**FOREVER FILLY**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to the exterior of Canterlot Carousel during the day. Zoom in slowly as ponies go about their business, then dissolve to the top of a stack of books and binders inside the showroom. Three more are quickly levitated up onto it, one by one, and a longer shot reveals the caster as manager Sassy Saddles. The room is a mad scramble of fabrics, outfits, and supplies, and she looks to be close to her breaking point as the constricted orange eyes dart to a quill and notepad held in her magic. She checks off an item, floats up a folded stack, and hurries across the floor with it, nerves bringing her to the brink of hyperventilation. Behind her, Rarity stands placidly at a counter and lets her aura guide a quill across a drawing.*)

(*Once the textiles are tucked away on a shelf, the blue unicorn catches sight of several rolls and hoists them up for her next pass. A third one takes outfits over to a display rack and hangs them up, and a fourth removes two others so they can be put on pony-shaped mannequins at the front windows.*)

**Sassy:** I can’t believe the winter-to-spring transition is almost here! (*She gallops across the room; Rarity sings to herself.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, I know. I love it so much, I gave it its own term—“Spring-sition”!

(*As she laughs at her own wit, the frazzled Sassy darts by with quill and pad at the ready, but suddenly stops.*)

**Sassy:** (*calmly*) Oh, I like that! (*sighing, on edge again*) I’m going to have to re-label all my binders, right after we finish…

(*A look across the space causes her to fall silent with a pained grimace; zoom out to frame the whole showroom. Nearly every available square inch of both floors is jam-packed with gear, quite a bit of the upper portion hanging over the balcony edge.*)

**Sassy:** …*everything!* We still have so much to do! (*galloping to a rack*) Oh! Oh, my bustles and bows! Rarity, did we—

**Rarity:** Already hemmed, ruched, and cut, my dear.

(*Sassy sighs with relief, but the respite ends with a little yelp as she looks in another direction. Pan quickly to a set of shelves and zoom in quickly on a conspicuously empty one, then cut back to the two mares. During the next line, the camera cuts in closer to Sassy by steps until Rarity is out of view altogether.*)

**Sassy:** (*moving to the gap, increasingly frantic*) Rarity, no reason to panic, but, um, we seem to be temporarily low—and when I say “temporarily low,” I mean “completely out of”—

**Rarity:** (*now o.s.*) —the baby-blue sapphires?

(*Zoom out to frame her on the end of this. She tranquilly floats an open box into view, packed full of the gems in question.*)

**Rarity:** They arrived this morning. (*Sassy calms down.*)

**Sassy:** Oh! (*Laugh.*) Wonderful.

(*Taking it in her magic, she closes the lid and slides it into place on the shelf. Here comes a second relaxed sigh, but just as before, she does a 180-degree turn right back to “borderline freak-out” mode.*)

**Sassy:** Oh! What about the design for the—

**Rarity:** And…done.

**Sassy:** (*calmly*) Wow. You *are* good. (*Rarity floats the drawing over to her.*) And you’ve really outdone yourself this time!

(*Close-up of the sketch: a mare in a flowing, short-sleeved dress with a multi-layer skirt and a flower at the neckline.*)

**Sassy:** (*from o.s.*) The Morning Sunshine Tulip Frock is gorgeous! (*Back to them.*)

**Rarity:** Ooh, thank you! (*pulling sheet back, emerging from behind counter*) Look, I know you’re worried about something slipping between the cracks. (*foreleg across Sassy’s shoulders*) But with your managerial skills and my fabulous designs, we have everything covered.

**Sassy:** You’re right, you’re right. There are no cracks.

**Rarity:** Would you be a dear and fetch me some vermilion satin from the back? And I’ll start on the Eternal Elegance Empire silhouette evening gown.

**Sassy:** My most certain pleasure.

(*She heads off to fulfill the request; meanwhile, the boss magicks a few random items off the counter. Beneath them is a photo that shows herself next to a swing-riding Sweetie Belle.*)

**Rarity:** (*tenderly*) Oh! (*Close-up of it; she continues o.s.*) I love this picture. (*Her field lifts it away; back to her, zooming in slowly.*) When was the last time we had that kind of fun together?

(*The warm fuzzy feeling evaporates in a sudden worried gasp.*)

**Rarity:** Why, I can’t remember! (*shaking head quickly*) Has it been that long? I guess I’ve been so busy running my shop— (*Sharp gasp; drop the photo; eyes tear up.*) —oh, no! Something—or should I say, somepony—*is* slipping between the cracks! (*sobbing*) I miss my Sweetie Belle!

(*She scoops up the picture and collapses crying across the counter just in time for Sassy to come back in, notepad hovering before her.*)

**Sassy:** Rarity, we’re running low on vermilion satin.

(*And now she is treated to the sight of the designer’s mascara-stained face and the gushers of tears that pour from the big blue eyes.*)

**Sassy:** (*raising voice slightly*) Um…I can order more!

(*Fade to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to Rarity and Sassy, the former now sitting on a couch and still weeping over an open book held in her field. Zoom in slowly as she sets it on the cushion, showing it to be a photo album.*)

**Rarity:** (*pointing at one picture*) And this is when we pretended we were storybook princesses.

(*Close-up of the pages, which display four shots of the sisters dressed in varying sets of themed outfits. They have already been stained by a couple of dark-tinted teardrops, and more splash down to join them.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s., pointing to another one*) And here, we pretended we were on a dangerous yet stylish safari.

