turns toward the camera with a slightly deranged little chuckle as it zooms in slowly.*)

(*Dissolve to the overly presumptuous dragon lying face-down on a massage table and getting a good thorough kneading by a unicorn stallion.*)

**Spike:** (*sighing, voice vibrating*) By order of the Princess. Hah.

(*Clouds of steam drift up to fill the screen, then dissipate to give a close-up of Gustave LeGrand—the griffon chef who appeared in “MMMystery on the Friendship Express”—carrying a tray of cupcakes and not looking too happy about it. Each one has been frosted in a different color and studded with tiny gems to match. Spike reaches into view and snags one; pan to the grinning gourmand, then cut to a longer shot. The two are standing in the kitchen of Canterlot Castle.*)

**Spike:** By order of the Princess.

(*He tosses the treat into his mouth and chomps noisily away as Gustave allows himself a thoroughly disgusted eye roll. From here, dissolve to a close-up of an old tan unicorn stallion whose mane/tail, eyebrows, and beard/mustache are streaked gray and white. He is in another part of the castle, using his magic to levitate a paint palette and ply a brush against an easel, and his cutie mark is a pony version of Leonardo da Vinci’s Mona Lisa. A cut to just behind the artist frames the work in full: Spike, in his beefed-up humanoid form as seen during his hero fantasy in “A Dog and Pony Show,” reclining against a slab of rock and reaching lazily out toward several floating jewels. The camera pans away from the work to stop on Spike, modeling the pose as he lies on a chaise longue.*)

**Spike:** (*through his teeth*) By order of the Princess.

(*Dissolve to the ballroom, where Spike sits at one of several long tables near the “Citizens of Equestria” statue, a bowl of gems within easy reach. A banner matching the one hung over the city’s main entrance has been strung up here as well. Zoom in as he sighs blissfully.*)

**Spike:** Princess life is good. (*Close-up; he munches one. Sound of approaching hooves.*)

**Cadence:** (*from o.s.*) It sure is— (*Zoom out slightly; she walks up.*) —but it’s also hard work— (*pointedly*) —isn’t it?

**Spike:** (*shrugging*) Eh, it’s not so bad. (*He reaches to the bowl.*)

**Cadence:** Spike, I’m concerned you might be abusing your relationship with Twilight.

**Spike:** (*chuckling*) What are you talking about? I’m a great princess.

(*He catches himself, throws the gem he holds aside, and leans over the table toward her suddenly dirty look.*)

**Spike:** I mean, *Twilight’s* a great princess, and I’ve been working hard to help her.

(*Pan quickly to the MA and WH delegates shaking hooves after he mediated their dispute at the start of this act.*)

**Spike:** (*voice over*) When two delegates had a falling out, *I’m* the one who fixed their friendship.

(*Another pan; now the geeky mare gives an overview of the statue’s composition. During the next line, pan to frame a completely bored Spike across from her.*)

**Spike:** (*voice over*) *I* listened to that pony drone on about gems for forty-five minutes— (*He goes face-first on the table.*) —so Twilight wouldn’t have to.

(*A third pan; the four ponies who were playing polo in Act One stand close together, mallets in teeth but with no good idea of what to do with them. As he continues, zoom out to show them standing within a fenced-in enclosure, well outside the castle proper, that leaves them barely any room to turn around.*)

**Spike:** (*voice over*) *I* moved a polo match away from the tower so she could sleep.

(*One more pan returns the action to the ballroom.*)

**Spike:** And *I* didn’t even eat that delicious-looking statue. *I’m* a decision-making master!

(*All of this self-aggrandizement thoroughly fails to impress the pink Princess, who just cocks an eyebrow at him until he deflates with a sigh.*)

