**WHERE THE APPLE LIES**

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Note: This transcript presents the episode as it originally aired in the United States. On

the home video releases (Netflix and Season 6 DVD), all mentions of “cider”

have been changed to “juice” or “juicing.”

Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to the yard outside the main barn at Sweet Apple Acres during the day. Filthy Rich stands in the back of a parked wagon as Applejack waits alongside. It is loaded with crates, and Big Macintosh brings another one out from the barn on his head. In close-up, he nudges it into place among the others—all bearing an apple-marked label.*)

**Applejack:** (*to Filthy*) Well, that’s the last of it, Filthy Rich.

**Filthy:** (*chuckling*) Just Rich, please. And on behalf of Rich’s Barnyard Bargains— (*winking*) —thanks for another season’s shipment of Zap Apple jam.

**Applejack:** Our pleasure. See you next time.

(*He and the siblings wave goodbye to each other as the stallion harnessed to the wagon pulls it away. Cut to just inside the barn as Applejack and Macintosh walk in, to the sound of something being slid across the floor o.s.*)

**Applejack:** Uh, Apple Bloom, did you pack up the cider into the same crates as the Zap Apple jam?

(*Cut to just behind her, staring at a pyramid of crates that all have the same marking as the ones Filthy just picked up. They are stacked against the far wall, and Apple Bloom sits proudly on her haunches atop one of them.*)

**Bloom:** Sure did! Now that I’m gettin’ older, I want to prove I can handle more responsibility on the farm.

**Applejack:** (*crossing to her*) But the crates aren’t marked. (*Bloom’s eyes pop.*) You kept track of what went into which crate, right?

**Bloom:** Oh! Um… (*stammering a bit*) …yep! I totally kept track of everything. (*Big grin.*)

**Applejack:** Good. Because we wouldn’t want Filthy Rich to get a shipment of cider when he’s supposed to get Zap Apple jam. You know how Granny feels about sellin’ cider anywhere but on the farm. (*skeptically, pointing toward Bloom*) Are you sure he got the right crates?

(*The filly scoffs a bit and pushes the orange-tan hoof out of her face.*)

**Bloom:** Sure I’m sure!

(*Hopping down from her perch, she starts to back Applejack up toward Macintosh and the small pile of crates next to him.*)

**Bloom:** Now why don’t you and Big Mac head on out to the house and let me finish up here?

(*One of Applejack’s rear hooves makes contact with a crate, setting off a rattle of glass on glass that gives her pause. She turns toward it; extreme close-up of one top corner as she pulls the lid away. Inside, the metal lids of jars are lined up row on row, and enough of the colorful contents are visible to mark this as a load of Zap Apple jam.*)

**Applejack:** (*from o.s.*) If you gave Rich the Zap Apple jam…

(*She fishes in the box; cut to all three as she lifts one container out and Bloom wilts badly.*)

**Applejack:** …then what’s this here?

**Bloom:** Um… (*smiling weakly*) …extra?

**Macintosh:** Nn-nope!

(*The youngest Apple chews her lower lip and lets her head droop, having been bowled out. Fade to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of a put-out Macintosh loading up Filthy’s wagon again. The tycoon is still riding in the back and looking quite ill at ease.*)

**Filthy:** Granny knows I-I wasn’t tryin’ to make off with a shipment of cider, right? (*Longer shot; he is addressing Applejack and Macintosh.*) Because I would never do that.

**Applejack:** Don’t worry. We know exactly whose fault it was.

(*Again the two sides wave goodbye as the wagon pulls out. Inside the barn, Bloom glumly shoves a crate over to the pile she had shown off in the prologue, and her cross older sister steps over to her.*)

**Applejack:** Now why in tarnation would you lie to me, Apple Bloom?

**Bloom:** I was kinda hopin’ I could fix it before anypony found out.

**Applejack:** Tellin’ lies won’t fix anythin’! (*Macintosh enters, crate on head.*) Trust me. I know.

(*This one is set down with a different rattle from the one Applejack bumped in the prologue—the cider being returned to its storage spot.*)

**Bloom:** What could you possibly know ’bout it? You’ve never told a lie in your whole life!

(*Macintosh breaks into a hearty, bass-tinged laugh and is soon joined by the cackling of the o.s. Granny Smith. All three faces turn toward the door, the camera panning quickly to the old green mare standing here. As she wipes a tear from her eye, it zooms out to frame the other Apples crossing to her. Applejack is the most annoyed by this turn of events.*)

**Bloom:** What’s so funny?

**Granny:** (*still chuckling*) Oh, sugar cube, your big sister lied so much when she was a filly, the whole family ended up in the hospital.

**Bloom:** (*jumping up, shocked*) *What?*

**Macintosh:** (*chuckling*) Ee-yup!

(*Applejack slaps a hoof to her face with a resigned sigh.*)

**Applejack:** You might as well tell her the whole story. Might even do her some good.

(*In a display that would draw the approval of Pinkie Pie, Granny stretches her forelegs like rubber bands to reach o.s. and whips a rocking chair back into view. A blink later, she is comfortably seated and easing herself back and forth.*)

**Granny:** When Applejack and Big Mac were just a wee bit older than you are now, they both kept a-squabblin’ over who would run the farm better.

