**THE GIFT OF THE MAUD PIE**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a train rolling through the countryside during the day. Zoom in and cut to a couple of passengers reading inside. Pinkie Pie pops up between the pair, startling them and several other riders considerably as she hops about.*)

**Pinkie:** (*singsong, with growing excitement*) We’re going to Manehattan, we’re going to Manehattan, we’re going to Manehattan!

(*She ends with a bend-over-backwards maneuver that brings her face to face with Rarity, who is using her magic to work a file across one hoof.*)

**Rarity:** (*nonchalantly*) Yes, yes, Manehattan. The height of sophistication, elegance, culture. (*She sets the file down and blows away some dust, then smiles.*) Since my boutique in Canterlot has been doing so nicely, it only makes sense for me to open one there as well. (*Up with the file for a moment; Pinkie bounds upright with a squeal.*)

**Pinkie:** We’re almost there! Why doesn’t your face look like this?

(*She demonstrates “this” by stretching her own cheeks back until every tooth is exposed in an ear-to-ear grin, adding another little squeal to drive the point home.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, Pinkie, dear, this is just a business trip for me. (*Pinkie rearranges her face into a frown.*) I need to scour the city for the most perfect location for my new shop. (*Another pull, and the frown becomes a bored one.*) And while it’s lovely how excited you are, there’s absolutely no chance of me getting swept into the—

(*Any further words are lost under a lung-bursting gasp as she catches sight of Manehattan’s high rises passing by her window. Cut to just outside, the reflections playing across the glass as she stares raptly out with a new enthusiasm of her own.*)

**Rarity:** —energy! The beauty!

(*Long shot of the skyline, panning slowly along the bridge over its river or bay as the train chugs across it.*)

**Rarity:** (*voice over*) The majesty of the greatest city in all of Equestria!

(*Cut to just outside the glass doors of the train station. Rarity, visible through panes, flings them open with her magic and sighs contentedly as Pinkie catches up to her.*)

**Rarity:** This city is simply *amazing!*

(*She delivers this last word in a singsong tone, the camera zooming out quickly across the busy street in front of the station.*)

**Rarity:** It’s just…everything…ever! (*Back to the pair.*)

**Pinkie:** And it’s about to get “everything-ever”-er! (*pointing down the steps*) Because guess who I see!

(*All four eyes turn toward street level and lock onto her sister Maud, standing stolidly and solidly on the sidewalk to gaze back up at them.*)

**Pinkie:** (*hopping down steps, forming each letter with her body*) M! A! U! D! (*now next to her; close-up*) You know what that spells?

**Maud:** It spells “Maud.”

(*Pinkie cranks off a big squeaky grin, and the camera zooms out quickly to show that Rarity has descended the steps as well. The trusty party cannon is now down here with them, its barrel pointed skyward, and Pinkie sets off a blast of confetti and streamers that catches every equine in the vicinity off guard. Every one, that is, except for her older sister.*)

**Pinkie:** (*jumping up, hanging in midair*) Maud, Maud, Maud! (*She touches down and pulls both Rarity and Maud into a hug.*) Yay!

(*Her goofy grin is met by a hesitant one from Rarity and not a flicker from Maud. Fade to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of the horse-head sculpture that has appeared prominently atop the city skyline in past episodes. On the start of the next line, tilt down to the three mares making their way along a sidewalk. The cannon is out of sight.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, you Pie sisters have just about the sweetest family traditions. (*to Pinkie*) Every year, you set aside a special day to spend with each of your sisters?

**Pinkie:** Yep! I do separate trips with each one. (*Hop.*) And we make it super-fun by picking a different location every year.

(*A colt on a skateboard rolls by in the foreground; behind him, the view wipes to them walking past a theater.*)

**Pinkie:** We see the sights all day and then swap gifts at sunset. And since Maud’s getting her rocktorate nearby, we figured this would be the perfect spot for PSSSD.

(*Pronounced as “pssst,” but with a D sound on the end instead of a T. Misinterpreting it, Rarity leans in toward Pinkie in close-up.*)

**Rarity:** (*whispering*) Okay, what’s the secret?

**Pinkie:** Huh?

**Rarity:** (*normal volume*) You just said “pssst.” (*Stop; Pinkie puts a hoof to Rarity’s chest.*)

**Pinkie:** No, silly. Not “pssst,” “PSSSD.”

(*She emphasizes the D to make the distinction clear.*)

**Pinkie:** P-S-S-S-D. Pie Sisters’ Surprise Swap Day.

(*Throwing a foreleg out to her other side, she is more than a little surprised to find it resting on the shoulders of a rather large, beefy, grumpy stallion. He snorts out steam, and a longer shot picks out the fact that Maud is no longer walking with the pair. She removes her foreleg with a sheepish giggle; Rarity glances back the way they came, the camera panning slightly to stop on the third mare, who has taken an interest in a rack of postcards at a newsstand. Her pet rock Boulder rests on one upraised front hoof.*)

**Rarity:** Maud!

**Maud:** Boulder promised his cousin a postcard.

(*She lifts it a bit higher, as if to let it get a better view of the uppermost portion of the display.*)

**Rarity:** (*to Pinkie*) Well, I’ll just leave you two to your PSSSD. (*Same emphasis that Pinkie used.*) And now I am off to scout possible locations for my new boutique.

**Pinkie:** Before you go, can I ask you a quick question?

**Rarity:** Oh, of course.

**Pinkie:** (*begging, throwing herself down to grab Rarity’s foreleg*) *Will you please help me?!?!?*

(*The spectacle attracts the attention and silent disapproval of a couple of passersby.*)

**Rarity:** (*uneasily, singsong*) Only if you let go of my leg and stand up. (*Pinkie does so; the others disperse.*)

**Pinkie:** Every year, Maud’s PSSSD gift always blows mine away, but this year is going to be different. For the first time, I’m finally getting her a gift that’s as good as the one she always gets me.