**Spike:** Okay. So maybe I did get a little carried away making decisions, but it’s not like anything bad happened.

(*Two of the polo players run into each other, and one swings his mallet to hit the ball. It flies wide, sailing over the fence and the castle wall, and scores a hit on the boughs of one Dragon Sneeze tree. It teeters precariously for a moment before the trunk snaps, leaving the whole thing to fall against the next tree in line; down goes this one, which in turn fells a third, which in turn lands squarely on the leaky water main. A mighty cracking and rumbling issues from beneath the deep red boughs, giving way to a massive jet of water as the pipe fails. Cut to the ballroom; one of the stained-glass windows takes the full brunt and shatters, and within seconds the place is flooded. Tree parts float on the current as Cadence’s yell splits the air; cut to her, flailing to keep her head above water. Spike is swept into view after her, lungs and arms working overtime as well. The deluge wipes out buffet tables and rips down the banner before carrying Cadence near the stage; she plods up the steps and onto it, shaking herself dry. An upside-down tale floats past, bearing Spike.*)

**Spike:** This is unexpected!

**Cadence:** I’ll go shut off the main! You get rid of the water!

(*As she flies off to cover her end, he spots his bowl of gems drifting past and hauls it in. Grimacing mightily at the sacrifice he knows he must make, he dumps the contents overboard and starts using the bowl in a fruitless effort to bail out the ballroom.*)

(*Outside, tilt down from the window through which the water is rushing in. Cadence has arrived at the site of the broken main, and she shifts her horn into top gear. A blaze of white light kindles at the end and triggers the growth of several feet of jagged, multicolored crystals over the free end that plug the torrent. Inside the castle, Fancypants hears rumbling from a set of closed double doors, uses his magic to open one, and is immediately hit with a gout of water that sweeps him away. The ballroom becomes visible through the doors as this subsides; cut to Spike, bowl in hand and still standing on his makeshift life raft. The water has drained out, leaving only a few puddles here and there. He looks about himself and runs across the room with a grin, dropping the bowl; cut to the spherical base of the statue—still somehow intact. Blooms, petals, and leaves from the Dragon Sneeze trees are scattered on the floor around it as he runs up.*)

**Spike:** At least the statue’s okay.

(But he is not, as his allergy to this plant chooses this moment to kick in.)

**Spike:** (*sniffling*) Oh.

(*Pan quickly to follow his glance across the room and stop on one bit of the offending flora.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) Oh, no!

(*To him again; here comes the windup, followed by a cut to a relatively clear patch of floor just before he lets rip with a sneeze. The sound of gems breaking apart is accompanied by a rain of loose ones that were once part of the splendid statue. Cut back to Spike, wiping his nose, and zoom out as he takes full, horrified notice of the near-total destruction he has just visited on this artwork. Only a section of the base has survived, but it too crumbles into single stones.*)

**Spike:** (*sourly*) Oh, bless me.

(*Snap to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to just inside the open ballroom doors. A great deal of very angry shouting makes itself heard, and here come a great deal of very angry ponies, headed by Fancypants.*)

**Fancypants:** Oh, my!

(*His perspective, panning slowly across the thoroughly trashed room, the remains of the statue, and Spike, then cut to an overhead shot as the group crosses to the dragon.*)

**Fancypants:** What is the meaning of this? (*Spike’s allergic reaction and the crowd both subside.*)

**Spike:** (*thinking fast*) Well…uh…you see…there was this polo game, and— (*Fancypants rounds on the construction worker.*)

**Fancypants:** How could you let a water main burst on Canterlot’s most important day?

**Construction worker:** Hey, don’t look at me! Princess Twilight said to stop workin’ on it!

(*The landscaper pegasus, having cleaned himself up from when Spike charcoaled him with a sneeze in Act One, finds himself under the white unicorn’s scrutiny next. A few Dragon Sneeze boughs are floated over for emphasis.*)

**Fancypants:** Well, what about these trees? (*He sends them away.*) I ordered them trimmed to avoid just such a situation!

**Landscaper:** Well, the Princess told me to stop, bub.

**Fancypants:** (*pacing a bit*) Why would the Princess make such horrible decisions? This all could have been prevented!

(*General disgruntled assent from the crowd.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) Please! (*Cut to him, standing on a broken table.*) Everypony! Listen! I-I’m so sorry all this happened! (*Fancypants eyes him.*)

**Fancypants:** What are *you* apologizing for? These were Princess Twilight’s awful decisions!

**WH delegate:** I’m about to blow my stack on Princess Twilight, I tell you that for nothin’!

**MA delegate:** Yeah, me too!

**Fancypants:** I’ll not let Princess Twilight give Canterlot a bad name in the eyes of Equestria! Come on, everypony! Let’s go give her a piece of our minds!