(*A wavering dissolve frames the same view of the open barn door, seen from inside during the day, but the tableau is replaced by Applejack and Macintosh in their youth, seen in profile. Both have their cutie marks, indicating that this flashback is set sometime after the trip to Manehattan that she described in “The Cutie Mark Chronicles.” Applejack is not wearing her hat, but Macintosh has his hitching collar; his mane/tail are shorter than the present day, and the former sticks up in tufts. Their contentious glares tell of a disagreement even before Applejack speaks. The bridge of her nose is speckled with birdcatcher spots as it was during her trip, and her overall build is noticeably more slender than in the present day.*)

*\*\*\* Until further notice, all characters appear as their past selves. \*\*\**

**Applejack:** All I’m sayin’ is that you may have plenty of brawn—

(*Close-up, showing her mane to be divided into two loose pigtails tied off to hang behind her ears.*)

**Applejack:** —but I’m the one with the ideas on how to run things better around here!

(*Big brother voices an indulgent chuckle—and then goes on to speak at length. His cadence in this time is considerably faster than the slow, laconic one he employs in the present.*)

**Macintosh:** Applejack, Applejack, Applejack. Ideas are all well and good, but you can’t plow a field with them. I don’t know how many times I’ve told you that.

**Applejack:** Too many.

(*Each stomps a hoof to punctuate the end of his/her words.*)

**Granny:** (*walking into view*) You two horned toads better stop jabberin’ and get to workin’! (*to herself*) Yeah, they’d better. (*to them*) I need you to go to town. The apple blight’s been awful, and if we don’t get more spray, cider season’ll be shorter than a dwarf crabapple tree!

(*Except for her mane/tail being in slightly better order and a few lines gone from her face, the matriarch’s appearance is virtually unchanged from the present day. Applejack and Macintosh growl softly at each other at having been thrown together on this task. Wipe to a profile close-up of the scarlet colt walking through Ponyville, hoof to chin in thought.*)

**Macintosh:** It’s like I was just tellin’ Cousin Braeburn last week. Now there’s a pony who knows how to put his back into a problem.

(*On the end of this, zoom out and pan ahead slightly to put a hacked-off Applejack in view, leading the way. She snarls through clenched teeth, but suddenly registers surprise.*)

**Applejack:** Oh! (*Both stop; she smiles.*) Hey there, Filthy Rich!

(*The magnate strolls up; in this period, he wears a red bow tie instead of a necktie, and his suit jacket lapels and shirt collar are gone. Next to him is a chronically stuck-up, disdainful earth pony mare whose coloration instantly pegs her as Spoiled Rich, Diamond Tiara’s mother as seen in “Crusaders of the Lost Mark.” However, she does not wear the blouse and necklace she sported during that episode; in addition, her mane is tied back in a high ponytail, and her double chin has not yet begun to come in.*)

**Filthy:** (*chuckling*) Just Rich, please. And I’d like you to meet my fiancée, Spoiled Milk. (*She turns her nose up; he addresses her.*) Honey, this is Applejack and Big Mac, the two hardest-workin’ ponies at Sweet Apple Acres.

(*So they are not yet married, and Milk is her maiden name. Cut to said ponies as he finishes; Applejack smiles and Macintosh grins proudly.*)

**Spoiled:** You work on a farm? (*slightly revolted*) How quaint.

**Filthy:** (*chuckling, putting a foreleg across her shoulders*) Now, dear, be nice. Sweet Apple Acres makes Zap Apple jam. It’s one of Dad’s best sellers. (*She pivots to push her nose against his and points.*)

**Spoiled:** You mean one of *your* best sellers. (*crossing to Applejack/Macintosh*) My amazing husband-to-be is running the Rich family business now. Did you know that? Well, now you do.

**Filthy:** (*chuckling, joining her, foreleg across shoulders*) Don’t mind Spoiled Milk. She’s just proud of me. But she’s right. I’m in charge of the store now, and I’m just burstin’ with ideas I want to try.

**Applejack:** Like what?

**Filthy:** Well, how ’bout this? Cider season’s around the corner. Why not let me sell it for you? (*Close-up of Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** That *is* an interesting idea!

**Macintosh:** (*from o.s.*) Well— (*Zoom out to frame him.*) —maybe it’s interestin’ and maybe it ain’t. But it’s definitely not a new idea. Granny Smith told us your grandpa Stinkin’ Rich used to ask her every year if he could sell our cider in your store, and Granny told him every year about the tradition of everypony in Ponyville linin’ up out at Sweet Apple Acres.

(*Throughout all of this monologuing, Applejack just stands there and glowers silently at him.*)

**Filthy:** So start a new tradition! Someday one of y’all’ll take over the farm, just like I’ve taken over the store. (*He leans close to Applejack and lowers his voice.*) I’m guessin’ it’ll be the one with the best ideas.