(*She fishes around in her mane; cut to Rarity as a sheet of paper is pulled out and shown to her. During the next line, cut to her perspective and tilt down. It is an advertising flyer for various styles of small bags and topped by a graphic of a stone.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s.*) There’s a specialty store here in Manehattan that sells nothing but rock pouches. (*Cut to frame her and Rarity.*) A rock pouch would be perfect for Boulder, and I know Maud will love it. (*She pulls the ad back.*)

**Rarity:** Why, Pinkie! That really *is* the perfect gift for Maud!

**Pinkie:** (*tucking it into her mane*) I know, right? Problem is…

(*Cut to Maud, still giving Boulder the grand tour of the postcard rack. On the start of the next line, zoom out quickly to put Pinkie and Rarity in the fore.*)

**Pinkie:** …I still need to buy one and the store’s downtown! (*Rarity puts a thoughtful hoof to her chin.*)

**Rarity:** Hmmm…and you want to get a pouch for Maud without ruining the surprise. (*An idea hits.*) Well, luckily for you, I know exactly what you should do. Why not sightsee on a path that leads right to the pouch store? That way, Maud won’t get suspicious. I’ll come with you and distract Maud so…

**Pinkie:** …I can sneak away to pick out a rock pouch! (*Gasp.*) And if you’re coming with us, you can look at boutique locations along the way! (*Zoom out slightly; she bounces up off the sidewalk.*) IT’S THE PERFECT PLAN!!

(*As her hooves hit the concrete, those last two words echo up and down the block, prompting a few surprised/angry/annoyed reactions. Pinkie hastily claps her front hooves over her mouth until the closest onlookers have cleared out, then drops back to all fours.*)

**Rarity:** Y-Y-Yes, yes, let’s not get too excited until you actually get a pouch for Maud.

**Pinkie:** Of course. Got it. Absolutely. (*Maud rejoins them, no longer carrying Boulder.*)

**Maud:** Nothing moved him.

(*After a long, silent moment, the pink pony breaks out in a gigantic smile and stretches out her forelegs to encircle Maud’s neck.*)

**Pinkie:** Maud, I’m giving you the greatest PSSSD gift in the history of ever!

(*She ducks o.s. for a split second and comes back with her cannon, shooting a salvo over the street. Dissolve to a simplified Manehattan map with several key landmarks picked out; a red line traces a path through the streets from the train station to the shore, then becomes a dotted line as it goes into the water. It stops at the pony equivalent of the Statue of Liberty, whereupon the view dissolves to a long shot of the actual site and zooms in slowly.*)

**Rarity:** (*voice over, sighing blissfully*) What a spectacular view!

(*Close-up of the crown; Rarity and Maud are visible at the windows of its observation deck, and Maud is holding Boulder.*)

**Rarity:** You really *can* see everything from here.

**Maud:** Especially the glaciation of the sloping strata. It’s breathtaking.

(*Zoom out quickly on the start of the next line to frame Pinkie rising through the air with the help of a bunch of balloons. Her cannon is a few yards below and getting a lift of its own.*)

**Pinkie:** But not half as breathtaking as the gift I’m giving you!

(*Fire. Dissolve to the map; a dotted line doubles back to the shore, and it goes solid again to trace out a path that stops at an image of Rarity’s face. Another dissolve shows the three mares wedged into the extremely narrow aisle of an empty store. Boulder rests on the floor.*)

**Rarity:** I-It certainly is…ugh!…cozy, but this simply won’t do. Working in a space this small would make me lose my mind!

**Pinkie:** Just like Maud’s gonna lose her mind when she sees the gift I’m giving her!

(*The cannon’s muzzle extends up into view behind the trio, and Rarity winces away from it in fearful anticipation. Cut to the street outside the store, which is jammed tightly between two other buildings; the door is open, but the block-shaking explosion hides the mares inside from view behind a cloud of confetti. Dissolve to the map, where the line snakes over to the pony counterpart of Rockefeller Center and its large outdoor ice skating rink, then to a long shot of the building. Tilt down slowly to the rink itself, populated by skaters and hockey players who clear out to give a view of Rarity and Maud approaching from opposite sides. The unicorn has donned a dress over a sparkly full-body leotard, but the earth pony is still wearing only her plain frock and is not carrying Boulder. Rarity takes a breath to speak, but she is cut off when Pinkie skids into view and stops, showering her with ice shavings kicked up by the blades. The peppy pony has donned a short-sleeved winter coat and knit cap. As she speaks, her cannon slides backwards into view and stops in front of her.*)

**Pinkie:** Whatever you were about to say isn’t nearly as good as the gift I’m giving Maud!

(*Here comes another shot, whose recoil sends the artillery piece skidding back and o.s.*)

**Maud:** You’ll be pleased with yours too.

(*She skates off and, as Rarity shakes herself clean, does a jump with a half-turn that brings her down to glide backwards on one hind leg. The fashionista’s mouth falls open at this display of her prowess, but Pinkie just smiles and takes it all in stride. Dissolve to the map; now a pink crayon reaches into view and draws a path from the rink to an icon of a portly stallion dressed in a chef’s white toque and apron—a restaurant.*)

**Rarity:** (*voice over, crossly*) Pinkie, put down that crayon!

(*Cut to one side of an outdoor table at this establishment. Pinkie and Rarity are seated at it, Rarity having defrosted herself, and the map and crayon are being used by the curly-maned goofball. These two have changed out of their skating duds, and Maud will be seen likewise in a moment.*)

**Rarity:** The Cantering Cook isn’t that kind of restaurant!

(*Pinkie hastily spits the crayon away; there is the sound of it splashing down somewhere o.s. Zoom out quickly to show all three at this table, one of several on a rooftop patio decorated with ivy-covered arches and strings of paper lanterns. Boulder rests in front of Maud, and the crayon has landed in another customer’s bowl of soup.*)

**Rarity:** (*sighing happily*) A pony could get used to eating at places like this.

**Maud:** I know. It’s the only restaurant in the city with nepheline syenite in their bathroom tiles.

(*Caught hopelessly off guard by this bit of geological esoteric, Rarity tries to hide her befuddlement behind a big grin and stammering giggle.*)

**Rarity:** Well, isn’t that something? (*stilted*) You know what, Pinkie Pie? (*floating a menu up to block them both from Maud’s view*) Uh…uh, maybe you could help me figure out what to order.