(*Back to her and Sassy, the touch of the latter’s hoof on a shoulder doing nothing at all to comfort the distraught unicorn.*)

**Rarity:** (*bawling*) So many wonderful memories!

(*With an expression that is less “there, there” and more “I should be asking for hazard pay,” Sassy levitates a handkerchief into view. Rarity grabs it with her telekinesis and blows her nose loudly, Sassy backing off to avoid catching any of the result with her face. She exerts her hold over the soiled hanky with visible revulsion and lets it fall into a handy trash can; now Rarity lounges on the couch.*)

**Rarity:** Not to put too fine a point on it, but…

(*She finishes the thought with a fresh onslaught of wailing and by pitching face first onto the open album, leaving Sassy at a total loss for words. A few seconds later she raises her head, cheeks now mostly clean of mascara runoff, and gets herself under some degree of control.*)

**Rarity:** Sweetie Belle loves playing dress-up. (*losing it again*) I MISS HER SO MUCH!! (*Face down again.*)

**Sassy:** Then why don’t you go visit her? (*Rarity sits up.*)

**Rarity:** (*between sobs*) I wish I could, but between running three stores and the Spring-sition, I couldn’t possibly!

**Sassy:** But you’ve already done almost all the work. I can handle the rest. (*She walks away…*)

**Rarity:** B-B-But…but… (*…and back again, a framed picture drifting alongside.*)

**Sassy:** Rarity, go. I have everything well in hoof.

(*This one captures Rarity and Sweetie Belle, both wearing helmets and riding a sled in wintertime. The older sister cries some more as it is floated over to her, then abruptly shuts off the waterworks and smiles, the makeup stains disappearing in the same instant.*)

**Rarity:** Hm. Point taken. (*hugging it to herself*) I am going to visit my sister!

**Sassy:** Way to immediately turn that around.

**Rarity:** We can spend the whole day together! And we can do all her favorite things! (*Float it away.*)

**Sassy:** I’m sure she’d love that.

**Rarity:** Oh, Sassy, thank you!

**Sassy:** Of course! Now get out of here.

**Rarity:** I’m going. I’m going!

(*She hops off the couch with an excited little laugh and gallops for the front door, photo in tow.*)

**Rarity:** Hang on, sis!

(*Close-up of it, zooming in on Sweetie’s image.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) I’m coming!

(*The view dissolves to the young unicorn in the same pose, including her helmet and laughing mouth. Behind her, slivers of pony anatomy in the coat colors of Apple Bloom and Scootaloo are visible; zoom out to frame all three Cutie Mark Crusaders in full, having a grand time and riding a flat slab of stone down a hillside. Each has donned a crash helmet. A pegasus stallion approaches the edge of the path, but freezes with only a fraction of an inch before the monolith rumbles past. His mane and tail end up blown straight back from his head, due to the wind of their passage and/or his own terror of being very nearly flattened. The only verbal response he can muster up is a half-strangled cry.*)

**Scootaloo:** (*calling back to him*) Excuse us!

**Bloom:** Comin’ through!

**Sweetie:** Cutie Mark Crusaders mid-mission here!

(*As their laughter dies away, the hapless stallion’s mane and tail poof up into ludicrous balls of fluff that seem to meet with his approval. A very long shot of the area reveals that the path they are following threads down the side of a mountain just outside Ponyville, the camera tilting down from its upper reaches to follow the last leg of their trip. From here, cut to an extreme close-up of an open lunchbox and a pair of gray front hooves building a most unusual sculpture from the contents. It is a dragon, with a cupcake body, the two halves of a banana for arms, lettuce-leaf wings, a carrot tail, and the halves of a sandwich arranged to form a head with open mouth and olive eyes. Cut to just behind the Crusaders as they zero in on the fabricator, who sits under a tree at a street corner; eyes pop and terrified screams split the air, and in close-up, this individual—Chip Cutter—ducks and covers. Pegasus colt; medium blue eyes; short, light blue mane/tail; birdcatcher spots sprinkled across the nose. A profile shot reveals that he does not yet have a cutie mark.*)

(*Just before the impromptu sled can run him over, it flips up onto its end and stops dead, slinging the Crusaders ahead and o.s. A hearty crash shakes the camera, and Chip stands up wonderingly once he realizes that neither he nor his work of art has been obliterated. Down the way, Bloom and Sweetie have wound up flat on the grass; Scootaloo stands up behind them.*)

**Scootaloo:** That was fun! (*jumping up*) Let’s do it again! (*The others stand.*)

**Sweetie:** Scoot, we’ve got a job to do.

**Scootaloo:** Later? (*Sweetie shakes her head.*)

**Sweetie:** (*leading them to Chip*) All right, Chip Cutter. We’ve done our part. The rest is up to you.

**Chip:** You really think I have it in me to be a sculptor?

**Scootaloo:** Yep!

**Chip:** But why?

(*This question catches the orange filly off guard, but the white one is quick to take up the slack.*)

**Sweetie:** Because you said you weren’t good at anything except getting in trouble for making sculptures out of your lunch, right?