(*One calculating blue eye flips her a wink, but Macintosh is first to muster a response.*)

**Macintosh:** (*chuckling a bit; Filthy backs off*) Well, now, as I’ve said many a time before, ideas are all well and good, but you can’t plow a field— (*Applejack loses her cool.*)

**Applejack:** You know what? How ’bout we give you three barrels of cider early— (*extending a hoof*) —and if it sells well, we’ll make a deal for the rest.

**Filthy:** (*laughing, shaking it*) Hey, now, perfect! (*walking off with Spoiled*) Come on, honey. I’ve gotta get everything ready.

**Applejack:** (*to Macintosh*) Hoo-wee! I tell you, if the future means *me* runnin’ Sweet Apple Acres and *you* bein’ quiet, I can’t wait.

(*The loquacious red colt meets her eager grin with a glare of clearest disapproval. Dissolve to the interior of the barn as they enter, carrying spray canisters on their backs.*)

**Macintosh:** I just can’t believe *you’d* make a deal with Filthy Rich— (*They stop, dumping the loads.*) —without even talkin’ to Granny!

**Applejack:** (*dismissively*) Ah, Granny will love the idea. And then she’ll decide that I’m the one who should take over the farm. You’ll see.

**Granny:** (*from o.s.*) See what?

(*The enterprising filly whirls to face the door, where her grandmother is walking in with a very funny look on her face. Cut to Macintosh, who adds a disdainful eye roll on the two emphasized words of the next line.*)

**Macintosh:** Applejack here had another one of her *big ideas*, and I think we all know my position on ideas. (*Zoom out to frame all three.*) You can’t—

**Applejack, Granny:** (*wearily, overlapping his last word*) —can’t plow a field with ’em.

**Macintosh:** (*dropping head*) Ee…right.  
**Granny:** (*to Applejack*) Big idea, hmm?

(*Applejack tentatively backs away from the two old eyes, one half-squinted and the other wide open, and ends up next to Macintosh.*)

**Applejack:** Actually, more of an opportunity. You see, we ran into Filthy Rich in town. Did you know he’s runnin’ the family store now?

**Granny:** And what does this here opportunity mean for Sweet Apple Acres?

**Applejack:** (*stammering a bit*) Well, since cider season is almost here, he—or, I-I mean, *I*—thought it’d be a good idea to give him a few barrels of cider to sell at the store before the season starts.

**Granny:** (*crossing to her with a smile*) Oh, is that all?

(*Applejack smiles at Macintosh, secure in the knowledge that her point has been made, but the calm goes out the window when the elderly mare shifts straight to boiling anger.*)

**Granny:** ABSOLUTELY NOT!!

(*Shouted with enough force to vibrate the entire barn, and followed up with a furious huff for good measure. The sheer volume has stunned both grandchildren into silence, and Applejack can only manage a deflated groan. Fade to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to the three. Now Applejack voices a petulant sigh as Macintosh smiles smugly.*)

**Applejack:** But, Granny, why can’t we sell a few barrels of cider early to Filthy Rich? And how is it any different than when you gave Zap Apple jam to Filthy’s grandpappy to sell?

**Granny:** Your cider and your jam ain’t the same thing! (*Hold up a jar of…*) Zap Apple jam jars preserve the flavor for moons. (*Put it away.*) But cider starts to spoil the second it comes out the press. That is why every cider season, all of Ponyville lines up at Sweet Apple Acres, and first come is first served! Hmph!

**Applejack:** I get what you’re sayin’, Granny, but…couldn’t you make an exception just this once? I…sorta promised.

**Granny:** (*shaking head*) Mmm—uh-uh.

(*As she continues, she crosses to two large bins; the apples in one are plump and shiny, while the other holds discolored, shriveled ones. Each bears a label with a picture of the fruit, but the one on the reject bin has a circle and slash superimposed on it.*)

**Granny:** Besides, cider makin’ is iffy business, and we’re prob’ly not gonna have a lot this year anyway, what with all the blight. I’m sorry, Applejack, but you’s just gonna have to un-promise.

(*Applejack lets off a long, disappointed moan as Macintosh throws her a merciless little smile. Dissolve to the two walking through Ponyville.*)

**Macintosh:** I hate to say I told you so, Applejack, but…

**Applejack:** You and I both know you don’t *hate* to say anything.

**Macintosh:** Well, *I’ve* always thought that the most important thing a pony can do is say exactly what’s on his mind to anypony who’ll listen, so everypony everywhere always knows everything you’re thinking. And—

**Applejack:** (*walking on, as Macintosh stops*) And you don’t ever have to listen to anypony else.

**Macintosh:** (*taken aback*) What? (*Applejack pauses at a store entrance.*)

**Applejack:** Exactly!

(*They head in. Cut to Filthy standing behind a counter inside, with a cash register in easy reach and shelves of various items on the wall behind him. This can only be Barnyard Bargains. He sets a bag of groceries on Mrs. Cake’s head, and she departs as the two Apples step up. The only noticeable change in the baker’s younger self is that she is not wearing her apron.*)

**Filthy:** Well, if it ain’t my new business partner!

**Applejack:** Uh…about the cider, Rich.

**Filthy:** Take a look at what I did last night after we made our deal.

(*He dashes away from the counter and pulls a rope hanging from the ceiling with his teeth. Behind him, a curtain opens to reveal an apple-themed advertising display: tree, fruit, barrels, crates, cider jugs, glasses. Applejack’s eyes pop at the spectacle, but Macintosh maintains his stoic demeanor.*)

**Filthy:** (*rearing up briefly*) Whoo! Hah! Pretty great, huh?

**Applejack:** The thing is, I-I don’t think I can get you any.

**Filthy:** (*stunned*) What? (*indignantly*) Well, I-I did all this work on your say-so! We shook hooves and everything!