(*Cut to their side of the impromptu barrier. The next three lines are spoken in hushed tones.*)

**Pinkie:** We’re so close to the pouch store! It’s just a block away! I can practically smell it from here—if I knew what a pouch store smelled like.

(*Maud’s side: Rarity risks a quick glance over the top edge, then ducks down. The gray mare’s demeanor betrays no hint that she has caught on.*)

**Rarity:** (*from behind menu*) Okay. Remember the plan. (*Cut to her and Pinkie.*) I will stay here and distract Maud, while you go get a pouch.

**Pinkie:** Gotcha! (*Down goes the menu; she grins fixedly.*)

**Rarity:** (*stilted*) Oh, why, thank you for the kind assistance, Pinkie Pie. (*winking, poking her*) And now I know exactly what to order.

**Pinkie:** (*ditto*) You are very welcome, Rarity. (*backing away from table*) Now pardon me whilst I go wash my hooves.

(*She bumps into a unicorn stallion waiter, knocking down both him and the covered tray of food he is carrying in his magic, and completely freaks out.*)

**Pinkie:** Sorry!

(*And with that, she bugs out fast enough to bash a pony-shaped hole through the double doors leading into the kitchen. The customer who got the crayon in his soup, also a unicorn stallion, levitates it out with some consternation. Cut to a close-up of Maud and zoom out slightly as Rarity leans across to get a look at Boulder.*)

**Rarity:** So, Maud— (*pointing at it*) —that Boulder of yours is such an interesting… (*Clear throat.*) …character. You must tell me—how did the two of you first meet? (*Grin.*)

**Maud:** It was a dark and stormy night. (*Cut to Rarity; she continues o.s.*) Little did I know that my life was about to change forever.

(*The grin becomes noticeably strained as its wearer realizes that she is about to get a lot more than she bargained for. Dissolve to the map, a red line tracing from the Cantering Cook to a drawstring pouch icon—the store whose ad Pinkie showed to Rarity earlier. It shakes to the sound of a ringing cash register, and another dissolve brings up a close-up of a purple pouch with yellow stars/dots and trim on display. A gasp from the o.s. Pinkie; zoom out to put the camera just inside the store window, with her peering at the item from the sidewalk. Her next words are muffled slightly by the glass, and she briefly mashes her face against it as she speaks.*)

**Pinkie:** Look at that hand-stitched, ten-thousand-thread-count, velvet-lined rock pouch! Maud will love it! I need it!

(*Out on the sidewalk. This pouch is one of many up for sale, and there is a small sign hanging on the door. She slides over her and tries to enter, only to end up mashed spreadeagle against its surface when it fails to open. An instant later she is up on her hooves.*)

**Pinkie:** Hm. Must be stuck.

(*Only now does she take notice of the sign, and she leans in to run a critical eye over the text.*)

**Pinkie:** (*reading*) “Took a sudden vacation to Canterlot with my grand-niece. Back in a few moons.” (*small voice*) Oh, no. (*Straighten up; panic grows.*) Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!

(*She gets herself under a vague semblance of control.*)

**Pinkie:** Well, maybe, just maybe, he’s already back from vacation and just forgot to take the sign down.

(*The second half of this line is delivered up close to a couple of passersby, first a filly whose mother does not approve of the interruption, then a mare who gallops off in fright. Pinkie has dropped to her haunches by this point; cut to inside the store, the camera pointing out through the door’s glass panel as she stands up to pound on it with enough force to shake the shelves.*)

**Pinkie:** (*muffled by glass*) Hello, Mr. Pouch Store Owner! I’d love to hear all about your sudden vacation to Canterlot with your grand-niece while buying a pouch for my sister, please!

(*During this line, cut to the sidewalk, where the mother and daughter have flagged down a police officer, an earth pony mare, and the mother is telling her of the incident. The muffled tone ends at this change of camera angle. The officer glances toward the store, as do a couple of passing stallions; from here, cut to Pinkie and zoom out as she steps partly into view.*)

**Officer:** Miss! (*Pinkie turns toward her…*) The store’s clearly closed. (*…and leans over.*)

**Pinkie:** But it can’t be! It just can’t be! If I can’t get that pouch, then not only am I not getting my sister the greatest present in the history of PSSSD— (*shaking her*) —but now I have no PSSSD present for my sister at all!

(*Her ears droop in brain-crushing terror before the view snaps to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to the kitchen entrance of the Cantering Cook. The doors have been repaired, and the stallion with the soup has set Pinkie’s crayon aside and is enjoying his meal again. Out comes the waiter she knocked out, floating a fresh tray and looking rather out of sorts. On the start of the next line, pan to Rarity and Maud still at their table.*)

**Maud:** And Boulder’s been by my side ever since.

**Rarity:** (*woodenly*) Wow. What a surprisingly suspenseful and compelling story. I completely get what you see in him now. (*She gasps as Pinkie trudges over, then works up a big smile.*) Pinkie Pie! You’re back! (*Sit.*) Oh, your hooves must be sparkling clean!

**Pinkie:** Huh?…Oh, right.

(*Setting her knees on the table edge, she props her head on her front hooves and lets out a loud groan. Maud stares impassively, while Rarity smiles and addresses herself o.s.*)

**Rarity:** *Garçon*! (*Longer shot; she is calling the waiter.*) One super-deluxe, two-mile-high, hot fudge sundae, stat!

