**GRANNIES GONE WILD**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to the interior of a locker as its door swings open to frame Rainbow Dash standing at it. She is in her Wonderbolt flight suit—this is the locker room within the team’s compound—and she retrieves her goggles and props them on her forehead. Fleetfoot, Misty Fly, and Soarin’ walk into view on the start of the next line, drawing her attention; all three are out of uniform, and Fleetfoot has the strap of a gym bag in her teeth.*)

**Soarin’:** (*excitedly*) I’m so glad I made it to Las Pegasus— (*Fleetfoot sets the bag down.*) —before the fastest, most thrilling ride of all time closes for good! (*The room proper; Rainbow closes her locker and turns to face them.*)

**Rainbow:** Wait. The fastest, most thrilling ride of all time?

(*Daytime sky is visible through the windows. Incredulous grimaces and gasps from the three teammates.*)

**Misty:** She hasn’t heard of the Wild Blue Yonder?

**Rainbow:** (*laughing scornfully*) Of course I have! It’s that one where, uh… (*Long pause.*) …all right, you got me. What is it?

**Soarin’:** (*foreleg across her shoulders*) Only the coolest roller coaster ever!

**Misty:** (*scoffing*) You can’t really call yourself a Wonderbolt if you haven’t been on it.

(*Rainbow’s eyes follow her pointing hoof to a bulletin board on the wall, covered with photos and notes. Cut to a close-up, panning slowly from one to the next: a fully outfitted FF and Soarin’ in the front car of a cloud-trimmed roller coaster as it hurtles down an incline…two more Wonderbolts, one screaming and the other struggling not to vomit…Spitfire and Misty calmly playing chess as they ride. The camera then cuts back to a close-up of Rainbow, who voices a sound of proper awe.*)

**Rainbow:** (*hovering*) It looks incredible!

**Soarin’:** (*from o.s.*) Oh, it is. (*Zoom out to frame him standing alongside.*) First, you strap yourself into the cloud rocket car— (*launching himself backwards*) —and then you’re catapulted straight through a—

(*Cut to the upper reaches of the gym in the School of Friendship. Now out of her suit and goggles, Rainbow loops her way over the heads of the gathered students.*)

**Rainbow:** (*flying through a hoop*) —series of daring dips and terrifying turns!

(*Confused glances pass between Sandbar, Smolder, and Yona, the dragon throwing in a shrug for good measure. Rainbow whisks past them, the view wiping behind her tail to the shop floor of Sugarcube Corner. Pinkie Pie stands behind a display case.*)

**Rainbow:** (*pulling into view, blurring through loop-the-loops*) Flipping upside down so many times, you don’t know which way is up!

(*The effect of this display is to disorient Pinkie so thoroughly that she pitches face first into a cake on the counter, splattering its innards over the camera. The mess slides away to frame Fluttershy, her rabbit Angel, and Rarity at a worktable in the Carousel Boutique. Her reading glasses on, the white unicorn levitates a measuring tape to gauge the length of Angel’s hind leg—but here comes Rainbow to sweep the little guy into the air.*)

**Rainbow:** (*rising toward ceiling in jerks*) ’Til finally you climb to the highest peak on the rails! (*diving*) Then drop towards the ground at lightning speed—

(*Cut to Applejack standing within one of the Sweet Apple Acres orchards.*)

**Rainbow:** (*dropping into view without Angel, sliding to a stop on hind legs*) —before coming up to a screeching halt! (*hovering*) It’s the coolest ride ever to exist in the history of Equestria!

**Applejack:** (*puzzled*) So when did you ride it?

**Rainbow:** Oh! (*Sheepish chuckle.*) I haven’t.

(*She touches down as the farmer gives voice to an exasperated groan. Fade to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to an extreme close-up of one tree trunk. Orange-tan hind legs rise up to slam their hooves against the bark; a longer shot frames Applejack watching the apples drop into and around a waiting basket as Rainbow crosses to her.*)

**Rainbow:** The ride closes this week, forever! (*petulantly, brushing dust off foreleg*) But I can’t go to Las Pegasus because I have to teach at Twilight’s school. I’m gonna miss out on the coolest roller coaster of all time!

(*She flops melodramatically onto her back, but rises almost immediately with a calculating smile.*)

**Rainbow:** Unless…

**Applejack:** (*adjusting hat*) Why do I feel like you’re about to ask me a mighty big favor?

(*Rainbow pops up into a desperate, point-blank hover, planting both front hooves on the blonde’s chest.*)

**Rainbow:** Can you cover my classes?

(*There follows a one-two combo of a pleading little whimper and big shiny red-violet eyes whose pupils easily reflect Applejack’s face.*)

**Applejack:** Absolutely! (*Rainbow gasps; her eyes shrink to stunned points.*)

**Rainbow:** Really? Awesome!

(*She disappears in a vivid blur—but not fast enough to avoid being snagged by her tail and reeled back in by an expert twirl of Applejack’s lasso.*)

**Applejack:** On one condition. You tag along with a few other ponies goin’ to Las Pegasus.

(*She glances back behind herself, Rainbow shifting her focus in that direction. Cut to Granny Smith slowly ambling up over a rise in the farmland. When the camera shifts back to Rainbow, she is up on all fours again to laugh heartily, the rope off her tail.*)

**Rainbow:** Surely you don’t mean Granny Smith.

**Applejack:** No, no, of course not. (*gesturing toward rise*) I mean Granny Smith and the rest of the Gold Horseshoe Gals.