**Macintosh:** Well, you see, at Sweet Apple Acres we’ve always been about quality, and while your basic jam jar’ll keep—

**Applejack:** (*hastily*) Plus it’s been a tough harvest this year, what with all the blight. (*Macintosh glares at her; Filthy scoffs disgustedly.*)

**Filthy:** Sounds to me like you’re tryin’ to make excuses! Whenever Granddad dealt with Granny Smith, *she* kept her word! If you can’t do that, then maybe our families should stop doin’ business together— (*leaning into her face; zoom in to a close-up*) —*altogether!*

(*He adds a stomp to emphasize “she”; once he finishes, he backs off, leaving one very badly shaken filly rooted to the shop floor.*)

**Macintosh:** (*chuckling*) Now, now, the thing is, Rich, it ain’t really up to us. You see, Granny’s—

**Applejack:** Uh, uh, sick!

**Filthy:** Wait. Granny’s sick? I-I had no idea.

**Macintosh:** (*pointedly*) Ee-yeah. Nopony did. (*Applejack kicks one of his hooves to cut him off.*)

**Applejack:** What Big Mac means is, uh, we’ve been tryin’ to keep it quiet. Don’t want people to make rash decisions about doin’ business with Sweet Apple Acres just because we’re, uh, a little short-hooved at the moment.

**Filthy:** Oh, my! O-Of course, of course! I am so sorry! Please, let me know if there’s anything I can do.

**Applejack:** (*slowly pushing Macintosh away*) Much appreciated, but right now, we—we only ask for your understandin’ durin’ this difficult time.

**Filthy:** (*nodding solemnly*) Mmm-hmm.

(*Dissolve to a long shot of the Sweet Apple Acres grounds and zoom in slowly.*)

**Macintosh:** (*voice over*) You were supposed to tell Rich the simple truth!

(*Cut to them seated on their haunches at opposite ends of a table in the house’s dining room.*)

**Macintosh:** But instead you made things worse with a giant lie! (*He pounds the table on the end of this.*)

**Applejack:** W-W-What was I supposed to do? You heard Rich. If I told him the truth, he was gonna stop doin’ business with us altogether!

(*Granny enters from the kitchen, pushing through a set of batwing doors and carrying a bowl of salad in her teeth.*)

**Macintosh:** Yeah, but that’s only because I— (*noticing Granny, quickly shifting gears*) —I forgot to ask if we had any oat crumbles for this delicious-lookin’ salad, Granny.

**Granny:** (*grumbling, returning to kitchen*) Yeah, I’ll go take a look.

(*Once she is through the doors, Macintosh leans across the full length of the table to stare his sister down point-blank.*)

**Macintosh:** (*hushed*) That was only because you made promises *you* couldn’t keep! But there’s gotta be a better way out of this mess than by makin’ up some story about Granny bein’ sick!

**Applejack:** (*hushed*) Well, it worked, didn’t it?

(*The face-off is interrupted by a knock at the door; cut to it. Reaching into view, Macintosh pulls it open to find Filthy and Spoiled at the threshold. The stallion carries a bouquet of flowers.*)

**Filthy:** Sorry to drop by unannounced. (*Zoom out; Macintosh and Applejack boggle at the pair.*) We just wanted to come by to wish Granny a speedy recovery. (*Cut to the siblings.*)

**Macintosh:** (*mildly sarcastic tone*) Look, sis! (*She sticks on a grin.*) Our good friend Mr. Rich and his fiancée…are here. (*The bouquet is held out to them.*) Oh, and they brought flowers… (*taking them*) …for Granny! On account of, she’s…sick! Like you said. Ain’t that sweet?

(*The sounds of an opening door and shuffling hooves shift their attention away from the uninvited guests, and they spot Granny backing in from the kitchen. However, the lines of sight are such that Filthy and Spoiled cannot directly see her.*)

**Applejack:** Uh, excuse me one second!

(*Slamming the door shut, she tackles the matriarch through the batwings, salad bowl and all. A tremendous crash shakes the camera; cut to Granny, fetched up against the wall with the bowl on her head and its contents spread all over the floor.*)

**Granny:** What in tarnation?!

(*Longer shot; she has ended up near the open back door, and a hanging picture has been knocked out of kilter. Applejack sits on her haunches before Granny.*)

**Applejack:** Oh, I’m sorry, Granny! I-I didn’t see you there!

**Granny:** You came blastin’ in so fast, ’tweren’t possible to see nothin’! (*Applejack stands up.*)

**Applejack:** Can you go out to the barn? I, uh, I-I think we might have left a blight sprayer in the orchard.

(*Granny snaps upright, no longer covered with salad or crockery, and taps a hoof against the orange-tan forehead.*)

**Granny:** Are you out of your apple-pickin’ mind? It’s suppertime, girl!

**Applejack:** (*stammering a bit*) I know, but if we forgot a sprayer, I’d want to get it before dark. (*ushering her out*) Y-You go start countin’, a-and I’ll tell Big Mac we’ll be right back. O-Okay?