(*He hurries toward the kitchen, darts back a moment later, and uses his field to slam the requested dessert onto the table. It is a monstrosity of ice cream, whipped cream, and chocolate sauce, studded with cherries and whole unpeeled bananas, and it stands several feet tall in a bowl as wide as the table. Just as with the menu dodge, Pinkie and Rarity take advantage of it for a conference.*)

**Rarity:** (*hushed*) What happened? Did you get a pouch for Maud? (*grabbing Pinkie’s cheeks*) Tell me everything!

(*As soon as she lets go, the party planner sucks in every molecule of air her lungs will hold, then several hundred trillion more on top of that, and opens the floodgates.*)

**Pinkie:** (*rapid fire*) The door to the rock pouch store was locked because the owner’s on a sudden vacation to Canterlot with his grand-niece for a few moons, and so there’s no way I can get the perfect present for Maud and now I don’t have any present for her at all, so it’ll be the worst Pie Sisters’ Surprise Swap Day ever!

(*With the torrent of words at an end, she hitches in a huge breath and buries her face in the colossal sundae. The mound of sugary goodness does very little to muffle the ensuing sobs. Rarity glances around the periphery, sees Maud deadpan as always, and throws her a placating little grin before giving Pinkie’s head a telekinetic yank out of the ice cream. The crying stops.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, not to worry, dear. I’ll just have to help you find a new present for Maud. We have plenty of time before your gift exchange at sunset, and all of Manehattan to explore. We’re bound to find something Maud would like, maybe even more than a rock pouch.

**Pinkie:** (*smiling*) You’re right! Thanks, Rarity!

(*Dissolve to an extreme close-up of a stretch of piano keys A couple of hooves reach into view from above to step on these, causing them to light up and play the opening bars of the show’s theme. The relative scale indicates that this is a giant instrument, and a longer shot reveals that it is a keyboard laid on the floor of a toy store. A stallion and filly are playing the music, but get knocked down when Pinkie slides across on her hocks. She has cleaned herself up.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) Maud…

(*Pan to these two, standing near a group of giant stuffed animals. Maud has put Boulder away.*)

**Rarity:** …I can’t help but notice you’re staring at that marvelous giraffe. I was just wondering—any chance you could see yourself with it?

**Maud:** Only if I had a mirror.

(*The unicorn uses a fixed grin to hide her disbelief at the earth pony’s literal-mindedness. A rain of gems tumbles over the screen, the view wiping behind them to show them in a jewelry store. The designer has donned a dark gray dress, pearl necklace, and tiara and re-styled her mane.*)

**Rarity:** Now, Maud… (*magically lifting her necklace higher*) …I know you’re a big fan of rocks. So get your camera ready—

(*Zoom out to frame the entire showroom, filled with all manner of expensive baubles in display cases that have caught Pinkie’s attention. Rarity’s outfit can be seen to include opera gloves now. As she continues, the camera cuts to close-ups of various merchandise.*)

**Rarity:** —because these are the most spectacular rocks in all of Manehattan! (*Cut to within one case, pointing out at Rarity and Maud.*) Surely there must be something here that catches your eye.

(*As a fully bedecked Pinkie leans in close, her sister pulls Boulder out and holds it up to one ear for a moment, as if listening to it whisper. She lowers it before speaking.*)

**Maud:** (*hushed*) Boulder says they’re all too…stuck-up.

(*Rarity rolls her eyes in mild disgust at this assessment. Dissolve to a close-up of a string of pennants stretched overhead and tilt down to ground level. They span the air above a busy expanse of outdoor market stalls. Maud stands in the foreground, holding Boulder and not doing much of anything else until Rarity leaps into view some distance back and gives a shrill whistle. Once all eyes turn toward her, the camera cuts to a slow pan across Rarity’s figure—hooves planted wide, grim determination writ large on her face, her finery and outfit gone and her mane back to its usual style.*)

**Rarity:** All right. You and me, Maud— (*Close-up.*) —you and me.

(*The view narrows to a horizontal slit that frames her narrowed blue eyes, and a similar transition picks out Maud’s half-lidded blue-green ones. She has put Boulder away again. Fullscreen: the camera rests just behind the latter, pointed down the aisle toward Rarity.*)

**Rarity:** What do you think about…this? Or this? Or this?

(*Each “this” is accompanied by her dash to a stall and telekinetic showing of a different item, zigzagging toward Maud. The camera then cuts to a close-up of the unflappable mare, whose eyes just flick back and forth to follow the items being flung about.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) Or this? Or this? Or this? Or this? (*Extreme close-up.*) This? This? This? This? This? This? This? This? This?

(*She speeds up into a machine-gun tempo, the rattle of flying objects matching her for a while before dying out. Maud’s eyes turn toward the ground at this point.*)

**Maud:** I like…that.

(*Cut to frame both. Rarity has collapsed at her hooves, in front of a mountain of assorted items.*)

**Rarity:** (*frantically, snapping upright, hooves to Maud’s chest*) What is it? You have to tell me! (*floating a scooter out*) Was it this bike?

(*Close-up of Maud. Each named item is presented in quick succession.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) This lamp? This grappling hook? (*She zips into view.*) What do you like?