**Granny:** (*calling over shoulder*) Hurry your haunches, hinnies!

(*Behind her come three other elderly mares who have figured prominently in past episodes. Cut to a close-up, panning from one to the next as she is named.*)

**Applejack:** (*from o.s.*) Grand-Auntie Applesauce, Cousin Apple Rose, and Cousin Goldie Delicious.

(*The first two appeared in “Apple Family Reunion”; the third is wearing saddlebags in which a couple of her cats are riding shotgun. One of them—gray, cross-eyed—meows loudly. Back to Applejack and Rainbow.*)

**Applejack:** Why, I’m sure they’d be plumb tickled to have you join their annual grand-mares’ trip to Las Pegasus. (*Rainbow cringes visibly.*) It’ll be perfect. I’ll teach your classes, and you can look after them for me.

(*Her raised hoof gets slapped down with a disbelieving scoff.*)

**Rainbow:** Look after them?!?

**Applejack:** So they don’t get too carried away. Usually Big Mac goes along as a chaperone— (*gesturing aside*) —but I’m sure he’d love a break.

(*The sound of something being slowly and laboriously moved is heard under the end of this. Its source proves to be Big Macintosh, his muscles taxed to their limit as he hauls a pile of luggage and cats at least twice his own height; one feline rides in a carrier whose handle is gripped in his jaws. The sheer poundage finally proves too much, and he collapses to his belly under it all, the free cats scampering away with a startled yowl.*)

**Rainbow:** (*hovering, leaning into Applejack’s face*) There is no way I’m going to Las Pegasus with a bunch of old, slow grannies!

**Applejack:** (*pushing her back*) So you don’t mind missin’ your only chance to ride the Wild Blue Yonder?

(*By the time she finishes, she has backed the sky-blue pony up a few steps and unnerved her so badly that she drops to her haunches before the level green eyes. A full-scale war rages through Rainbow’s mind, ending with a frustrated grunt.*)

**Rainbow:** (*hovering briefly*) Fine! I’ll go!

**Applejack:** (*chuckling*) That’s the spirit! (*Macintosh chases a cat in the background.*) Now skedaddle so I can help ’em get ready.

**Granny:** (*from o.s.*) Applejack!

(*Long shot of the main barn; she is at an upper-story window, while the other oldsters stand by the open main door. The pursuit of the runaway cat continues across the fields.*)

**Granny:** Have you seen my Cranky Flank cream? I can’t find it in this whole tootin’ farmhouse!

**Applejack:** (*to Rainbow*) It’s, uh, gonna take a while.

(*She sets off to aid in the search as Rainbow slumps dejectedly where she stands and claps an irked hoof to her face. Dissolve to an extreme close-up of the town clock tower’s timepiece, the hands showing 12:59, and zoom out slightly to show the flyer hovering to watch it with fear-saturated intent. At the click of the minute hand and the single stroke of the bell, a supremely fed-up yell begins to build in her throat, but she manages to tamp it down the level of a loud groan. Cut to a moored hot-air balloon in the middle of one street and zoom in slowly as she arcs down to it. Applejack stands by the rig, doing nothing of particular import, and Cherry Berry undertakes an inspection while wearing a leather aviator helmet and goggles.*)

**Rainbow:** Why is this taking so long? The Wild Blue Yonder’s gonna close before we even get to Las Pegasus!

(*She plunks her haunches onto the steps of the platform on which the balloon rests, crossing her forelegs grumpily.*)

**Applejack:** Here.

(*She nips up a scroll in her teeth and passes it over for Rainbow to take in a wing.*)

**Applejack:** I made a list to help you keep the grand-mares outta trouble. Don’t want to have to bring ’em back home before you get to go on your roller coaster.

**Rainbow:** (*shocked*) That could happen?

**Applejack:** Only if you don’t follow the rules. These grannies need a lotta care. If one of ’em overdoes it, it’s “bye-bye, Las Pegasus” for the lotta you.

(*She backs off as Rainbow opens the scroll.*)

**Rainbow:** (*reading, increasingly aghast*) “Make sure they get their naps…eat only soft foods…careful when dancing…don’t get too excited”? Seriously?

**Applejack:** (*sternly*) And *don’t* let ’em outta your sight… (*Extreme close-up.*) …ever! (*Rainbow has put away the scroll.*)

**Rainbow:** Wait. Then how am I supposed to go on the roller coaster?

**Applejack:** (*smiling, foreleg across Rainbow’s shoulders*) You’ll find time, and you might even learn a thing or two about *havin’* a good time from these old gals.

(*Here come the Gold Horseshoe Gals, having traded their usual clothing accessories for matching white T-shirts and sun visors that each sport a gold horseshoe; the shirts’ collar trim is gold, and the visors’ bills are transparent green. All four carry their bags’ handles in their teeth, and Goldie Delicious has three cats on leashes.*)

**Rainbow:** (*dryly*) Yeah. That’ll happen. (*The four begin climbing in; Cherry is aboard, waiting for them.*)

**Applejack:** All right, y’all. Time to get this show on the road! (*chuckling*) Or in the sky, in this case.

(*Watching/hearing a few hundred years’ worth of old mares go by grates on Rainbow’s patience until she has no choice but to uncork a loud groan.*)

**Rainbow:** Come on, come on, come on!

(*Goldie, the last of the group, sets one cat within the balloon’s basket, then another—each one promptly jumping over the side—and then prepares to load in her own bag. This does it for Rainbow’s nerves, and she lets go with a half-crazed growl and a pull at her mane that very nearly tears half of it out by the roots. A split-second blaze of color marks her rounding up of the wayward cats, which are then unceremoniously dumped in with the four seniors.*)

**Rainbow:** Go, go, go, go, go!

(*She rockets upward, Cherry pulls a rope in her teeth to fire up the burner, and the balloon lifts off. After several seconds of waving goodbye with her hat, Applejack puts it back on and walks away. It takes Rainbow only a moment to rise well above the cloud cover, where she stops dead and waits…and waits…and waits for the balloon to ascend slowly to her level. Her supremely annoyed growl carries all too clearly through the tranquil skies.*)

**Rainbow:** Everypony okay in there?

**Granny:** Dandy as a pansy in a plant pot!

**Apple Rose:** You know, this hot-air balloon ride reminds me of the time I climbed a tree. Have I ever told you that story?