**Chip:** Yeah, I can’t help it. When I look at my sandwich, it’s like it’s just asking me to turn it into a dragon.

**Bloom:** (*bringing him a hammer and chisel*) Well, uh, what is this slab askin’ you to turn it into?

(*Close-up of the tools as she sets them at his hooves, then tilt up. He glances back and forth between them and the stone.*)

**Chip:** Hmmm…I see…

(*A quick duck o.s., and he comes up with both items in his mouth, an apron tied on, and a pair of safety goggles propped on his forehead. These last are quickly pulled down over his eyes, and he lifts off to attack the mass, visible only as a whirling blur for several seconds. Finally he stops, carrying only the hammer in his teeth, and strikes a blow on one corner. Cracks race all over the surface, accompanied by a growing rumble, and curtains of dust that boil out in all directions. The screen clears to show a close-up of the three smiling, rearing fillies rendered in stone, Sweetie facing front in the center and Bloom and Scootaloo waving to either side.*)

**Bloom:** (*from o.s., awestruck*) Wow! Th-That’s incredible!

(*Zoom out slightly. Chip, still hovering, has also carved a pedestal for the triple statue, and his sandwich dragon stands by its base.*)

**Bloom:** (*from o.s.*) It looks just like us! (*Cut to the Crusaders.*)

**Scootaloo:** We knew you had it in you, Chip!

**Chip:** (*shucking off goggles/apron/hammer*) This is way better than sandwich sculpting! (*He lands on the pedestal’s base.*)

**Sweetie:** Chip, we’re proud of you.

(*The budding artisan suddenly finds himself lifted a short distance into the air and wreathed in an intense glow. Both effects fade away after a few seconds, setting him on the grass, and he looks back toward his haunch with openmouthed surprise. In extreme close-up, a spot of light kindles on the gray hide and winks away to reveal a brand-new cutie mark of a crossed hammer and chisel.*)

**Chip:** (*doing a loop-the-loop*) I finally got my cutie mark! (*The Crusaders gallop over to him.*)

**Bloom:** Woo-hoo! All right!

**Scootaloo:** Yes!

**Sweetie:** Way to go!

(*Cut to a point just over their heads. One yellow, one orange, and one white hoof reach up and into view and slap together in a three-way high five, soon joined by a gray one. From here, dissolve to a long shot of the Crusaders’ clubhouse, the members climbing its ramp without their helmets; Sweetie is carrying something in her field. Inside, Scootaloo voices a contented sigh as the other two enter.*)

**Scootaloo:** Not a bad way to start a day. (*Sweetie magically shuts the door.*)

**Bloom:** Not a bad way at all. Helpin’ ponies is just about my favorite thing to do.

(*By this point, Sweetie has crossed past them and o.s; cut to an extreme close-up of the object she was carrying—a framed photo of Chip, in goggles and apron and grinning around the chisel in his teeth as he stands by the new statue. Zoom out as Sweetie levitates it onto a blank spot on the wall, nestled among several others.*)

**Sweetie:** Another satisfied client!

**Bloom, Scootaloo:** (*Scootaloo rearing up briefly*) Mmm-hmm!

(*The yellow Crusader steps across to a stack of file folders in the corner, pulls out a sheet, and sits down on her haunches to study it.*)

**Bloom:** So who’s up next? (*Sweetie maneuvers a cloth up to dust the pictures.*)

**Sweetie:** Pretty sure it’s Zippoorwill. She needs help reconnecting with her cutie mark—three puppy paw prints. (*Scootaloo slides over to them.*)

**Scootaloo:** When is she swinging by?

**Sweetie:** (*crossing to door*) Well, I think she should be arriving right about… (*Brief pause, then exert her hold on the knob.*) …now!

(*The door swings inward to expose Zippoorwill, the excitable pegasus filly who adopted a puppy in “Filli Vanilli,” an instant before her upraised hoof can knock against the wood. Now, though, that old energy has drained away, evident in both her downcast face and the fact that she is not buzzing around like a hummingbird that has just chugged a quart of espresso. The only physical difference between then and now is that her glasses have a slightly different design to them.*)

**Bloom:** Wow. You *are* good. (*All three are now near the door.*)

**Sweetie:** Come on in, Zippoorwill! (*She does so.*)

**Scootaloo:** Okay, so what seems to be the problem, exactly?

**Zippoorwill:** It’s my puppy, Ripley. We used to be so close. (*Smile.*) In fact, I got my cutie mark the day I found him and took him home. (*Smile fades.*) But now, it’s like he wants nothing to do with me.

**Scootaloo:** Don’t you worry. You’ve come to the right place. The Cutie Mark Crusaders are on the job!

(*As she finishes, she throws a foreleg across the shoulders of Sweetie, standing to her left; Sweetie does the same to Bloom, who grins widely and raises her own foreleg.*)

**Bloom:** Trust us. Before you know it, you and your puppy will be back to bein’ besties. (*Sweetie steps forward.*)

**Sweetie:** You have the CMC guarantee! (*Cut to Zippoorwill, now smiling; she continues o.s.*) No matter what it takes, we promise you’ll have our full attention.