(*Without waiting for a response, she slams the door shut and pokes her head back out through the batwings to find Macintosh holding court with the visitors.*)

**Macintosh:** So from that moment on, I took to referrin’ to myself as Big, or Large, or— (*Applejack whisks over to his side.*)

**Filthy:** Ah, Applejack! Your brother was just explainin’ why he always wears his yoke.

**Spoiled:** Even though we asked him how your grand-mare is doing! (*Macintosh wipes sweat from his face.*)

**Applejack:** (*poking his flank*) Oh, well, you know how Big Mac can get to—to talkin’, especially when he’s upset. (*as all four exit*) And right now, he’s just as worried about Granny Smith as I am.

(*The door swings shut behind them; dissolve to a long shot of the main entrance to the property, where they have all gathered, and zoom in slowly.*)

**Filthy:** Oh, dear. Is she doin’ that bad? (*Close-up of Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** Well, one thing’s for sure. She—she shouldn’t be seein’ anypony right now.

(*A major-league grimace follows these words; cut to her perspective of the open barn doors and zoom in quickly to a close-up. Granny has pushed a bin full of spray canisters over to this spot. Back to Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** I-In fact, I’m gettin’ more upset just thinkin’ about it. E-Excuse me!

(*A few bounds carry her across the yard and put her in range to head-butt Granny’s rump and send her flying into the barn. There follows a mighty crash as she trots in; cut to the old pony, half-sprawled out in the hay.*)

**Granny:** (*standing up, turning to Applejack*) Oh, what in the frilly fumidil has gotten into you?!

**Applejack:** Sorry, Granny. I just decided if I helped you, it would go faster.

**Granny:** Well, you’re too late! All the sprayers are here.

(*The scheming granddaughter glares toward the barn door; cut to her perspective, zooming quickly on Macintosh talking to Filthy and Spoiled, then back to her and Granny.*)

**Applejack:** Oh. Good. (*stopping Granny from leaving*) Uh, say, Granny, when did you first fight the apple blight again?

(*The dilatory tactic instantly has the desired effect as the seamed green face softens into a mood of warm reminiscence.*)

**Granny:** It was my second year here in Ponyville. (*Applejack sneaks away.*) Uh, that was before I had the rick on the one knee.

(*Cut to Filthy ad Spoiled, still at the entrance and with their patience wearing thin. Applejack moves toward them from the barn as if trying to tiptoe across a minefield.*)

**Macintosh:** (*from o.s.*) And others say that’s how the trees got to growin’ so tall. (*Cut to him.*) But to me— (*chuckling*) —it’s just how I got my cutie mark. (*Grin.*)

**Spoiled:** But we asked when we could come back to see Granny! (*Applejack gallops out to them.*)

**Applejack:** Uh…Big Mac didn’t want to be rude, but…you just can’t see Granny right now because she’s… (*Think fast, think desperately.*) …got apple blight!

**Filthy:** (*gasping*) I thought only trees got the blight! (*Macintosh gives her a strange look.*)

**Applejack:** Yeah, that’s usually the case. (*Eyes dart back and forth.*) The doctors think it’s from workin’ in the orchard for so many years. (*Puzzlement from Filthy/Spoiled.*) You see, we had to take Granny to Ponyville General. We just got back right before you showed up. (*Close-up of Filthy.*)

**Filthy:** Oh, my! That is terrible! (*Pan to Spoiled; she makes a sound of revulsion.*)

**Spoiled:** It’s not contagious, is it? (*Applejack leans toward her with a shaky smile.*)

**Applejack:** Um…I’m sure you’ll be fine, but you should leave… (*Exaggerated cough.*) …just in case.

(*Almost as soon as she backs off, Spoiled trots briskly away from the property; Filthy follows her for a few steps, but pauses to address the Apples over his shoulder.*)

**Filthy:** You’re right. We’re gonna have to hurry if we want to get there before visitin’ hours are over!

**Applejack:** That’s right. (*Panicked double take.*) Wait. Get where?

**Filthy:** Why, the hospital, of course! I’m sure we’ll see you there.

(*He hurries off after his fiancée, leaving Macintosh to train his latest irked expression on Applejack. She begins to shiver, eyes flicking from side to side out of soul-freezing dread at having her deception discovered. Fade to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of the two at the property entrance and zoom in slowly.*)

**Macintosh:** Tellin’ Filthy Rich that Granny’s in the hospital just made everything a hundred times worse! (*hoof to forehead*) What are we s’posed to do now?