**Applesauce:** (*bored*) Only about a million times.

**Apple Rose:** (*loudly, deploying an ear trumpet*) Huh? What did you say?

(*The unwilling chaperone snatches hold of the device’s bell and angles it upward so she can speak directly into it.*)

**Rainbow:** (*loudly, reverberating*) They said they’ve heard the tree story!

**Apple Rose:** (*normal volume, putting trumpet down*) Oh, you want to hear the tree story. Okay. (*Cut to the other three.*)

**Goldie:** (*wearily; a cat yowls and tries to escape*) Here we go again.

**Apple Rose:** (*from o.s.*) Back when I was a young filly— (*Back to her.*) —I was afraid of tree climbin’. Knees knockin’, hooves sweatin’—have you ever had the hoof sweats? (*Cut to Rainbow, who glares sullenly as she continues o.s.*) Well, they’re just the worst thing.

(*Long shot of the entire entourage.*)

**Apple Rose:** You know, Cousin Strudel—she used to get ’em too. (*fading out*) Now, of course she was a champion fritter thrower…

(*Dissolve to a stallion—curiously, a winged unicorn—clad in a yellow hard hat and orange safety vest. He backs up across a large platform, waving a pair of orange signal beacons in his magic aura; cut to a long shot of this area—a balloon takeoff/landing zone among the clouds. As soon as the Ponyville craft touches down, the Gals emerge onto the platform and Rainbow zips up with an eager little grin. An overhead shot and zoom out gives away the reason for her change of heart: they have arrived at the nonstop party that is Las Pegasus, as seen in “Viva Las Pegasus.”*)

**Rainbow:** The Wild Blue Yonder is *in our hotel?!?*

(*She subdues herself and turns to face the four as Cherry finishes bringing out the luggage. Goldie is now carrying one of her cats.*)

**Rainbow:** Uh…I bet you grannies are feeling super-tired from your journey.

**Granny:** Nope. How ’bout a trot down the avenue to see the sights, girls?

**Goldie:** (*dropping cat*) Oh, forget the sights! I came here to play some serious Horseshoe Toss!

**Apple Rose:** Oh, can we see the rainbow fountains at the water show? They’re so magical.

**Applesauce:** My pores are cryin’ for a mud mask at the Prism Palace Spa!

(*She pulls back the loose skin of her face as she finishes, giving herself the appearance of a mare at least six decades younger until it all falls forward again.*)

**Rainbow:** (*shrewdly*) You know what would be really fun? Relaxing in our room! (*hovering*) Come on! Last one to the hotel is a rotten apple!

(*She blasts off in that direction, but her charges show no sign of following her lead; instead, they turn slowly toward their piled baggage. Rainbow doubles back to it as quickly as she left and stands up on her hind legs to block their approach.*)

**Rainbow:** Let me get that for you.

(*As they do a glacial U-turn and start for the hotel, she gets behind the jumble and finds out for herself just how heavy it all is, unable to move it at more than a snail’s pace despite her grunting exertions. Wipe to a pair of closed, gilded double doors framed in lights that bear the likenesses of the Flim Flam Brothers. Whoops and hollers of joy ring out from o.s. as these swing inward to admit the aged travelers and Rainbow, who has somehow managed to get the entire load airborne; she is only too happy to dump it all over the threshold, missing their heads by only a hair or three. She has barely made it inside before an ecstatic gasp inflates her lungs; cut to her perspective and tilt up slowly. They have entered the lobby of the hotel that figured prominently in “Viva Las Pegasus,” still stuffed from floor to ceiling with attractions to entertain the bustling crowd. Only one change is immediately noticeable: the gilded statue of Gladmane, pulled down after his ouster as owner, has been replaced by a pair for the smooth-talking siblings who took over in his place. A greater extent of the lobby’s overhead roller coaster is now seen, snaking and looping in every conceivable direction, passing through/around strategically placed clouds, and even threading into and out of a few windows.*)

**Rainbow:** Oh my gosh, oh my gosh, oh my gosh, oh my gosh! There it is—the best roller coaster ever!

(*Back to her, a shiny-eyed grin threatening to split her face in two—at least until a creaky whoop from Goldie snaps her back to reality.*)

**Goldie:** Warm up those withers, ladies! There’s a horseshoe-hurlin’ trophy with our names on it!

(*Said ladies go into an assortment of limbering-up exercises, causing Rainbow’s face to contort into a queasy grimace. Behind her, a ghostly, translucent image of Applejack’s face fades into view.*)

**Applejack:** (*spookily, reverberating*) Don’t let them get too excited, or you’ll have to go home!

(*She fades away in time with a panicked gasp from Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** (*waving for attention; they stop*) Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. That sounds a little too exciting. (*pointing off to one side*) Why don’t we get you checked in first?