(*And right at this very moment, Rarity decides to barge in, pushing the bespectacled filly to one side.*)

**Rarity:** (*singsong, exuberantly*) Guess who’s here to spend the whole day with her little sister!

**Sweetie:** (*gasping in shock*) Rarity?!

(*A white foreleg snakes around her shoulder and reels her in, eliciting a yelp; in a trice she finds herself wrapped up in a bone-crushing hug. She manages a strained chuckle as Zippoorwill eyes them both with considerable concern, and the view fades to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to the tableau inside the clubhouse. Noticing Zippoorwill behind her at last, Rarity releases her hold on Sweetie.*)

**Rarity:** Oh! (*Chuckle.*) So sorry, dear. (*patting her head*) You’re tiny. (*Cut to her and Zippoorwill.*) I didn’t even see you there. Tend to get carried away with my entrances. (*spreading forelegs wide*) Ta-da! (*Laugh.*)

**Sweetie:** (*from o.s.*) Rarity! (*Cut to Rarity and the Crusaders.*) What are you doing here?

**Rarity:** (*leaning in, nose to nose*) I am here to spend the day with you! (*Back off; hoof to forehead.*) I’m so excited I could practically faint! (*Pause.*) You don’t happen to have a fainting couch in here, do you? (*She paces across the room.*)

**Sweetie:** (*pointedly*) No.

**Rarity:** Oh, pfft! Of course not. It’s a treehouse! (*Airy giggle.*) That would be *trés gauche*. (*Another one.*)

**Sweetie:** (*hesitantly*) Right. (*smiling*) Well, I sure am happy to see you, and spending the day with you does sound like a lot of fun, but…

(*She throws a slightly desperate glance toward the other Crusaders and their latest client, nibbling her bottom lip. Getting no help from that end, she turns back to her big sister.*)

**Sweetie:** …I’m kinda right in the middle of something important. I have responsibilities, and… (*One foreleg rubs uneasily against the other.*)

**Rarity:** (*deflated*) Oh.

(*After a moment’s thought, Bloom and Scootaloo smile and nod to each other while Zippoorwill casts her eyes toward the floor. Bloom aims her smile at Zippoorwill, who returns it with reassurance, and the first two move across the floor.*)

**Bloom:** Go on, Sweetie Belle. We’ve got this covered. (*Sweetie smiles.*) How often do you get to spend time with your sister?

**Scootaloo:** Yeah! Go have fun. (*Close-up of the Crusaders.*)

**Sweetie:** You sure you two can handle our client here? (*Pan slightly to frame Rarity behind her.*)

**Rarity:** “Client”! Oh, that is so adorable!

(*The pink/violet curls are subjected to a hearty noogie that leaves them in thorough disarray and ticks off their wearer a decent bit.*)

**Sweetie:** Uh, thanks… (*She pats her mane back into place.*) …I think?

(*Now Rarity crosses to a corner, one away from the stack of files, and inspects a table set with a vase of flowers and a bowl of wrapped candies. She sniffs deeply of the combined aroma.*)

**Rarity:** Ooh! You have mints to offer your clients. (*giggling*) How professional.

(*Laughing again, she floats one piece out of the bowl, unwraps it, and pops it into her mouth to start chewing. Cut to the Crusaders.*)

**Sweetie:** (*to Bloom, Scootaloo*) Are you sure you two got this? (*They nod.*)

**Bloom:** We have it handled.

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) Oh, my!

(*Cut to just behind her head and pan slowly to follow her eyes as they travel from one side of the picture-covered wall to the other.*)

**Rarity:** Look at this wall of satisfied customers! (*Overhead view; she gasps as Sweetie steps up next to her.*) You girls really have come a long way. (*The briefest flicker of unease crosses the filly’s face before she speaks.*)

**Sweetie:** Well…all right, then. (*to Bloom, Scootaloo*) But let me know if you need me or run into any trouble.

**Rarity:** (*eagerly, nudging her toward door*) Come on, come on!

(*Cut to just outside the door; they emerge and start down the ramp during the next line.*)

**Rarity:** You’ll never guess what I have planned!

(*She squeals in delight as both break into a gallop; Bloom, Scootaloo, and Zippoorwill step out to look after them. Dissolve to an extreme close-up of a closed curtain, against which a googly-eyed pony marionette in a bow tie leaps into view and gambols about, moved by magic. A second one bounds in to join it. The sound of young laughing voices is heard, and the camera cuts to a long shot of the fillies belonging to them, seated in a tract of grassland outside Ponyville proper. The stage on which this puppet show is taking place faces away from the camera in this shot, and is part of the second cart that Rarity constructed for the unicorn puppeteer stallion Claude in “Inspiration Manifestation.” His portly hindquarters protrude from its curtains. Rarity and Sweetie are among the spectators, the former having procured a bag of popcorn and enjoying the show much more than the latter. They are the only audience members with cutie marks.*)

**Rarity:** Ooh, so fun!

(*In close-up, she grins hopefully down at her bored little sister and chews her lower lip as the camera zooms in slowly. A long moment of silence.*)

