**THE LAST PROBLEM**

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Note: See note at start of “The Ending of the End—Part One.”

Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a long shot of Canterlot during the day and zoom in slowly. Not only has the castle been completely rebuilt after its near-total destruction in “The Ending of the End,” but the city has expanded considerably—both up the mountain and into the surrounding foothills and plains. The general impression is that a significant amount of time has passed since that world-shaking throwdown. Creatures of various and sundry species are amusing themselves in the meadows and flying toward the city proper, and a particularly large dragon wings past the camera in extreme close-up. Behind the broad form, the view wipes to a pan through an equally busy stretch of lawn within Canterlot, then cuts to a square in which a statue of Twilight Sparkle and her friends has been constructed. One mare takes a picture of her own buddies standing in front of it as another one leads a group of youngsters on a field trip.*)

(*Cut to within the throne room, the camera aimed at the closed doors. The walls have been repainted a soothing sky-blue, with white cloud edging along the lower portions. One door opens to admit Spike—now grown to at least half again the height of the average pony, broad of chest and shoulders, prominent jaw, and wearing the medal Twilight gave him in “The Ending of the End” to mark him as her Royal Advisor. As he enters, he speaks in a deeper tone than in his younger days.*)

**Spike:** I got here as soon as I could— (*showing off medal*) —but Friendship Ambassador is a full-time job these days. Making peace between Abyssinians and the Diamond Dogs has *not* been easy.

(*Two ponies stand at the base of the dais. One is a unicorn stallion in a short, dark red robe with gold collar edging, while the face of the other is momentarily obscured by a scroll levitated in front of its face. The light violet coloration, wings and horn, and dark blue, pink/purple-streaked tail give it away as Twilight, but one grown to proportions very similar to Princess Celestia. Her mane/tail nearly reach the floor, sparkling and waving gently in an unseen wind. She wears gold shoes on all four hooves, and the rest of her regalia proves a match for them when she lowers the scroll: a broad necklace on which the central six-pointed stars from her cutie mark stand out in relief, and a tiara set with a pink, six-pointed star jewel. Zoom in slowly.*)

**Twilight:** That’s why I picked you for the job.

(*The stallion’s field takes the scroll from hers, and he bows and departs with it.*)

**Twilight:** (*crossing to Spike*) But I’m glad you could come.

(*Following a brief embrace, they fly to the dais—set with not only her throne, but a lower-backed chair to its side.*)

**Spike:** So, what’s the emergency? (*They sit.*)

**Twilight:** Ever since I took over Celestia’s School, my focus has been on teaching magic. But now it seems my top student has missed the most important lesson of all.

**Spike:** What do you mean?

**Twilight:** Let’s just say it’ll be good to have my Royal Advisor and Friendship Ambassador by my side.

**Gallus:** (*from o.s.*) Your Majesty…

(*His voice, too, sounds deeper than usual; cut to a long shot of him at the far end and outfitted in gold armor—he has reached adulthood and is serving in the Royal Guard. He stands at one open door, the other still closed.*)

**Gallus:** …she’s here.

**Twilight:** Send her in, Gallus.

(*The griffon bows and swings the other door wide to expose a rather nervous unicorn mare. Bright pink coat; golden brown eyes; slightly unkempt, two-tone blond mane/tail shading to lighter hues at the ends, with part of the former tied back in a loose ponytail; cutie mark of a sun rising over water. This is Luster Dawn, who trots up to stop a few feet short of the dais. Now the wall behind the throne can be seen in full since the reconstruction, having been painted a light blue-green. The stained-glass framings for the two doorways leading to the balcony have been replaced with new ones—a pastel rainbow on one side, a night sky marked by suns, moons, and an eight-pointed pink star on the other. The large window above them presents these same three symbols amid an expanse of evening clouds. Luster’s voice is that of a serious-minded young scholar, not too different from Twilight when she left Canterlot for Ponyille two hundred and twenty episodes earlier.*)

**Luster:** (*bowing*) Your Majesty.

**Twilight:** Luster, I may be the ruler of Equestria, but I’m still just your teacher.

**Luster:** And you’ve been wonderful. I’ve enjoyed every moment at the School of Magic. But…I-I’m just not sure it’s the right place for me.