(*In close-up, Applejack risks a split-second look toward the barn and grins hesitantly.*)

**Applejack:** I got it!

(*Wipe to the barn interior. Granny is right where Applejack left her in Act Two, having taken no notice of her departure, and both grandchildren are sneaking back in.*)

**Granny:** Dropped my second-best teeth right in the pigpen, and that was the worst case of apple blight I have ever seen!

**Applejack:** I’d love to hear more, Granny, but we gotta get to the hospital right away!

**Granny:** The hospital? Why? Who’s sick?

**Macintosh:** (*relishing the moment*) You are, apparently. (*Applejack snarls silently at him.*)

**Applejack:** What he means is, you’re *needed* at the hospital.

**Granny:** Heh! Whatever for?

(*The conniving brain under the blond mane spins in neutral for a second before coming up with a new tack.*)

**Applejack:** It’s the apple blight! It’s startin’ to infect ponies now! The doctors need an expert opinion, and nopony knows more about fightin’ blight than Granny Smith.

**Granny:** Well, what in tarnation are we waitin’ for? Let’s go!

(*She trots purposefully away past them; Macintosh draws in a breath to speak his mind, but Applejack heads him off by stuffing an apple into his mouth. Wipe to the exterior of the local hospital that has appeared in previous episodes—Ponyville General. Macintosh has removed the fruit from his pie-hole. Applejack freezes in her tracks, having spotted Filthy and Spoiled approaching along a different road; zoom in quickly on the pair, then cut back to the three, now all stopped.*)

**Applejack:** (*to Granny*) You know, we’re supposed to go in, uh…in the back! (*smiling placatingly; Macintosh rolls his eyes*) Uh, to avoid anypony in the waitin’ room with the blight.

(*She turns off in a new direction. Cut to a corridor lined with doors on both sides, only one of which is open. Applejack leads the rest of the family into view around a corner, finding it teeming with doctors and nurses—and Filthy and Spoiled crossing a juncture at the far end. Zoom in quickly on these two for a moment, then cut back to the Apples, now at the open door.*)

**Applejack:** Oops! I almost forgot.

(*She pushes the aged mare into the room beyond; Macintosh holds his position and looks around himself, but she leans back out to yank him inside as well. A moment later, she leads them back out, Granny now clad in a surgical mask and light blue scrubs that include covers for her mane/tail and hooves. Her next two lines are slightly muffled by the cloth over her mouth.*)

**Applejack:** This is perfect! Now you don’t have to worry about catchin’ the blight.

**Granny:** If you say so, dearie.

**Applejack:** Now you wait right here while I, uh, check on your presentation. (*She gallops off.*)

**Granny:** What in the rotten rhubarb’s goin’ on here?

(*Cut to the waiting room, well stocked with patients suffering from various and sundry maladies and injuries. Filthy and Spoiled have reached the front desk and its receptionist mare, and they turn toward Applejack as she enters with an airy laugh.*)

**Applejack:** Fancy meetin’ you two here!

**Spoiled:** Well, we told you we were coming.

**Filthy:** (*chuckling)* I’m glad we found you— (*glowering briefly at receptionist*) —because I can’t seem to find Granny’s room, or any nurses who’ve even heard about a pony with apple blight.

**Applejack:** Granny’s room…sure! (*rapid fire*) Just go down here, take a left, then a right, go down some stairs, up a bunch more stairs— (*Her perspective of the three, all unconvinced.*) —uh, through the cafeteria, left three more times, and then you’re there. (*Back to her.*) Easy as Granny’s apple pie.

(*The green eyes have shrunk to severely unnerved points, and she forces out a chuckle as sweat starts to dribble from beneath the blond mane. She turns to leave, but halts as soon as Filthy opens his mouth.*)

**Filthy:** Um, aren’t you comin’ with us?

**Applejack:** I’ll catch up! I gotta find Big Mac!

(*She trots away. Cut to a close-up of Macintosh and Granny, still waiting in the corridor, and zoom out to show Applejack having rejoined them.*)

**Applejack:** Okay, Granny. Just wait here one second, and we can go.

(*Now it is Macintosh’s turn to be on the receiving end of her headfirst bulldoze, but bulk and irritation prevent her from shifting him more than a few inches.*)

**Granny:** Where are you two going? (*Close-up of the younger pair on the end of this.*)

**Applejack:** Big Mac can’t come. He, uh… (*poking his flank*) …might be contagious!

**Macintosh, Granny:** (*Applejack pushing Macintosh in*) Contagious?!

(*Inside the room, Applejack nips a sheet in her teeth and pulls it away to expose a gurney. Beds separated by sliding curtains line the walls, and a cart stacked with food trays stands in one corner.*)

**Applejack:** (*tapping its surface*) All right. Climb up here and I’ll cover you up. Then I’ll bring Rich in, tell him you’re Granny, but you’re not allowed to take the sheets off. You moan a few times, he leaves, and this whole thing is over.

**Macintosh:** This is spinnin’ way outta control, Applejack! Now I know you thought sellin’ cider in Filthy’s store was a good idea, but it ain’t worth lyin’ to him about Granny bein’ sick and needin’ to go to the hospital, or fibbin’ to Granny about them wantin’ her to come here to talk about the blight, or—

**Applejack:** BIG MACINTOSH, PLEASE JUST LISTEN TO ME FOR ONCE!! This ain’t about my ideas! If Rich finds out about all the lies, he’ll cut off ties with us and the farm’ll go under! Now do you want that to happen, or do you want to help?