**Sweetie:** What?

**Rarity:** (*laughing, hugging her*) It’s just…I know how much you love these puppet shows.

**Sweetie:** I *did.*

**Rarity:** Oh, it’s just like old times. You, me… (*grabbing popcorn bag*) …greasy popcorn…

(*Laughing lightly, she magically pops a few kernels into her mouth.*)

**Rarity:** It’s like no time has passed at all.

(*She sets the bag down, missing the worried glance that Sweetie aims to her unoccupied side as the camera pans away from the gathering to a nearby path. Here, Bloom and Scootaloo follow Zippoorwill, standing on her hind legs she tries to take her puppy Ripley for a walk. The operative words here are “tries to,” as his hind legs are dragging the ground while his front half is hoisted up. He is the same dog she adopted in “Filli Vanilli,” but the increased size speaks to the passage of a decent bit of time between then and now. And he wants nothing at all to do with this walking nonsense.*)

**Zippoorwill:** (*gasping for breath*) Come on… (*The puppet show again.*)

**Rarity:** (*to Sweetie*) Ooh, ooh, ooh! It’s your favorite part.

(*The younger unicorn offers up a humoring grin as both puppets leap out of sight in opposite directions. One leans back into view and drops a banana peel, miming a “zip your lip” gesture before ducking away again. The second slides into view and waves, prompting the first to rejoin it and slip on the peel so that it slides back and forth across the stage. After a couple of passes, the second jumps onto the first’s back; on the next one, they have adopted a figure-skating pose that ends when the two coast out of view and wipe out. Rarity joins in the audience’s mirth, but Sweetie shoots a mildly irritated side-eye glare her way.*)

**Rarity:** Banana peels are so very, very slippery! It’s funny because it’s true!

(*The white filly musters a feeble chuckle, but soon lets it drop and looks away with a glum sigh.*)

**Rarity:** What’s the matter, darling?

**Sweetie:** I, um…guess I just prefer black-box experimental theater.

**Rarity:** (*shocked*) What? Since when?

**Sweetie:** (*sighing*) I don’t know. (*smiling*) It’s no big deal. This is great.

(*She lets her smile drop as Rarity floats some more popcorn up and eats. Wipe to an extreme close-up of the uppermost portion of a door, which swings open/closed and rings the bell hanging over it, then cut to the pair entering a shop. Rarity has disposed of her popcorn, and Sweetie is blindfolded; they stop after a few steps.*)

**Rarity:** (*giddily*) Okay. We’re here. (*magically removing blindfold*) Ta-da!

(*The camera zooms out quickly across to the room to show it as an ice cream parlor. Tables line the windows that stretch the full length of one wall, and the ice cream tubs and a diner-style counter with low stools run along the opposite one. Quite a few ponies have turned out to enjoy the frozen treats. Rarity giggles wildly, but Sweetie just runs a jaded eye over the establishment; the older unicorn clears her throat, and both pace along the counter. An elderly earth pony mare is on duty.*)

**Rarity:** Aren’t you excited to be back here again? (*They take seats.*) Do I know my baby sister, or do I know my baby sister?

**Sweetie:** (*slowly, reluctantly*) Uh…yeah. Where is “here,” exactly?

**Rarity:** Oh, pfft! Stop being so silly. You know this is your favorite ice cream shop. (*Grin; Sweetie thinks hard for a moment.*)

**Sweetie:** Oh! Right. From when I was a little filly.

**Rarity:** And I convinced the original owner to come out of retirement to make you your all-time favorite dessert.

(*She giggles and claps her front hooves together, the signal for the old mare—the retired owner—to bring out a serving tray in her teeth. Rarity floats up both a gem and the mare’s paper cap, nestles the first among the gray locks, and sets the second back in place over it. The tray is dropped onto the counter, revealing its freight as an incredibly tiny sundae styled as a clown’s face. It is so small, in fact, that when Sweetie leans in very close, it proves to be about the same size as her nose.*)

**Sweetie:** (*dryly*) Huh. I remember it being much bigger.

**Rarity:** (*expectantly*) Well? Go ahead. I know you’re dying to dig in.

(*One quick flick of the tongue is all that the little unicorn needs to transfer the entire contents of the minuscule dish to her mouth, and swallowing it gives her no pleasure whatever.*)

**Rarity:** Well? (*Sweetie laughs feebly and sighs.*)

**Sweetie:** That was, uh…one tasty bite! Still a little hungry, though.

**Rarity:** (*gasping happily*) We can get another sundae! Chocolate, with rainbow sprinkles, perhaps?

**Sweetie:** I was thinking something more like a salad.

**Rarity:** (*surprised*) A salad? When did you get so practical?

**Sweetie:** (*forcing a smile*) Oh! Um…I guess another scoop would be fine.

**Rarity:** (*gasping happily, addressing the o.s. retiree*) One more Filly Clown Surprise, please!

(*She beams and whisks the tray off the counter with her field; an instant later a new one is thrown down with a fresh itty-bitty sundae. Sweetie sighs heavily, the camera zooming in quickly through the window behind her to stop on Bloom, Scootaloo, Zippoorwill, and Ripley on the grass outside a house. Each filly has a plaything in hoof: chew toy made of knotted ropes, ball, rubber bone, respectively. Pan from one to the next in turn.*)