(*On the end of this, the camera pans in that direction to stop on an earth pony bellhop stallion who has just rolled a luggage cart up to the ready. As he begins to load up bags and cats, Applesauce strolls across with her best come-hither expression; her first words freeze him in place.*)

**Applesauce:** Oh, my. You are a strong pony, aren’t you, sugar hocks?

(*The object of her affection can do no more than force down a hard swallow, and the other three giggle and cackle as they step over. Rainbow, for her part, looks as if she might need a heavy dose of antacid to settle her stomach; she groans quietly to herself and flies after them. Wipe to a set of closed doors, which open to let the bellhop push the cart in, followed by the five guests. They have entered an expansive suite, one end of which is visible from this angle: common area with wall-to-wall windows and a huge fruit basket resting on the couch, side bedroom, dresser/vanity resting under a sizable wall mirror.*)

**Bellhop:** Welcome to our Gold Horseshoe Suit. Only the best of the best for our favorite guests, which of course means you lovely mares.

(*The camera pans briefly away from him during this line, tracking the group’s survey of the suite: a second couch facing the one set with the basket, and a crystal chandelier hanging above the coffee table between them. Once the view returns to him and he finishes speaking, Applesauce decides to do a little more flirting.*)

**Applesauce:** Why, thank you a bushel and a peck, you scrumptious morsel of frosted carrot cake.

(*The hapless stallion reacts much as he did in the lobby, and the coin she offers in her teeth as a tip does not settle his mind one whit.*)

**Bellhop:** Oh! (*chuckling, tipping cap*) Thank *you*, ma’am.

(*With a degree of revulsion that sets his entire body jittering, he eases forward to lock his own choppers on the legal tender. He exits with it, missing the cocked-eyebrow leer she sends after him.*)

**Applesauce:** (*to the others*) I think he was sweet on me. Maybe I should ask him to accompany me to the magic show tonight. (*Goldie is holding one of her cats now; Granny laughs.*)

**Granny:** You sure your name’s not Apple Saucy? Better find the brakes on that buggy, sugar. We just got here.

**Applesauce:** You’re right. (*rubbing chin in thought*) Better see what else is out there first. The day is young and I am not!

(*Giggles from the other Gals as Rainbow pulls out the scroll Applejack left her and runs an eye over it. A second bedroom can now be seen behind them, on the side of the suite opposite where they came in.*)

**Rainbow:** Uh— (*Tuck it away.*) —Granny Smith’s right. (*Goldie drops her cat.*) Let’s not overdo it.

(*A deft dart to the windows allows her to pull the curtains shut.*)

**Rainbow:** How about a nice nap so you can really enjoy Las Pegasus?

**Goldie:** (*yawning loudly, winking to Granny/Apple Rose*) Good idea! We could use some shut-eye, hmm? (*Granny slyly acknowledges her.*)

**Apple Rose:** But I’m not tired.

(*A good hard nudge in the flank from the Apple matriarch, and she has caught on.*)

**Apple Rose:** (*stammering*) Oh, right. I…yaaawwwnnn.

(*The rest of the Gals follow suit with fake yawns of their own.*)

**Granny:** (*to Rainbow*) You go along now and explore while we rest, sugar booger. (*All four head for the bedrooms.*) Yawn.

**Rainbow:** (*brightening*) Uh, if you say so!

(*She makes a beeline for the door, but stops short upon finding Goldie’s cats—tan, cross-eyed—sitting in her way.*)

**Rainbow:** What? They’ll be in here sleeping the whole time I’m gone.

(*The animal remains silent, only responding with an out-of-sync blink.*)

**Rainbow:** Quit judging me!

(*Out she goes, the door slamming shut behind her; only now does the cat stir, licking at a hind leg to bathe itself. Wipe to a hall lined with doors, among which is a wide curtained entrance to an adjoining room. Above it is a bank of clouds encircled by loops of roller coaster track and backed by a rising sun—this can only be the entrance for the Wild Blue Yonder—and a unicorn stallion in a name-tagged golf shirt stands on duty. Rainbow flashes past along a connecting hall, then doubles back and comes in for a landing in front of the attendant.*)

**Rainbow:** (*clearing throat*) One ticket for the coolest roller coaster of all time, please.

(*This item is promptly levitated across so she can take it in her mouth, and she parts the curtains fully—only to find a colossal waiting line that stretches back and forth across the floor through a maze of velvet ropes. Rainbow recoils with a stunned gasp, letting the curtains fall back into place as her ticket flutters down to the carpet.*)

**Rainbow:** But…but…this line never ends!

**Tourist mare: (***eagerly, walking up behind her*) I know, right? Good thing we can just stand here all day without any responsibilities waitin’ for us.

(*Her laugh is met by a protracted groan from the deflated pegasus, who trudges away past the ponies who have queued up behind her. A stallion is now in behind the tourist mare.*)

**Tourist mare:** (*calling after her*) Oh, hey, thanks!

**Rainbow:** (*woodenly*) Enjoy the ride.

(*The attendant floats a ticket to the mare. Wipe to just inside the closed door of the suite, which opens quietly so Rainbow can peek in. Finding the coast clear, she eases it shut and flaps quietly in without disturbing the cat asleep on the nearest vanity. Cut to within one darkened bedroom, the camera aimed at the closed doors and framing the foot of its bed as Rainbow lets herself in to hover at the threshold. The blanket is pulled up over the lumpy form of its occupant.*)

**Rainbow:** (*landing, chuckling*) They didn’t even know I left.

(*All is quiet until the lump partly deflates due to a cat jumping out from under the blanket with a yowl.*)

**Rainbow:** Whoa!

(*A swift yank at the covering exposes only piles of pillows and a second cat, which wakes up with a bewildered little meow and brings a shocked yelp from Rainbow. She rockets across the suite, knocks open the doors to the other bedroom, and finds pillows and the contents of the suite’s fruit basket under the blanket in its bed.*)