**Maud:** (*pointing*) I like that fissure in the sidewalk.

(*Blue eyes turn toward the ground; cut to a close-up of the crack in question, with a few tufts of grass growing through.*)

**Maud:** (*leaning down to it*) It’s an elegant example of thermal expansion and soil settlement.

(*By the time she stands upright, two things have happened. One, she has a camera at the ready, attached to a holder around her neck, and she snaps a picture. Two, Rarity looks about one good push away from a full-scale major mental malfunction. The glare from the camera flash clears to give an extreme close-up of the crazed blue eyes, and Rarity backs away to present her contorted face in vivid detail. Incoherent mumblings escape her lips and she claps front hooves to temples as a steam whistle builds in pitch within her mind. Finally she manages to get a word out.*)

**Rarity:** *WHAT?!?!?* (*Maud walks off, her camera packed away.*) But I—all of this, and she likes a *crack?!?*

(*She keels over in a faint just before Pinkie sticks her head out of the mass of discards.*)

**Pinkie:** Did she like anything? (*Rarity stands up.*)

**Rarity:** (*hushed*) That sister of yours is simply impossible to shop for! There’s nothing she needs or wants!

**Maud:** (*from o.s., calling out*) Boulder! (*Cut to her, hoof cupped to mouth.*) Boulder! (*Pinkie and Rarity look her way.*) Where’d you run off to? (*Pause; she looks off to one side.*) There you are.

(*Cut to a close-up of the missing stone, on a counter with several silly-faced pet rocks. On the start of the next line, she reaches into view to scoop it up and the camera pans slightly to frame her.*)

**Maud:** Sure wish I had something to carry you around in.

(*Now it is Pinkie’s turn to flip her lid, bounding up out of the junk pile and hanging in midair as items go flying in all directions.*)

**Pinkie:** A ROCK POUCH WAS THE PERFECT GIFT FOR MAUD!! (*She comes down to earth with a moan.*) And I know she would’ve loved the one I saw in the window! It had double stitching, a red drawstring—

**Rarity:** (*looking away, smiling*) —and ochre-flecked velvet lining with reinforced triple-crosshatched seams?

**Pinkie:** (*glumly, nodding*) Yep. That’s the pouch.

(*The unicorn’s smile has become a grin. It takes a second for her words to sink in through the layers of magenta mane and pink–coated skull.*)

**Pinkie:** Wait. How’d you know?

**Rarity:** (*pointing*) Because I’m looking at one just like it!

(*The lighter blue eyes pop in surprise. Cut to just behind the pair and zoom in quickly on a figure at the far end of the aisle, moving at a leisurely pace along the sidewalk. Light yellow earth pony stallion; unshaven; two-tone gray slicked-back mane and short tail; blue eyes; gold tooth, medallion, and ear stud; short-sleeved reddish-pink shirt; brown belt; cutie mark of several gold coins. The very pouch that Pinkie noted in the store window is hooked onto the belt like a saddlebag, the camera cutting to a close-up of it and then back to Pinkie and Rarity.*)

**Rarity:** Maybe if you catch up with him, you could ask—

(*The rest of the suggestion dies on her lips as the pouch hunter disappears in a pink blur and whips over to intercept the stallion.*)

**Pinkie:** Excuse me, sir. (*bending to eye the pouch*) I couldn’t help but notice your nifty rock pouch. Is there any chance you’d be willing to part with it? (*Straighten up partway.*) I really need it. Like, really, really, *really!*

(*“Goldie” speaks in the manner of a sleazy street hustler.*)

**Goldie:** So, uh, let me get this straight. (*holding pouch up*) You, uh, really, really need this pouch, huh?

**Pinkie:** I believe I said “really, really, *really.*” (*She stands up to full height.*)

**Goldie:** (*bouncing it on hoof*) Well, you know, pouches like this are really hard to come by these days. (*It goes back on the belt.*) But I might be able to part with it—for the right price.

**Pinkie:** (*eagerly*) So you’ll sell it to me, and I’ll finally be able to give my sister the perfect Pie Sisters’ Surprise Swap Day present? (*hopping in place*) Ooh, thank you, thank you, thank you!

(*She demonstrates her gratitude by wheeling the party cannon into view and letting him have it point-blank.*)

**Goldie:** (*shrewdly*) Hmmm!

(*Cut to inside the barrel, the camera pointing toward the muzzle as he peers in.*)

**Goldie:** (*echoing slightly*) That’s one sweet party cannon you got there! (*Outside; he removes the pouch from his belt.*) Tell you what. I’d be more than happy to give you the pouch for the low, low price of…that cannon.

(*At the mention of those last two words, Pinkie’s face twists into a paroxysm of horror and she hugs the firing piece reflexively to herself.*)

**Pinkie:** My…my…party cannon? (*He takes a step closer.*)

**Goldie:** Well, if you really want to give that sister of yours the perfect present— (*Her eyes go big and shiny; face goes slack.*) —then you’ll have to give up your party cannon. (*He backs up o.s.*) So, what do you say? (*Cut to him, holding the pouch.*) The pouch for the cannon.

(*He sneers, knowing that he has his target hopelessly over a barrel, and his gold tooth gives off a sinister little gleam. Pinkie’s chin quivers like a jackhammer, her teeth threatening to chew her lower lip to shreds. Snap to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of the sidewalk crack that fascinated Maud so much.*)

**Maud:** (*from o.s., pointing at it*) Do you see the exposed chalcedony in the fissure?

(*Cut to her, hunched down over the fault, and a thoroughly bemused Rarity.*)

**Rarity:** (*looking closer, hesitantly*) Probably? (*Zoom out as a thoroughly dispirited Pinkie joins them.*)

**Pinkie:** Whatcha guys looking at?

**Rarity:** (*sighing with relief*) You’re back! (*to Maud*) Darling, I want to get one more picture of you with that astounding fissure in the sidewalk. (*floating up camera*) And the inspiration just struck me for the perfect shot! Uh, be a dear and…go stand behind it.

(*The geology nut takes up the indicated position, accompanied by a zoom out as Rarity brings the camera up to her eye.*)

**Rarity:** Okay! Now just, uh, back up a little bit. (*Maud does so; another zoom out.*) Little more. (*Again; cut to Rarity.*) And now just a little, eh…twenty yards more.

(*Cut to Maud, who complies with this request; she is nearly to the sidewalk at the other end of the row of stalls.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) Perfect! (*Long shot of all three.*) Hold that pose! I think we’ve found your new holiday card!