**Zippoorwill:** (*waving bone*) Hey, Ripley!

**Scootaloo:** (*tossing ball*) Look at me! Over here!

(*The camera stops on Bloom, who gets her item looped around a hind leg and catches the free end in her mouth. However, just as in Zippoorwill’s attempt to walk him, the dog shows no willingness to play along; instead, he lets go with a cavernous yawn and turns his head away. All three fillies put their toys down and trade disconcerted looks.*)

(*Wipe to a close-up of a tan earth pony stallion standing near a fountain and busily creating something from balloons. Bright brown eyes; curly, light blue mane/tail; pink/white apron; balloon hat on head; cutie mark of two balloons—this is Twisty Pop. One last pull with his teeth, and he proudly holds the finished product—a giraffe—out for inspection. A longer shot frames the long line of fillies who have turned out to partake of Twisty’s wares, and the unicorn at the head of it levitates the animal over to herself as the camera pans to Rarity and Sweetie at the other end. As at the puppet show, they are the only two with cutie marks.*)

**Rarity:** I know you must be bored, darling. (*Sweetie slaps on a grin…*) This is a very long line for one of Twisty Pop’s balloons. (*…then sighs from the hooves up.*) But just be patient. We’ll get you your favorite balloon bouquet, and it’ll all be worth it!

(*The unwilling recipient of this generosity looks back over her shoulder, the camera panning to follow her line of sight across a bridge spanning a stream and stopping on her friends with Zippoorwill and Ripley on the other side. They have disposed of the dog toys and are regarding the pooch with considerable puzzlement. Zippoorwill kicks off the latest campaign with a string of silly faces and noises.*)

**Zippoorwill:** Who’s a good puppy? Who’s a good puppy? You’re the good puppy!

(*Neither this round of compliments, or the petting she delivers to the top of Ripley’s head, makes him any more amenable to playing with her. Nevertheless, she persists, now holding the ball Scootaloo showed off earlier.*)

**Zippoorwill:** Now come on, puppy-wuppy! (*sitting on haunches*) Get the bally-wally!

(*She tosses it so that it bounces a few feet, but Ripley shows no motivation to chase it down.*)

**Scootaloo:** Come on, Ripley! Like this!

(*She darts across, nips it in her teeth, and brings it back to drop at Bloom’s hooves in close-up. The yellow filly sits on her haunches.*)

**Bloom:** (*patting her head*) Good Scootaloo! See?

(*A series of loud barks surprises both of them; cut to Ripley, who has chased a squirrel up onto a tree branch and is giving it an earful from below. He is visible from the neck up; on the next line, tilt down to frame all of him and the three fillies in the background. They are standing again and have put the ball away.*)

**Zippoorwill:** (*sighing impatiently*) It’s not working. (*Scootaloo sits.*)

**Scootaloo:** Maybe if the ball tasted better?

**Bloom:** I don’t think that’s it, Scoot.

(*Cut back to Rarity and Sweetie at the end of Twisty’s line, the filly’s attention still centered on the fruitless dog retraining.*)

**Sweetie:** Doesn’t look like it’s going so well. I’m just gonna do a quick check with the CMC’s.

**Rarity:** (*glumly*) Well, I guess duty calls, and…and you—you have that now. (*Sweetie pauses in her walk toward the stream bridge.*)

**Sweetie:** What?

**Rarity:** (*smiling, waving her on*) Nothing, nothing. Go on.

(*The smile evaporates. Cut to the other end of the bridge, where Bloom stands and Scootaloo sits on her belly, as Sweetie gallops to them.*)

**Scootaloo:** Hey, Sweetie Belle. (*Stand.*) How’s your day with Rarity going?

**Sweetie:** Well…it’s not exactly great.

**Bloom:** What do you mean?

**Sweetie:** I don’t know. It’s like Rarity doesn’t even know me anymore.

**Scootaloo:** I wish we could say our day is going better.

(*Behind her and Bloom, the squirrel Ripley had treed races past with him in hot pursuit and Zippoorwill chasing him in turn.*)

**Bloom:** But we can’t.

(*As Zippoorwill offers her rubber bone to Ripley and he shows not a whit of interest in it, Scootaloo moves to watch from a short distance.*)

**Scootaloo:** Seems like Zippoorwill’s puppy doesn’t want anything to do with her.

(*Now Sweetie steps closer, in time to see Zippoorwill set the plaything on Ripley’s head and sit on her haunches. He responds by vigorously shaking it off and running away, crushing her spirits all over again; she stands up and plods after the canine.*)

**Sweetie:** (*hoof to chin*) Hmmm…I see what you mean. (*Gasp; a brainstorm hits.*) You know, it’s an awfully big puppy.

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) Sweetie Belle! Hurry! (*Pan to frame her waving in the background.*) He’s making it!