**Rainbow:** (*gasping deeply*) They’re gone!

(*Snap to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to the hotel arcade. A freaked-out Rainbow hurtles in, whimpering and mumbling to herself, and begins aerial reconnaissance of the game players.*)

**Rainbow:** (*calling out*) Granny Smith? Apple Rose? Are you here?

(*She leans abruptly in front of Bon Bon and Lyra Heartstrings, seated side by side in a photo booth.*)

**Rainbow:** Applesauce?

(*A camera flash, followed by the booth ejecting its strip of four pictures—all of which show the rattled blue mare crowding out the puzzled pair. Elsewhere, a stallion plays a claw game and gets a big surprise when his snatch at the prizes within snags Rainbow by the skull instead.*)

**Rainbow:** Goldie?

(*Leaving the machine, she does another pass and then lands, hoof to forehead as a frustrated snarl escapes her lips.*)

**Rainbow:** I’m the worst chaperone ever!

(*As in Act One, a spectral image of Applejack’s face appears floating behind her.*)

**Applejack:** (*spookily, reverberating*) Don’t let them outta your sight!

**Rainbow:** (*waving her off; she poofs away*) I know, I know!

(*A few galloping strides bring her to intercept a passing stallion.*)

**Rainbow:** Excuse me, sir. Have you seen a group of old mares around here?

**Stallion:** Lady, you just described half the ponies in this place.

(*His pointing hoof drives the point home: the arcade and lobby are teeming with pensioners. She groans, long and loud, as he goes about his business.*)

**Rainbow:** This place is huge! They could be anywhere!

(*A chant of “Goldie! Goldie! Goldie!” shakes her out of her despair; cut to this lively throng as she shoulders her way to the front, then to the missing mares. They are gathered at a horseshoe-throwing game, Goldie at the line and ready to pitch, and a barker stallion in a red/white-striped coat, white dress shirt, red bow tie, and boater hat stands on a stool and speaks into a hanging microphone. All of his lines are amplified by the sound system.*)

**Barker:** Can they do it? Can good old Goldie Delicious and the Gold Horseshoe Gals break the all-time resort record, folks?

(*Good old Goldie lets fly, dropping the iron neatly onto the stake at the far end of the green. It rattles its way down to the floor as a ringer, prompting a round of cheers from the onlookers.*)

**Goldie:** (*high-fiving Granny*) Now *that’s* how you hurl a horseshoe!

**Rainbow:** (*impressed*) Hah! No way! Goldie’s totally got game!

**Barker:** Make some noise for the best-played game of horseshoes this resort has ever seen! Can you believe your eyes, folks?

(*More cheers as Granny passes a horseshoe to Goldie, who casually flips it from one front hoof to the other.*)

**Rainbow:** Yeah! (*hovering*) Go, Goldie!

**Barker:** Stand back! She’s getting excited!

**Rainbow:** Huh?

(*The specter of Applejack drifts past, saying nothing but letting its two green eyes broadcast their disapproval loud and clear.*)

**Rainbow:** Uh-oh!

(*She plucks away the shoe jus as Goldie is about to throw, leading to a very confused squawk from the latter.*)

**Rainbow:** Uh, mind if I try?

(*Her back to the game, she heaves it over her shoulder without looking; it thunks onto the turf well short of the stake and falls flat, instantly killing the festive mood.*)

**Rainbow:** (*innocently*) Whoops. Guess I’m no good at this game. Sorry.

**Barker:** And the Gold Horseshoe Gals are out! Looks like the show’s over, everypony. (*The microphone is reeled up to the ceiling.*)

**Crowd:** Awww…

(*They and the barker swiftly disperse to leave Rainbow on the receiving end of bemused/annoyed looks from four pairs of old eyes.*)

**Rainbow:** Oh, I’m so glad I found you! (*squashing Goldie’s cheeks*) Everypony feeling okay? (*moving to Applesauce*) Not too excited?

**Goldie:** (*dryly*) Pretty much the opposite right now.

**Rainbow:** (*sighing*) Good. From now on, I’m not letting you grannies out of my sight.

(*She crosses her forelegs with an air of finality, but knowing glances pass between the elders.*)

**Applesauce:** In that case, let’s paint the town candy-apple red!

**Goldie:** Ohhh! We could play more games!

**Apple Rose:** Or go shopping for hats! Have I ever told you about the time I got a new hat and it turned out to be a bird? (*Chuckle.*)

(*After a moment’s looking around the area, Granny brightens and points at a row of posters advertising various attractions, one of which is the Wild Blue Yonder.*)

**Granny:** *That’s* what we oughta do!

**Rainbow:** (*brightening*) Really?

(*Her grin widens a notch or three—and then, in a shot from Granny’s perspective, the wrinkled green hoof shifts ever so slowly to indicate the next poster in line: the hotel buffet.*)

**Granny:** Hit the buffet! (*The sky-blue face twists in shock; back to her.*) All that horseshoe tossin’ sure works up an appy-tite.   
**Rainbow:** (*landing, sighing heavily*) Uh-huh.

(*She finds herself with no choice but to follow the quartet out of the arcade. Dissolve to an extreme close-up of a stretch of the buffet line as Granny slides her tray into view and commandeers an entire platter of loaded nachos.*)

**Granny:** I love me some nachos! (*prodding them*) I’m-a set my dentures loose on these vittles until the crumbs cry uncle!