(*Leaving the camera hanging in midair, she turns to her downhearted fellow traveler.*)

**Rarity:** (*hushed*) So, how did it go? Tell me, tell me, tell me!

**Pinkie:** Well, I got the rock pouch for Maud, and…that’s really the only thing that matters.

**Rarity:** (*normal volume, touching Pinkie’s shoulder*) Oh, I am so glad to hear that! She’s going to absolutely love it! (*Pinkie turns away and rests her forelegs on a counter.*)

**Pinkie:** Yep.

**Rarity:** (*dryly*) “Yep”? That’s it? You got your sister the greatest PSSSD present in the history of ever, and all you have to say is “yep”?

**Pinkie:** Yep.

**Rarity:** But…you’re Pinkie Pie. You’re supposed to be all…

(*The following is delivered in her best impression of the pink wacko, trotting energetically in place and bouncing wildly about like a four-legged Superball.*)

**Rarity:** …“Oh, I’m so excited I got the rock pouch! And I know I say ‘excited’ a lot when I’m actually just kind of excited, but this time I’m really excited about how excited I am about being this excited over the rock pouch!” (*Normal tone, all four hooves back on the ground.*) And then you fire off your party cannon. (*Pause.*) Say, where *is* your cannon? (*Another pause; she gasps sharply.*) Did you lose it? (*pulling Pinkie around to face her*) Is your party cannon lost somewhere in the big city?

**Pinkie:** Well…I wouldn’t say it’s lost. (*turning away*) I mean, I know where it is, it’s just… (*She trails off into a crushed sigh.*)

**Rarity:** I can clearly see that something’s bothering you, and I want to help. But I can’t help you unless you tell me what the problem is.

**Pinkie:** Oh, there’s no problem. It just turns out that the going rate for a rock pouch in Manehattan is one party cannon. Who knew? (*Rarity’s eyes pop at this bit of news.*)

**Rarity:** *You gave away your cannon?!?* But—but that party cannon is your everything! You absolutely love that cannon! (*turning Pinkie to face her*) How could you possibly part with something that means so much to you?

(*The gloomy-faced trader pushes the white hoof down from her cheek.*)

**Pinkie:** (*smiling sadly*) Well, I finally got Maud a gift that’s just as good as the one she always gets me. And that’s all that really matters.

**Rarity:** Well, I guess I understand—maybe.

**Pinkie:** (*brightening a bit*) Maud’s going to be so excited. (*rising to hind legs*) I can’t wait to see the look on her face when she sees the pouch.

(*Zoom out slightly as the older sister joins them, carrying Boulder.*)

**Maud:** I know. The camera loves Boulder.

(*Pinkie and Rarity trade a smile. Wipe to a pan through a park, in which ponies are amusing themselves in various ways, including rides on the swan-shaped boats floating along a stream that runs through the green space. The three mares have spread a picnic blanket at the bank and are sitting on it; both Boulder and Maud’s camera have been put away, and Pinkie is back to her happy self. Stop on them.*)

**Rarity:** After the day we’ve had, I’m probably looking forward to the swap part of the Pie Sisters’ Surprise Swap Day even more than the two of you. (*Giggle.*) And I’m not even a Pie sister. (*to each in turn*) I can’t wait one more second to see the wonderful gifts you’ve gotten each other!

**Pinkie:** Well, you’re going to have to. We don’t just swap, silly. We always sing the Pie Sisters’ Surprise Swap Day Song first. (*Rarity’s smile slips a bit.*) Ready, Maud?

**Maud:** As I’ll ever be.

***Cheerful piano melody with cymbal/snare drum, brisk 4 (C major)***

**Pinkie:** (*trotting behind Maud*) It’s the Pie Sisters’ Swap Day Song

***Song ends***

(*She gestures toward her sister; zoom in on the latter.*)

**Maud:** Hey.

**Pinkie:** Okay, time to swap presents!

(*Reaching out of view, she brings back a box wrapped in striped paper that bears a pattern of little Maud-faces. This is set down on the blanket in front of Rarity, and Maud counters with a tall cylindrical gift wrapped in plain brown paper and tied with twine. Each sister then picks up the gift meant for her, and Pinkie stands up to eye hers critically.*)

**Pinkie:** Hmmm…

(*Look at it high and low, pick it up, give it an experimental shake; meanwhile; Maud just gives hers the barest nudge. Rarity’s anticipation yields to apprehension as she glances from one side to the other, seeing Pinkie run her tongue down the full length of her gift that is now lying on its side. When the stress finally gets too much, Rarity voices a rising growl and the camera zooms out quickly from an extreme close-up of her face to frame all three. Pinkie’s gift is upright again.*)

**Rarity:** JUST OPEN THEM ALREADY!!

(*Maud goes first, tearing off the paper and pulling out the treasured pouch.*)

**Maud:** Thanks.

**Pinkie:** (*tearing up*) I knew you’d love it! It was all worth it! Look how happy she is!

(*Cut to the stoic sister on the end of this; she places Boulder into the pouch.*)

**Pinkie:** (*to Rarity*) And I couldn’t have done it without you. (*They embrace.*) Thank you, Rarity.

(*The tender moment ends abruptly when she shoves the unicorn aside.*)

**Pinkie:** Okay, time to open your present to me!

(*One deft motion strips away the paper and twine, exposing a cardboard canister with a lid on its upper end. She pops this off and squinches one eye shut to peek inside, then lets both eyes run over the contents with a surprised little yelp.*)

**Pinkie:** You did it again! You got me the best present in the history of PSSSD! (*Gasp; Rarity looks in, clearly not catching on.*) This is perfect! This is amazing! (*trotting/jumping in place*) This is incredible! I love it, I love it, I love it!