(*He gallops off, the others following with dander up and grumbles in throats.*)

**Spike:** (*jumping off table, running after them*) Please! You’ve got it all wrong!

(*Hooves of all colors pound their way up the tower stairs; as the crowd thunders its way through one spiral turn after another, Spike sprints up the banister in a desperate bid to beat them to the top. He wins the race and plasters himself against the doors of her suite, back first with arms thrown as wide as they will go.*)

**Spike:** *WAIT!!*

(*Dead silence, his one word ringing loud and clear; close-up of him.*)

**Spike:** I mean… (*softly*) …waaaaait!

**Fancypants:** (*from o.s., exasperated, sputtering a bit*) What is it now? (*Cut to him and the group.*) There’s an angry mob here that demands satisfaction! (*Back to Spike.*)

**Spike:** (*hushed*) It-it’s just that, uh…we don’t want to wake the Princess, do we?

**MA delegate:** (*from o.s.*) Wake her?!? (*Cut to him.*) What?!? You’re tellin’ me that she’s asleep?!?

(*That gets the ponies yelling all over again and starts them closing in on the overreaching dragon for good measure. He opens one door and ducks into the suite; cut to just inside as he repels Fancypants’s attempt to bull his way in and gets the door closed. A turn of the deadbolt seals it, and he heaves for breath.*)

**Fancypants:** (*from outside, through doors, pounding on them*) Princess, we must speak at once!

**Spike:** (*on his last good nerve*) She…is…*SLEEPING!!*

(*Realizing too late that he may have blown the game for good, he claps both hands over his mouth and shoots a glance toward the bed. The high-decibel onslaught, though, has not shifted Twilight even one iota from her nap, and he crosses the suite to regard her with a sigh from her bedside. Suddenly, she awakes and sits up with a happy yawn and stretch, fully rested and back to her normal self. The fatigue is gone from her face and voice.*)

**Twilight:** I’m glad you’re here, Spike. We’ve got a lot to do. (*She climbs out of bed and heads toward the doors.*) Do you know if the water main was fixed?

**Spike:** (*nervously*) Uh…you seem well-rested.

**Twilight:** (*laughing, stretching a hind leg*) I haven’t slept like that since I was a filly.

**Spike:** You haven’t? Well, at least I got one thing right. (*An idea occurs to him.*) And it was the one thing Cadence asked of me! Maybe I did do a good job today!

(*The muffled pounding and yelling from the other side of those doors throws enough of a scare into him to set him running across the room. Before he can either head Twilight off or slip out to calm down the crowd, they barge in, slamming the doors open with enough force to hurl him back across the suite with a yell.*)

**Twilight:** Fancypants! What’s wrong? (*He leans into her face; the crowd quiets down.*)

**Fancypants:** Don’t play games with me, Princess! You know why I’m here.

**Twilight:** (*backing away*) I-Is this about the special privileges you wanted? Because this seems a little extreme.

**Fancypants:** (*sputtering a bit*) Special privileges?!? (*stomping a hoof*) The last thing on my mind is special privileges!

(*Her brain stalls out for a fraction of a second. Once it finds second gear again, she aims a look across the suite, toward the window where Spike is trying to climb out with the help of a couple of books to reach the sill.*)

**Twilight:** What’s going on, Spike?

(*Cut to just outside the window on the end of this; he freezes in his tracks.*)

**Spike:** Um… (*Inside again; he turns to face her.*) …you needed to sleep. (*jumping off books, crossing room*) And Princess Cadence told me you weren’t to be disturbed. And there was this bird and, well…long story short, I-I made a few decisions on your behalf.