(*Behind her, the rest of the gang have secured their own stashes of goodies. Rainbow, bringing up the rear, starts in surprise at this declaration; zoom in quickly on her. Right on cue, here comes the Applejack apparition.*)

**Applejack:** (*spookily, reverberating*) They can only eat soft foods! You’re a nacho away from no rolly-coaster!

(*Vanish. Granny opens her jaws as wide as they will go, ready to dive into the bliss of mounded chips and cheese and sour cream and toppings, but ends up with a mouthful of air once Rainbow flashes by to steal the lot. She mumbles confusedly after the pegasus, who has pulled into a hover with the platter.*)

**Rainbow:** Come on, Granny! You know you can’t have those. They’re super-crunchy.

(*A trash can is plucked up from the floor and the entire platter dumped in. Another high-speed pass clears the food off the others’ trays, and a third bestows a bowl of soup per Gal. The culinary quick change earns her a quadruple hairy eyeball.*)

**Rainbow:** How about some nice soft carrot soup instead?

**Granny:** I thought you was s’posed to be the fun one. (*They get trays in teeth and head for a table.*)

**Rainbow:** Wait! I *am* fun!

(*A loudspeaker crackles to life, broadcasting the voice of an announcer stallion.*)

**Announcer voice:** Attention all thrill-seekers! There’s only one day left to ride the ride of all rides, the Wild Blue Yonder, before it’s gone for good! Get in line—*now!*

(*This update throws a scare into Rainbow, and the two passersby who hustle away in response spook a whimper out of her locked teeth. Meanwhile, the Gals have seated themselves at a table and are moodily glaring at their bowls of soup, Apple Rose tentatively lapping hers up as well. Rainbow flies over to sit with them, having procured a fresh platter of nachos for herself.*)

**Rainbow:** (*with forced cheer*) So, what does everypony want to do tonight? (*Nervous little laugh.*) I-I was thinking “go to our room and put on eye masks and earplugs”?

(*They pointedly refuse to make eye contact as she stuffs her mouth full of the cheesy goodness she denied to Granny.*)

**Apple Rose:** I’d rather hit the club and show off my dance moves. (*gyrating a bit in her seat*) I’m quite a legend when it comes to rumba.

(*Assorted encouraging responses from the other three as Rainbow sneaks a quick peek at her scroll and stows it away in close-up. She has swallowed her mouthful.*)

**Rainbow:** Sounds kind of intense. Aren’t you all *exhausted* from your big day? (*Zoom out to frame Goldie on the next line.*)

**Goldie:** (*pounding table*) Heck, no! We save up our energy all year for Las Pegasus weekend. Isn’t that right, girls?

**Granny, Apple Rose, Applesauce:** (*nodding*) Mmm-hmm!

**Rainbow:** (*groaning, propping head on front hooves*) Dancing it is, then. I’ll be there.

(*The collapse of her mood is completed when she goes face first into her nachos. Wipe to an extreme close-up of a DJ’s deck as a record is floated onto an unoccupied turntable and set spinning, then cut to a longer shot and zoom out. DJ P0N-3 is on duty, up on an elevated platform at the edge of a large circular dance floor lit by roving spotlight beams and the reflections from a huge mirrored disco ball. Tables are set up around the perimeter, but the Ponyville five are occupying exactly none of them. The Gals are grooving to a subdued electronic melody in the center of the floor, having shed their shirts and visors in favor of their usual accessories, while Rainbow rocks moodily in place off to one side, her face clean of nacho detritus. The sight of Apple Rose doing a very passable moonwalk throws a jumbo monkey wrench into her mind’s workings; it is quickly followed by the vision of Applejack’s face.*)

**Applejack:** (*spookily, reverberating*) Careful when dancing!

**Rainbow:** (*waving her off; she poofs away*) Ugh! Stop doing that! (*calling after Apple Rose*) Uh, that’s probably enough dancing for now…right, Apple Rose?

**Apple Rose:** (*rising to hind legs*) Oh, that was just my warm-up!

(*If the moonwalk was a monkey wrench, the blurring pirouette that follows it dumps the rest of the toolbox into Rainbow’s brain pan. As the other three keep dancing, they catch sight of two stallions idling at the edge of the dance floor. One is Big Bucks: pale violet earth pony; short, two-tone, light yellow-green mane/tail/mustache carefully styled; green eyes; pale yellow hoof tips; white sportcoat over an open-collared brown dress shirt; cutie mark of a white star springing from an upended top hat. The other is Jackpot: bright blue unicorn, short mane/tail in white and light blue, purple eyes, brown sportcoat over a white turtleneck with a green gem brooch at the collar, cutie mark of three gold stars in a row. Bucks has a drink resting at the edge of DJ P0N-3’s platform, while Jackpot holds one in his aura.*)

**Applesauce:** (*to Granny, foreleg across her shoulders*) Look! It’s our favorite magicians, Big Bucks and Jackpot! (*Goldie joins them, staring raptly.*) And aren’t they lookin’ handsome as ever?

(*Bucks whispers to Jackpot and points the group out; the two do a quick bit of on-the-fly grooming and start to approach. Granny counters by undoing the buns in her mane/tail so that waterfalls of whitened locks cascade down around her shoulders and rump. Jackpot has a slight British accent and a flair for the dramatic when he speaks, while Bucks is more of a smooth talker.*)

**Jackpot:** (*clearing throat*) You little fillies have got some smooth moves. (*Apple Rose breakdances past in the background during this line; the other three giggle coquettishly.*)

**Bucks:** (*circling behind Applesauce/Goldie*) Say, how would you Gold Horseshoe Gals like to bring some of that good energy into our magic show tonight?

**Jackpot:** (*conjuring several tickets between his hooves*) Here’s five complimentary VIP tickets to our most amazing trick, in the *Poney Fantastique* Theater.