(*She races away, the little sister’s demeanor sinking several notches.*)

**Sweetie:** Gotta go.

(*She trudges away as Zippoorwill returns. At the fountain, Twisty is doing his thing at blinding speed, and within seconds he has crafted a multicolored bouquet of flowers and held it out to Rarity and the returning Sweetie. A ribbon is tied around the green balloon stems. Rarity gasps and takes the whole thing in her telekinesis.*)

**Rarity:** I know just what to do with this!

(*Wipe to them in the park outside Ponyville, standing side by side: Rarity dressed as a shepherdess and holding the bouquet, Sweetie as one of her charges and none too pleased about it. A meadow backdrop has been set up behind them, with spotlights to either side, and a unicorn photographer has the lens of his neck-mounted camera trained on them. He floats it up to eye level and gets ready to shoot.*)

**Rarity:** And pose!

(*The shutter is pressed, the screen flashing white and clearing to put the siblings in front of a barn: Rarity as a chicken, Sweetie as a giant cracked egg.*)

**Rarity:** And pose!

(*Again; now they are on grass, as a butterfly and caterpillar.*)

**Rarity:** Love the camera!

(*She winks before the flash goes off; next they are a frog and tadpole against an underwater backdrop.*)

**Rarity:** Hate the camera!

(*She pouts for it. The next flash deposits them before a sun/raindrop/cloud/rainbow ground, as a flower and a sprouting seed.*)

**Rarity:** Love it again!

(*She leans in close with a big smile, hooves to cheeks. One last flash, and the scene has shifted back to the photography session. They are still in this final pair of costumes, and Rarity has picked up all the photos in her magic and is studying them. Through all of this, Sweetie’s bored/vexed expression has not shifted one iota.*)

**Rarity:** Sweetie Belle, you did “hate the camera” for all these shots. (*She tosses them aside with a groan.*) Let’s do it again.

**Sweetie:** No!

(*A gasp from Rarity comes in time with a pan away from the area. Stop on the other three fillies near a stone bench; Ripley lies impassively before them, and Zippoorwill has the rubber bone toy he rejected in her mouth.*)

**Bloom:** Come on, Zippoorwill! You can do this!

(*She squeezes it in her teeth, causing it to squeak, and sets it on the ground before the pooch. He stares levelly at it, sniffs it a couple of times, and delivers his verdict by standing up and walking off. All the wind goes out of the three fillies’ sails in record time. Back to the photo shoot.*)

**Rarity:** W-W-What do you mean, no?

**Sweetie:** Rarity, this is hard for me to say, but…um…

**Rarity:** Sweetie Belle, what is it? You’ve been acting weird all day. You used to love doing these things with me.

**Sweetie:** That’s just it! I *used to!* That’s not who I am anymore!

(*Cut to Zippoorwill.*)

**Zippoorwill:** This isn’t who I am! My cutie mark must be for something else— (*Longer shot of her, Bloom, Scootaloo, and Ripley lying nearby.*)—because my puppy just doesn’t love me anymore! Hmph!

(*She gallops off. Out in front of the backdrop, Sweetie shucks off her seed costume and throws it to the ground.*)

**Rarity:** But it *is* you! You love puppet shows, and dressing up and taking silly photos and tiny little clown-shaped ice creams! (*Flash of anger on Sweetie’s face.*)

**Sweetie:** Really? If you still think I like doing this stuff, then maybe you don’t know me at all!

(*The hoof on the end of one short foreleg clops against the dirt for emphasis as she finishes this declaration, and she too gallops off. Rarity drops to her haunches and begins to cry quietly as the camera zooms out slowly. Fade to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of Rarity, still weeping.*)

**Rarity:** I can’t believe Sweetie Belle talked to me like that. (*indignantly*) And after everything I did to set up a whole day of doing *her* favorite things! I mean, accusing me of not knowing her! I know her better than anypony!

(*A red heart-shaped balloon is held into view toward her; zoom out to frame Twisty offering it. She manages a slight smile and noncommittal grunt while pushing it away.*)

**Rarity:** Thank you, Twisty. (*indignantly*) But the hard truth is, my sister is being unappreciative right now… (*leaning into his face*) …and I’m going to go and give her a piece of my mind!

(*The florally dressed fashionista stalks away, and Twisty’s balloon deflates in his grip. Dissolve to an equally put-out Sweetie clomping through the park, the camera panning to follow her until Zippoorwill comes into view in the fore.*)

**Sweetie:** Hey, Zippoorwill. What are you doing here? Where are Apple Bloom and Scootaloo? (*Zippoorwill is sitting on a rock.*)

**Zippoorwill:** They’re with my puppy. He seems to like them better than me, anyway. (*Sweetie circles to look her straight on.*)

**Sweetie:** Now I’m sure that’s not true.

**Zippoorwill:** It is. He doesn’t like doing anything with me anymore. (*sighing, pulling out rubber bone*) He didn’t even want to play with this—and all puppies love these.