(*Once she settles back to all fours, she too registers some confusion.*)

**Pinkie:** What is it?

**Maud:** It’s little pieces of cupcake-scented paper. You know—

(*Close-up of the open container, showing the multicolored bits inside.*)

**Maud:** (*from o.s.*) —confetti, for your cannon. (*Pinkie tears up all over again at the sight.*)

**Pinkie:** (*wiping eyes*) Maud, you know me so well. (*She stands up…*) You really are the most thoughtful gift-giver in the world! (*…and bounds across to deliver a monster hug.*) I’m gonna love it five-ever! That’s even longer than forever.

(*Pronounced with emphasis on the first syllable to make the numerical pun. The hug tightens a notch, with an ecstatic little hum for good measure, and Rarity cannot help but smile warmly at the sisters. Dissolve to a stretch of unoccupied park land; Rarity and Maud walk into view, the latter with her new pouch hooked on her belt, and look upward.*)

**Rarity:** You’re right.

(*Zoom out quickly to a long shot. They have arrived at a collection of boulders half-buried in the ground, surrounding a massive monolith that resembles a mountain summit flipped over and rammed into the grass at an angle.*)

**Rarity:** That *is* impressive. But it’s no fissure in the sidewalk.

(*In close-up, Maud leans down with Boulder in her teeth and sets it on the nearest rock.*)

**Maud:** Play nice.

**Rarity:** Oh, I’m so relieved to see that you like the pouch, especially considering what Pinkie Pie had to give up for it.

(*Realizing that she has just spilled part of her friend’s secret, she sucks in a sharp gasp.*)

**Rarity:** Oh! (*Hoof to mouth.*)

**Maud:** What?

**Rarity:** (*hastily*) I mean, forget I said that. I mean, I-I’m-I’m-I’m glad to see that you like the pouch. You can remember that part. Just forget the second part. You know, the—the second part where I said that Pinkie Pie had to give something up and—

(*This time, she cuts off her indiscretion with a shocked yelp and shudder.*)

**Rarity:** (*hastily*) I should just stop talking now. Nothing!

(*She catches her lower lip in her teeth as Pinkie’s laugh from o.s. wipes the tension away, and the party mare bounds into view to scatter confetti from her canister.*)

**Pinkie:** Yay! I love my sister and my new confetti! (*Off she goes.*)

**Maud:** (*to Rarity*) Why isn’t she using her party cannon?

(*The mare on the wrong end of this question stammers a bit, trying to think of a way out, and finds one by scraping a front hoof over the dirt to sully it.*)

**Rarity:** (*stilted*) Ooh, wow! Look how filthy my hooves are! I really should go wash them.

(*Off she goes at a full gallop away from Maud, the camera following—only to stop dead upon finding the unsmiling mare standing in her way.*)

**Maud:** Where’s her cannon?

**Rarity:** (*backing fearfully away*) No, no. Stop…stop giving me that look. I can’t take it!

(*Cut to a close-up of Maud on the end of this; “that look” is no different from her usual flat expression. Rarity promptly caves in with a pained moan.*)

**Rarity:** (*rapid fire*) Pinkie Pie feels badly that the gifts that she always gives you are never as good as the ones that you give her!

**Maud:** What?

**Rarity:** (*more normal cadence*) That’s why she was willing to give up her party cannon for the pouch! (*Maud glances at it.*)

**Maud:** She gave up her party cannon?

(*A look behind herself leads into a quick pan that stops on Pinkie, sitting on her haunches in the grass and halfheartedly taking a pinch of confetti to blow off her hoof.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s., voice raised*) Pinkie Pie! (*Pinkie looks up; cut to a long shot of Rarity and Maud.*) You might want to come over here for a second!

(*Her front hoof is clean now. The cannon-free mare trots across, a knowing smile on her face and no longer toting the confetti container.*)

**Pinkie:** I think I know what this is about. You guys want to ride the swans. Well, there’s swan *boats*— (*winking*) —but there *are* real swans here we can ri—

(*One older sister gets into her face, close enough to touch noses with her.*)

**Maud:** You gave away your party cannon?

(*One younger sister averts her eyes to look at Rarity, standing a few paces back and doing her best to keep her dignity.*)

**Rarity:** She broke me.

(*If there is any hint of disapproval on the gray face, it is a model of subtlety and imperceptibility.*)

**Pinkie:** (*stammering*) It’s just…it’s just…it’s just…you always give better gifts than me! That’s why I had to get you the perfect gift.

(*Maud lets her head dip and walks off as Rarity returns.*)

**Pinkie:** (*calling after Maud*) Are your hooves dirty?

(*Cut to behind the aspiring rock scientist, who keeps moving steadily away from the camera along the path.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s., shrilly*) *Where are you going?!?* (*Stop; glance over shoulder.*)

**Maud:** To get your cannon back.

(*Off she goes, leaving the other two to trade hopelessly puzzled glances and trot after her. Dissolve to a stretch of the skyline, the sky having deepened into late afternoon, and tilt down to street level. Maud walks point for the trio on the sidewalk, but stops after a few steps; the others follow suit.*)

**Maud:** (*pointing across street*) There.

(*Pan quickly to Goldie on the opposite side, covetously running a polishing cloth over the cannon barrel, and zoom in to a close-up.*)

**Pinkie:** (*from o.s.*) Yep, that sure is the pony I got the pouch from. (*The three again.*)

**Rarity:** That’s amazing! (*to Maud*) How did you know where he’d be?

**Maud:** Maud Sense. (*Rarity is left totally bewildered as she crosses the street.*)

**Pinkie:** (*to Rarity*) Runs in the family.

(*As the sleazy stallion continues his polishing job, one gray hoof taps his rump to get his attention. He shoots an irritated glare behind himself and spots Maud.*)

**Maud:** (*holding up pouch*) I’d like to return this pouch for my sister’s party cannon, please.

**Goldie:** Sorry, missy. All sales are final.

(*The camera pans to follow him as he trundles the device along the sidewalk—but it and he stop short upon finding the implacable mare now standing right in front of him at the street corner.*)