(*His perspective: he points toward a curtained doorway surmounted by an image of a top-hatted mare producing a burst of stars.*)

**Jackpot:** Just over there. (*Back to the group.*)

**Applesauce:** Sugar cube, we never miss your show. (*She waggles her eyebrows at him—one at a time, in quick succession.*)

**Jackpot:** Fabulous! We’ll save a spot for you—onstage.

**Bucks:** (*bowing*) And in our hearts. (*Wink; close-up of Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** (*to herself, repulsed*) So gross.

(*Zoom out to the sound of the others’ whoops and laughter. She has wound up sitting on the platform’s edge and is watching the two performers exit; Granny now has the tickets.*)

**Granny:** (*jumping in place*) Yee-haa, girls! Applesauce landed us some Very Important Pony tickets for the show tonight!

(*They laugh and murmur among themselves as Rainbow slumps far enough forward to risk a tumble and a face plant on the dance floor. After a long moment, she snaps upright again.*)

**Rainbow:** Oh, come on! You said you were going back to the room after dancing—so each pony could have some alone time?

**Goldie:** Oh, now don’t be a stick in the mud! Trust me, you’ll *love* this show. It’s the best thing in Las Pegasus.

(*All four retirees leave the club amid a gale of laughter and chatter as Rainbow claps a supremely irritated hoof to her face. The two tourists who were behind her in line for the Wild Blue Yonder walk by, but stop upon recognizing her. The mare has a document tucked into a fold of her shirt.*)

**Tourist mare:** Oh, hey! Thanks for giving me your place in line. (*The item is levitated out and shown to Rainbow.*) They said I’m one of the last ponies ever to ride the Wild Blue Yonder!

(*Close-up of both it and Rainbow’s queasy reaction as she finishes speaking—a photo of the two unicorns having a grand time riding in the coaster’s front car. Following the mare’s laugh, the camera cuts to frame all three again; she slips it back into its spot, and she and the stallion go on their way. The flying ace’s brain completely locks up, causing the rest of her to collapse insensate onto her back, and the view fades to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a packed theater whose stage is set with backdrops and decorations that evoke an undersea fantasy. Bucks and Jackpot are on either side of a stand whose upper half is covered by a cloth. Both are wearing top hats, bow ties, and tuxedo jackets over ruffled dress shirts. Bucks: blue jacket/tie/hatband, pale blue jacket piping, white shirt and hat. Jackpot: purple jacket/tie/hatband, yellow piping and hat, lighter yellow shirt. Zoom in slowly as Jackpot whisks the cloth away to reveal a small table on which nothing rests—the climax of a disappearing trick, perhaps—and the crowd begins to cheer. The Gals are in the front row, now wearing their shirts and visors again and accompanied by a dour-faced Rainbow. Granny has put her mane/tail back into their usual buns.*)

**Bucks:** And now, for the trick that made us famous!

**Jackpot:** The most dangerous magical feat known to ponykind!

(*Multicolored spotlights play across the stage as the table is lowered out of sight and the audience voices its awe.*)

**Jackpot:** We’d like to invite some *very special* mares to the stage. (*Muted applause.*)

**Applesauce:** (*to the other Gals*) That’s our cue, girls! (*All four vacate their seats and head up.*)

**Rainbow:** (*hushed*) Hey! Where are you going? Come back!

(*She hurries after them, but the stallion she asked for help in the arcade during Act Two rises from his seat to block her way. At her polite tap and hopeful grin, he gives her a dirty look and rears up far enough to let her gallop through. Meanwhile, the elderly mares—now having traded their visors for feathered showgirl-style headdresses—step to center stage.*)

**Bucks:** Meet our lovely assistants!

(*A round of applause drifts up as Rainbow makes her way to a backstage entrance and cringes in fear at the sight before her.*)

**Jackpot:** They will make a splash-tastic escape using only the instructions we give them… (*hoof to temple*) …with our minds. (*Awed ooh’s from the crowd.*)

**Bucks:** Don’t try this at home, folks!

(*At his wink and an upraised foreleg from both stallions, a large, rectangular, glass-walled tank with an open bottom is lowered on chains from the rafters to pen in the four assistants. The top and bottom edges feature gilded scrollwork, and the top face is a solid metal panel rather than glass. Once its bottom edges are solidly in contact with the stage, water begins to pour from a drain set into the planks, slowly filling the tank as they smile to the audience and trade high fives. Rainbow gasps in brain-paralyzing fright, hooves to temples, and here comes Applejack’s ghostly avatar.*)

**Applejack:** (*dryly, reverberating*) Do I really have to say anything?

(*Spoken without the previous spooky inflection, these seven words tip Rainbow into a headlong flight to the stage; she addresses first Bucks and then Jackpot on the next line.*)

**Rainbow:** Release those grannies right now!

(*Murmurs of surprise and dismay ripple through the audience. Pinned under the glare of those red-violet eyes, Jackpot can only shrug helplessly as the water level reaches the top of the tank. Rainbow throws her weight against the front wall and, with her wings buzzing like a hummingbird’s after ten gallons of coffee, begins to tip the enclosure ever so slowly backwards. The bottom edge comes free of the stage, releasing the water to cascade everywhere, but she does not stop until the whole thing has landed on its back. Granny bites down on the varicolored tail and gives one good hard yank to drag Rainbow down for a furious eye-to-eye.*)

**Granny:** What’d you go and do that for? That was our big star moment!

**Rainbow:** Y-You were in danger! I-I saw the water! You were trapped!

**Goldie:** Oh, pish-tosh! This is a magic show! We’ve seen it a thousand times! Everypony always escapes!

(*Now the murmurs that run through the crowd are ones of dawning comprehension at the secret that she has just involuntarily given away.*)

**Bucks:** (*nervously, crossing to Jackpot*) Uh, th-th-that’s right, folks, because of our, um, uh…skill as magicians!

**Jackpot:** (*hastily*) And now, a disappearing act!

(*Whipping a small device from behind his collar, he throws it down to release a screen-filling burst of blue smoke. A longer shot reveals, though, that the diversion has only obscured their end of the stage; they gallop madly across and into the wings, the haze clearing and the curtains closing. Behind them, the now-dry Gals fix Rainbow with a salvo of truly steamed glares.*)

**Applesauce:** (*as all remove their headdresses*) Well, I hope you’re happy. (*voice breaking*) We’ve been waitin’ to be picked as the lovely assistants in that trick for years!