(*He hangs his head dejectedly. Cut to a close-up of Twilight in the ballroom; on the next line, zoom out as she takes in the extent of the wreckage. Spike and Cadence stand in front of her.*)

**Twilight:** A *few* decisions? (*She paces the floor.*)

**Spike:** Well…maybe more than a few, but… (*Cadence glares at him.*) …I had good intentions! Honest! (*The glare intensifies.*) Until I… (*Cut to Twilight, sadly regarding a torn ribbon; he continues o.s.*) …didn’t anymore.

(*On the start of the next line, pan slightly to frame him crossing toward her.*)

**Spike:** I’m sorry, Twilight. (*She drops the ribbon.*) I guess I got a little carried away. It-it just felt so good to have ponies caring about my opinions on such important matters. I guess I was just enjoying feeling like a princess.

**Twilight:** (*turning to him, lifting his chin with a smug smile*) Well, Spike, one of the most important things a princess can do is realize when she’s made a mistake and fix it.

**Spike:** How do I do *that?*

**Cadence:** (*pointing o.s.*) You could start with them.

(*Cut to the out-of-sorts delegates, then to Spike as he sighs heavily, then back to them.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) Uh…hi there, everypony. (*Anger melts into surprise; back to him, stepping forward.*) So…I guess I owe you all a pretty big apology.

(*Long shot of him, now standing on the ballroom stage with Twilight and Cadence looking on from one side as he speaks to the crowd. Slow pan.*)

**Spike:** I-It’s funny. Here we are at a summit that brings together ponies from all across Equestria, and all I could think about was myself. (*Cut to a slow pan through the crowd; he continues o.s.*) You all came here to celebrate the things that make each of our cities so unique and special.

(*Back to him on the end of this; he looks toward Twilight and Cadence, the camera zooming out to frame them nearby.*)

**Spike:** But instead of getting into the spirit of things like all of you, I used my friend’s position to make myself feel good.

(*As he finishes, cut to a close-up of a blue jewel lying on the stage at his feet; he reaches into view and picks this up, reflecting his contrite expression in each facet. The green eyes shift into determination, and the camera cuts to the delegates in time with the sound of gems clinking against each other. A zoom out shows the baby dragon trying to puzzle out their arrangement; he has a small portion of the base reassembled, but the next stone he places causes all the others to fall apart again. As he fumbles with them, Fancypants and the MA and WH delegates step to the front; a red gem falls loose, but before Spike can pick it up again, the unicorn’s magic takes hold and floats it up.*)

**Fancypants:** The Canterlot ruby goes here, old sport.

(*Close-up of it being set into its place on the end of this; next the WH delegate adds a piece alongside.*)

**WH delegate:** And ours goes here, dontcha know.

(*Good-natured talk and laughter begin to spread as the other attendees add in their cities’ gems, with mouths, hooves, magic, and griffon talons. One last piece added, and a brief glimmer of light plays over the entire statue; zoom out to frame it fully rebuilt.*)

**Spike:** Does this mean you forgive me?

**MA delegate:** Sure! You know, the whole idea of the statue— (*Cut to it, tilting slowly up along its height; he continues o.s.*) —is that when each of us plays our own small part, it adds up to somethin’ great. (*Back to ground level.*)

**Fancypants:** Quite. (*Slow pan across the group.*) Just like how all our cities make up the beautiful land of Equestria.

(*The camera motion puts him o.s. as he finishes. Cut to another tilt up the statue’s height; Cadence is in view for only the first few words of the following until the movement puts her out of frame.*)

**Cadence:** I hereby dedicate the “Citizens of Equestria” statue to everypony who plays their part— (*Back to her and Spike.*) —no matter how big or how small.

(*A collective cheer as one delegate brings Spike a bouquet of flowers—very familiar red-orange ones, nestled in a spray of equally familiar deep red leaves. He realizes this in the split second that it takes for his eyes to go bloodshot and watery, and one sniff confirms it: some dope decided to use Dragon Sneeze as a thank-you gift.*)

**Spike:** Aw, come on!

(*Twilight and Cadence, then Fancypants and the MA/WH delegates, recoil in horrified anticipation to the sound of his building sneeze, and the camera zooms out quickly from Spike as he braces himself to let fly. Before he can do so, the view snaps to black.*)