(*She tosses it down to the grass, sniffling and crying softly. The lone Crusader hunches down over the toy and gets an idea.*)

**Sweetie:** I think that might be your problem right there! (*Stand up.*) Come on!

(*She gallops off, Zippoorwill hopping down and picking up the bone in her teeth before following. Wipe to a close-up of Ripley lying on the turf. He yawns expansively and rests his head on his front paws as Scootaloo drops to her belly beside him with a defeated moan.*)

**Scootaloo:** Find Zippoorwill, Ripley!

(*No response. Pan slightly to his other side, where Bloom hunkers down.*)

**Bloom:** Woof! Woof! It’s Zippoorwill! Woof! (*Still nothing; Scootaloo stands up and groans.*)

**Scootaloo:** It’s hopeless. (*Bloom stands.*)

**Bloom:** Sweetie Belle! (*She and Zippoorwill race up.*)

**Scootaloo:** Zippoorwill! (*sighing*) We’re sorry we haven’t figured this out yet.

**Sweetie:** Don’t worry, girls. I think I cracked this one.

(*Long shot of the tableau. A tree and a clump of bushes stand several feet back; Rarity pokes her head up from the latter, twigs and leaves now caught in the petals of her costume.*)

**Rarity:** (*to herself*) Aha! There she is!

(*Close-up; she turns away. More of the real foliage is matted in her tail as well.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, dear. Really should’ve changed. (*Dismissive sniff.*) No matter. I’m going to give her quite the talking-to! (*She turns back and sees Sweetie consoling Zippoorwill, who no longer has the bone.*) Right after she’s done with her conversation. Anger is no excuse for poor manners, after all.

(*The scene again.*)

**Sweetie:** Okay, Zippoorwill. What do you see?

**Zippoorwill:** (*slightly bewildered*) My puppy?

**Sweetie:** That’s not what *I* see. *I* see a full-grown dog.

**Zippoorwill:** (*smiling briefly*) He *did* get bigger, I guess.

**Sweetie:** He’s not just bigger, he’s older too. (*Ripley scratches at one ear.*) You don’t still play with the same toys from when *you* were a foal, do you?

**Zippoorwill:** (*holding up bone*) Oh. Ohhh! The squeaker *is* a little small for him now. (*Sigh; put it away.*) It’s just hard for me to believe he’s not the same adorable little guy I found anymore.

**Sweetie:** I understand. But doing things like you used to won’t turn him back into a puppy.

**Zippoorwill:** So what do I do?

**Sweetie:** Treat him like the dog he is, and find new favorite things to do together.

(*This line catches Rarity like a two-by-four upside the head. Cut to Sweetie and Zippoorwill.*)

**Zippoorwill:** (*smiling*) You think so?

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) I know so! (*Both heads turn in her direction.*)

**Sweetie:** Rarity?! (*The mare emerges from the bushes.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, Sweetie Belle, I heard what you said, and you are so right.

**Scootaloo:** About the dog?

**Rarity:** Yes. But about us, too. The truth is, I know you’re not a little filly anymore, but it’s just…the last time we did all of those things together, I…I didn’t realize it was gonna be the *last* last time.

(*Blue eyes fill with tears as the mouth beneath them curves into a proud smile, and she drops to her haunches.*)

**Rarity:** I loved doing those things with you. It’s hard for me to let that go.

**Sweetie:** Aw, Rarity. (*hugging her*) I love being with you too. That will never change. (*They pull apart.*) But maybe we could just try to do different things together?

(*Big sister nods happily, and the two attempt a nuzzle that is foiled by her costume’s petals. A quick burst of magic strips the whole thing off and removes all the caught-up plant matter except for one branch in her mane. Noticing it, Sweetie fires up her own horn to pull it loose and toss it aside. It lands in front of the dozing Ripley, who takes a sudden interest and gets upright with a happy yip and pant.*)

**Zippoorwill:** What is it, puppy? (*Laugh.*) I mean, Ripley?

(*She moves closer to the bit of wood, picks it up in her teeth, and lets fly; he does what any self-respecting dog would do and bounds off in pursuit. It is quickly nipped up, carried back, and dropped at her hooves, and his enthusiastic lick at her face elicits a giggle.*)

**Zippoorwill:** I love you too, Ripley! (*Another toss; he charges after the stick.*) Thank you, Crusaders.

**Crusaders:** No problem!

(*All but Rarity and Sweetie head off laughing to continue the game of fetch.*)

**Zippoorwill:** (*now o.s., distant*) Oh, Ripley…

**Rarity:** (*touching Sweetie’s cheek*) Sweetie Belle, I am so very proud of the pony you’ve grown into.

**Sweetie:** And *I’m* proud that no matter what, I’ll always be your little sister.

**Rarity:** I, uh, have a little bit of time before I have to head back to Canterlot. Could we spend it together? (*Sweetie nods.*) What would a grown pony like you want to do?

**Sweetie:** Well, I do have one idea.

(*Cut to the counter in the ice cream parlor. On it are two vastly scaled-up copies of the teeny-tiny Filly Clown Surprise sundaes that Rarity ordered for Sweetie in Act Two. Zoom out to frame both unicorns at their stools, the smears of sweet stuff around their mouths telling the tale of their choice to gorge themselves. Both lick their chops, lost in the sheer pleasure, and Rarity plies her tongue over her own sundae.*)

**Rarity:** Heh. I didn’t realize your idea would be such a delicious one. (*Giggle.*) I don’t know how I’m gonna finish this.

**Sweetie:** Oh! I’ll help you!

(*Both laugh and trade a high five, and Sweetie giggles as Rarity throws a foreleg across her shoulders and the retired former owner steps partly into view in the fore. She has a neck-mounted camera at the ready, and both stained faces break into broad grins in time for her to use it. The camera flash clears to show the image now captured as a framed photograph, and a slow zoom out shows that it has been given a place of honor in Canterlot Carousel, on a countertop next to the cash register. Fade to black.*)