**Macintosh:** (*petulantly*) Why can’t you be Granny? You’re her size and this is all your fault in the first place.

**Applejack:** I would, but if I let you do the talkin’, you’d just ramble on and on until we all got caught.

(*The bigger-than-average young colt uncorks an exasperated groan and climbs onto the gurney to lie on his back.*)

**Applejack:** Just lay down, keep still, and promise me you won’t say anythin’ for once in your life!

**Macintosh:** Ee-yup.

(*She tosses a sheet over his entire form just as Granny shuffles past the doorway. Cut to the corridor.*)

**Applejack:** (*from inside room*) Granny!

(*She bolts out into view, the green grandmother turning to her with a quizzically cocked eyebrow and just missing the arrival of Filthy behind her. Applejack sees him all too clearly, though, and her whole face seizes up.*)

**Applejack:** (*whispering*) Granny! (*She hurries over.*)

**Granny:** It’s about time! What is goin’ on around here?

**Applejack:** (*normal volume*) Uh…Granny, they need you to wait here. I-I’ll come get you.

(*She opens the nearest door, giving a flash of a closet filled with janitorial supplies, and shoves Granny in. The latter lets out an alarmed squawk as Applejack slams the door shut and presses her back against it; a moment later, Filthy’s out-of-breath panting marks his and Spoiled’s arrival.*)

**Filthy:** There you are! We’ve been goin’ in circles lookin’ for Granny’s room.

**Applejack:** Well, you’re in luck, ’cause it’s—it’s right over here, and this time I’ll make sure you don’t get lost.

(*As she speaks, the covered gurney begins to roll out from the room in which she stashed Macintosh. She begins to lead them down the corridor, taking no notice of either the vehicle or the unicorn stallion orderly propelling it along with his magic. After they enter, cut to them within the room.*)

**Applejack:** What in the dadgum…? (*Zoom out to frame the distinct lack of Macintosh.*)

**Spoiled:** What now?

**Applejack:** He…I mean…*she* was right here!

(*A moment’s thought, then a horrified realization.*)

**Applejack:** Oh, no. We gotta go!

(*She gallops out; cut to the corridor as she emerges and stops, followed by the engaged couple. The squeak of gurney wheels is heard from somewhere down the way.*)

**Spoiled:** (*pointing ahead*) I-Is that Granny Smith?

**Filthy:** Where are they takin’ her?

(*The ersatz Granny is being wheeled away around a corner, while the real one steps out from the closet, prompting Applejack’s face to rearrange into yet another novel expression of full-scale panic.*)

**Applejack:** You two, don’t lose that gurney!

(*All three get their hooves moving; Applejack is first to her target, intercepting Granny.*)

**Applejack:** (*hushed*) Granny, what are you doin’? You were supposed to stay there!

**Granny:** It was a supply closet!

**Applejack:** (*normal volume, feigning ignorance*) Ohh! Uh…well, okay, come with me, but be quiet! (*smiling*) You know, save your voice for the big presentation.

(*Granny is clearly not buying a word of it, but she allows Applejack to lead her around the corner—following the same route taken by Macintosh. In this new corridor, the filly traces a frantic zigzag route from one open door to the next as Granny ambles confusedly along. Finding no trace of her brother, Applejack races to a pair of imposing, closed double doors; once Granny reaches them as well, the camera cuts to the other side as they swing open, then to just behind them. The two Apples have arrived in an operating theater, and the third is already there on his gurney, hooked up to an intravenous drip and with one hoof poking out from the sheet that still covers him. Ponies in scrubs and masks are gathered around him, and quite a few medical professionals are watching from the tiers of elevated seats that run around the circular perimeter. Filthy, Spoiled, and a scattering of other civilians are in the audience as well. Close-up of the couple, Filthy recoiling slightly in anticipation of what is to come, then tilt down quickly to the patient and cut back to Applejack and Granny. The younger pony gasps in fright and starts to follow the older one into the theater; however, a masked surgeon stallion moves in to block her.*)

**Surgeon 1:** Ah, ah, I’m sorry, but you can’t get any closer without a gown and mask.

**Applejack:** But…but-but…but that’s my brother on there!

(*Her perspective on the end of this, pointing at Macintosh, then back to her and the surgeon.*)

**Surgeon 1:** Don’t worry. This is our best doctor. She’ll have your brother back on his hooves in no time.

(*He returns to his post as she groans loudly and puts a hoof to her face; now Granny addresses the audience.*)

**Granny:** Now apple blight is a serious disease.

(*A second surgeon stallion on the floor utters a grunt of surprise to the nearest colleague.*)

**Surgeon 2:** Did she say “apple blight”?

**Surgeon 3:** I-I think she said “gasket mites.” (*Pan to Granny on the other side of the gurney from them.*)

**Granny:** (*holding up Macintosh’s hoof*) And once your trunk turns red like this, the only thing to do is prune the branches. (*Filthy gasps.*)