**Goldie:** You keep runin’ our fun! I had a hot hoof goin’ in that game you decided to lose for us!

**Granny:** And I wanted to eat those nachos at the buffet!

**Apple Rose:** And I could’ve torn up the dance floor if you didn’t keep stopping me!

**Granny:** They’re bein’ too polite to say it, so I will. (*She gets in Rainbow’s face.*) Rainbow Dash, we thought you’d be a hoot, but I ain’t never met a wetter hen!

**Rainbow:** (*totally shocked*) *What?!?*

**Goldie:** She’s right! You’ve had your mane in a twist ever since we arrived!

**Apple Rose:** (*gently, touching Rainbow’s wing*) Is something the matter, dear?

(*Rainbow hangs her head ashamedly.*)

**Rainbow:** I’m so sorry, everypony. (*sitting on haunches*) The truth is, all I wanted to do for this whole trip is ride the Wild Blue Yonder. I mean, it’s why I came to Las Pegasus in the first place. Applejack told me not to let you out of my sight, or you might overdo it and we’d have to go home early.

**Applesauce:** Applejack put you up to this?

(*Grumbles of understanding pass among the Gals as Granny puts a hoof to her face, having grasped the full effect of her granddaughter’s meddling.*)

**Rainbow:** Well, now it’s too late. (*flopping onto her belly*) I ruined your trip, *and* it’s the last day ever to ride the Wild Blue Yonder. (*miserably*) The line is so long, I’ll never get to go on it.

(*The ensuing round of hearty laughter catches her entirely off guard.*)

**Rainbow:** Hey. What’s so funny?

**Granny:** (*chuckling*) Is that all you wanted?

**Goldie:** (*ditto*) Well, fish-flavored kitten kibble! Why didn’t you say so sooner? (*She helps Rainbow upright and rears up.*) Come on, girls!

(*The Gals set off at their usual sedate pace, a truly puzzled Rainbow bringing up the rear. Dissolve to the sea of ponies waiting in line to ride the colossal coaster. At the sound of a brass fanfare, they back off to one side or the other, creating a broad aisle for the five to pass. Granny and her friends now have their visors on again.*)

**Granny:** We’re Gold Horseshoe members, the most exclusive club in Las Pegasus—

(*Now at the head of the queue, she indicates the blue Wonderbolt to the attendant on duty—a different stallion from the one seen in Act One.*)

**Granny:** —and she’s with us.

(*Rainbow grins with anticipation as the attendant tips his visor and lets them through to climb the steps to the loading platform.*)

**Goldie:** We’ve been comin’ here every moon since we can remember—(*winking*) —even some we don’t remember.

**Applesauce:** It definitely has its perks. (*Wink.*)

**Rainbow:** Like fancy suites? And roller coaster rides?

**Apple Rose:** That’s right! And I hope you like riding in the front.

**Rainbow:** Um, *yes!*

(*A split-second later, she has claimed one of the seats in the front car and is pulling a safety harness down over her shoulders and chest with a giddy little squeak. Granny takes her time doing likewise with the other one.*)

**Rainbow:** This is amazing! Isn’t this amazing? (*The mechanism starts up.*)

**Granny:** Sugar, you prob’ly want to hold on ’bout now.

(*The coaster starts to move, cresting a near-vertical hill and eliciting a chorus of whoops once gravity takes hold to accelerate it. A series of souvenir photos now appears, one at a time and each accompanied by a camera flash: Rainbow and the Gals cheer their way through a drop with raised forelegs…they rocket through an upside-down loop…a raucous charge down a straightaway. The camera zooms out from this last to show it as the topmost of the three pictures, held fanned by a gratefully smiling Rainbow for the others to see in close-up.*)

**Rainbow:** I’m sorry I misjudged you for being older ponies.

(*Longer shot: they and Cherry are floating home in the balloon in which they arrived, including Goldie’s cats. It is late afternoon.*)

**Rainbow:** You mares are actually pretty cool.

**Granny:** Rainbow Dash?

**Rainbow:** Yeah, Granny?

**Granny:** The Gals and I have been talkin’, and, well… (*smiling*) …we think you’re a hoot after all! We’d like to invite you to become a permanent member of the Gold Horseshoe Gals!

(*She lets off a whoop as Apple Rose and Goldie hold up a shirt like theirs, each with one sleeve in her teeth, and Apple Rose shows off the matching visor. Within seconds, they have put the first item on Rainbow and hung the second from her foreleg; she regards herself with an amazed little laugh.*)

**Rainbow:** Really?

**Gals:** (*nodding*) Mmm-hmm.

**Applesauce:** Same time next year?

**Rainbow:** (*donning visor*) I wouldn’t miss it for anything.

(*Cut to a long shot of the balloon and zoom out slowly as it drifts toward the sun, which is soon blotted out by Applejack’s translucent visage. She smiles and winks to the group, and the view fades to black.*)