**Maud:** (*a tiny fraction more insistently*) I’d like to return this pouch for my sister’s party cannon, please.

**Rarity:** (*stepping into view, playing along*) Oh, I’ve never seen her like this. (*pointing toward Maud*) Look at the fire in her eyes! (*Cut to Maud; she continues o.s.*) You’d better do what she says! (*Back to her and Goldie.*)

**Goldie:** (*confused*) “Fire in her eyes”?

(*The drama queen utters a panicked little squeak and clutches at him for protection.*)

**Rarity:** Did she just clench her jaw? I think she clenched her jaw!

**Goldie:** I didn’t see. (*A slow blink from Maud sets her off all over again.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, no! When she clenches her jaw— (*ominously, turning his face to her*) —*you know what that means!*

**Goldie:** (*scared*) W-What? What’s it mean? (*She lets go.*)

**Rarity:** Trust me, you do not want to know!

**Maud:** I’d like to return this pouch.

**Goldie:** (*stammering, making the trade*) Here! Take it! Take it! Please! (*He hunches down, covering his eyes and sweating.*) Just relax that jaw of yours and turn down that fire in your eyes!

(*The gibbering, sobbing hustler is in no position to see either Rarity’s satisfied smile or Pinkie’s hopping, bubbly approach. Dissolve to a different sidewalk on which Maud is walking; the party cannon rolls up next to her, ridden by Pinkie. Goldie’s polishing cloth, which he left on the barrel, has been discarded.*)

**Pinkie:** Maud! (*hugging cannon*) I’m so happy you got me my party cannon back! (*firing*) Yay!

(*The recoil has tossed her into the air, where she hangs for a moment, suddenly worried.*)

**Pinkie:** Uh-oh. I just realized something. (*She lands.*) ’Cause you gave back the pouch for my cannon, this is now the second gift you’ve gotten me today— (*Close-up.*) —and it’s something I really, really wanted. (*Smile.*) You did it again. Your gifts are always better than mine. Next year I’m gonna have to really step it up and— (*A gray hoof corks her mouth.*)

**Maud:** (*from o.s.*) Pinkie— (*Cut to frame both.*) —gift-giving isn’t a competition. (*She takes the hoof away.*) It’s an expression of love, and you always make sure to give your gifts with lots of love. That’s why I’ll always love them— (*Pinkie smiles.*) —and you, five-ever. That’s even longer than forever.

(*Same “forever” pronunciation that Pinkie used in the park. Maud’s mouth curves up into a faint smile, which is all the prompting Pinkie needs to voice a contented little squeal and wrap her up in a hug. Here comes Rarity.*)

**Pinkie:** There you are! You’ve sure been washing your hooves for a long time. We’ve got a train to catch here!

**Rarity:** I know, but there is one more sight you two simply must see before we leave.

(*Dissolve to the map on which the trio’s previous journeys had been charted out. The Rarity-face icon has been crossed out—a rejection of the cramped shop as a location for her new boutique—but a second one has appeared between the shore and the park. A red line traces to it from a nearby intersection as the camera zooms in, and the view then dissolves to a close-up of the entrepreneur standing before a locked wrought-iron gate set in a stone archway. The door behind it, and the windows to either side, have been boarded up.*)

**Rarity:** *Voilà*! Welcome to the future home of…Rarity for You! What do you think of the place? Is this the right location?

(*Cut to Pinkie and Maud, looking on and without the party cannon in evidence.*)

**Rarity:** (*nervously, leaning toward them*) Did I pick a good spot?

**Maud:** No.

(*The white face falls at this judgment; cut to a long shot of the mares. The building in question has three stories and stands on a block marked with billboards advertising jewelry and hats. A second door, positioned near one corner, has not been blocked off. The sun has dipped a little farther behind the rooftops.*)

**Maud:** You picked the perfect spot. (*Close-up of them, Rarity now grinning proudly.*)

**Pinkie:** You know, I think this might be my favorite PSSSD ever! But I can’t wait until next year’s PSSSDWR! (*Grin.*)

(*The sounds of these last two letters are individually appended to the pronunciation of “PSSSD.”*)

**Rarity:** (*puzzled*) Wait. “PSSSDWR”? What’s that?

**Pinkie:** P-S-S-S-D-W-R. It’s a new tradition that Maud and I came up with. (*to her*) Pie Sisters’ Surprise Swap Day…

**Maud:** …with Rarity.

**Rarity:** Ooh! (*Giggle; tear up briefly.*) Why, that’s the sweetest… (*Panic takes hold.*) …oh, no. (*Back away hurriedly.*) Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no. I know how good you two are at giving gifts. I’m going to have to get you both something amazing— (*hooves to temples*) —and I only have a year to do it!

**Pinkie:** (*crossing to her, lifting her chin*) Oh, Rarity, it doesn’t matter what you get us. (*They embrace.*) As long as you give your gift with love, it’ll be perfect.

(*She tips a wink to her sister, who returns it in her typical unhurried fashion, and Rarity sighs contentedly as the two pull apart.*)

**Rarity:** Why, thank you, Pinkie.

**Pinkie:** Buuuut now that you mention it…

(*And off she goes to fetch the shooting iron in an instant.*)

**Pinkie:** …I *could* use more confetti for my party cannon. (*winking at Maud*) You wouldn’t believe how much of that stuff I go through in a day.

(*One final burst rings out, showering the colorful bits over the Manehattan city block at sunset, and the view fades to black.*)

(*The usual closing theme does not accompany the credits. In its place is an extended portion of the background score, heard during the map-tracing journey from the ice skating rink to the Cantering Cook. Lush, gentle orchestral melody with woodwinds/strings and very light percussion; leisurely 4; played twice, first in G major and then in E flat major.*)