**Filthy:** Oh, no! Granny!

(*The mare whose overeager sales tactics started this whole mess grits her teeth and shivers at the very real prospect of her brother coming home on fewer than four legs.*)

**Surgeon 3:** (*really confused*) Did you say “prune them branches”?

**Granny:** Well, sure! What else you gonna do once the blight gets this bad?

(*Turning to a nearby cart, she pulls its sheet covering away to expose a gleaming saw. Ponies from floor to back row gasp sharply at the revelation, and Macintosh sweats and shivers silently under his own sheet. The perspiration runs freely down Applejack’s face as she fights an agonizing battle with her nerves and conscience and ultimately loses it, clapping hooves to temples.*)

**Applejack:** Everypony just stop! This is all a big misunderstandin’! (*Sigh; enter the theater.*) Actually, it’s a big lie.

(*Close-up; she whips the sheet away from the gurney to reveal Macintosh, prompting gasps of astonishment rather than horror. Granny pulls the surgical mask down from her face as the camera zooms out slightly.*)

**Granny:** Big Mac?

**Filthy:** (*from o.s., gasping*) Granny Smith? (*Cut to him and Spoiled; he leans forward.*) What is goin’ on here, Applejack?

**Granny:** (*to Applejack*) That is a darn good question!

(*Her grand plot having finally crashed down, she sighs quietly as Macintosh sits up to his haunches and Filthy resumes his seat. The IV line has been unhooked by this point.*)

**Applejack:** I’m not sure if I was worried that nopony was listenin’ to my ideas, or just nervous that I wouldn’t be the one to end up runnin’ the farm, but…I promised somethin’ to Filthy Rich that I couldn’t deliver. (*Sigh.*) And I was too embarrassed to admit it.

**Filthy:** So Granny was never sick?

**Granny:** And there ain’t no apple blight in ponies?

**Macintosh:** Nn-nope. (*Overhead shot of the theater floor; zoom in slowly.*)

**Applejack:** (*to Filthy*) Those were all lies, a-and I thought if you found out, you’d stop doin’ business with the farm. So I just kept tellin’ more. (*Floor level again.*)

**Surgeon 1:** So she’s not a doctor. (*Cut to Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** *Please* don’t make Granny and the farm suffer for what I did! This whole thing is my fault.

**Macintosh:** (*smiling, crossing to her*) That’s not entirely true. Maybe if *I* paid more attention to what *you* had to say instead of talkin’ all the time, none of this woulda happened in the first place. I just need to talk less and listen more… (*He pulls her into a one-hoof hug.*) …especially to you.

**Applejack:** (*sighing contentedly*) Thanks, big brother. And whether it’s me runnin’ Sweet Apple Acres or you, I know it’ll be in good hooves.

(*Their embrace is rudely interrupted by the cracked old voice they both know so well.*)

**Granny:** (*from o.s.*) Well, that’s nice— (*Overhead shot of the floor; she is glaring at them.*) —but I don’t know what in blazes you two are talkin’ about. I ain’t goin’ anywhere anytime soon! (*She blows a raspberry.*) Runnin’ the farm—not after this display! Not likely!

(*The old eyes shift sharply toward the seats; cut to Filthy and Spoiled on the receiving end. The next words cow him to the point that he tries to shrink out of sight, while she edges slowly away from him.*)

**Granny:** (*from o.s.*) And don’t *you* go gettin’ any ideas about cuttin’ ties with Sweet Apple Acres! (*pacing deliberately toward him*) Or I’m goin’ right to your grandpappy. Get me?

**Filthy:** (*sweating, stammering badly*) Um, yes, ma’am.

**Granny:** (*smiling, addressing all*) Now, who here still wants to hear about the apple blight? (*Hooves go up all over the room.*) Now when I was a filly…

(*Wavering dissolve to a close-up of Bloom in the present, marking the end of the protracted flashback.*)

\*\*\* *Characters appear as their modern-day selves again.* \*\*\*

**Bloom:** I can’t believe you told all those lies!

(*Longer shot, framing the entire Apple family in the barn. Granny is still in her rocking chair, the other three sit on their bellies, and the sky beyond the open door is now the orange/gold of late afternoon.*)

**Applejack:** It’s not a story I’m proud of, but it taught me a lifelong lesson about bein’ honest. I hope *you* learned somethin’ too.

**Bloom:** I sure did! I learned that nopony starts out perfect, and sometimes you gotta make a few mistakes to figure out who you are.

**Macintosh:** Ee-yup. (*Close-up of Bloom.*)

**Bloom:** But I think the most important thing I learned is who really runs Sweet Apple Acres. (*Zoom out to frame all four.*)

**Applejack, Macintosh, Bloom:** (*pointing at…*) Granny!

**Granny:** You’re darn tootin’! Now everypony quit your lollygaggery and get back to work!

(*She shifts to a smile and holds up a tray set with a jug and four glasses.*)

**Granny:** Right after we have a glass of cider.

(*They share a gentle laugh as the camera zooms out slowly and the view fades to black.*)