**Twilight:** I see.

**Luster:** And it’s not the work. (*laughing a bit*) I could spend weeks in the library doing research. I-I-It’s just that…there’s a lot of focus on making friends. (*Spike stands up.*)

**Spike:** If that’s your problem, you’ve come to the right place.

**Luster:** But that’s just it. I don’t want to make friends.

**Spike:** (*wings flaring*) What?!?

(*At a brief, sharp glance from Twilight, he clears his throat and settles down, but still aims a funny look in the student’s direction.*)

**Twilight:** So you’d rather leave the School of Magic than make friends?

**Luster:** I was hoping to set up an independent course of study. I want to accomplish as much as you have someday.

**Spike:** It’ll be hard to do that without friends.

**Luster:** I’m not so sure. Friendship looks like more of a distraction than anything else— (*chuckling dismissively*) —and ultimately a waste of time.

**Spike:** (*hands to temples*) *What?!?*

**Luster:** I know you and your friends accomplished a lot together, but that was *sooo* long ago, and as far as I can see, you rule by yourself now.

**Spike:** (*irked, showing medal*) Uh, hello? Royal Advisor right here!

**Luster:** (*hastily*) A-And I don’t think there’s anything wrong with that. In fact, I think it’s better. Plus, if friendships ultimately fade, why even make them in the first place?

(*Twilight ponders this carefully for a long moment in close-up.*)

**Twilight:** You know what, Luster Dawn? (*smiling*) You’re right. (*Zoom out to frame the gobsmacked dragon, again clutching his temples.*)

**Spike:** *WHAAAT?!?*

(*He crumples to his knees, utterly unable to process these last two words. Fade to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Note: For the remainder of this transcript, the headings “NOW” and “THEN,” centered

in bold, will be used to indicate the time frame. “NOW” corresponds to the same

time as the prologue, with familiar characters appropriately aged: foals will be

fully grown, and adults will show wrinkles and age lines. “THEN” corresponds

to the time frame of the rest of the series, some years before the prologue. Details

on appearance changes between the two time frames will be added as necessary.

Act One

**NOW**

(*Opening shot: fade in to the throne room, seen from one side, and zoom in slowly on the three.*)

**Spike:** Friendship is more trouble than it’s worth? (*whispering, to Twilight*) This is your top student?

(*The violet sovereign flaps gently down to land in front of Luster.*)

**Twilight:** Friendships take work, and there’s no guarantee they’ll last.

(*She exits the room, Luster following, and the two proceed down a corridor lined with stained-glass windows that commemorate the heroic actions of those she has known—including a full-grown, crowned Flurry Heart.*)

**Twilight:** They can be complicated. They can be messy. (*Spike catches up.*) And they never go the way you plan. Friendship is a hard thing to navigate. (*They stop at a window that captures her younger self.*) I remember the first time I realized it might not last forever.

(*Wavering dissolve to…*)

**THEN**

(*…an extreme close-up of a checklist held in Spike’s clawed grip. He marks off a box as his boss’s frantic panting makes itself heard; cut to her galloping madly back and forth within a corridor of the Castle of Friendship. Boxes and loose items are piled up willy-nilly, and the number-one assistant sits calmly on one stack.*)

**Spike:** Twilight? Uh, I’m pretty sure that’s everything.

**Twilight:** I’m just doing a final check, Spike!

**Spike:** But we did a final check, of every room. Twice.

(*She peeks out from around one doorframe, a big shiny-eyed grin on her face and a comic book in her aura.*)

**Twilight:** Aha! (*She trots out and shoves it into his face; he drops his gear.*) See? An issue of *Power Ponies*! Now aren’t you glad we triple-checked?

**Spike:** (*taking it*) Thanks, but I already read this one. I don’t need to take it to Canterlot.

**Twilight:** (*shaking head*) No, no, no. You love *Power Ponies*. (*magically yanking it back*) We’re taking it.

(*By the time he can sort out this bit of oddness, she has raced into the library, the contents of whose shelves have been fully boxed up. A very nervous Spike steps in through the doors.*)

**Spike:** Really, Twilight. We don’t have to bring the comic. (*flying to her*) I’m not even sure how much longer I’ll collect ’em. (*She fretfully shifts the issue from one box to another.*) A lot is changing, and I *am* getting older.

(*He touches down with a smile, satisfied that he has made his point, but she is far from being at ease.*)

**Twilight:** Just because things change doesn’t mean you leave everything you love behind!

(*Voicing a crushed moan, she flops face-first onto the nearest box.*)

**Spike:** (*stroking her mane*) You’re not still worried about ruling Equestria, are you? (*She raises her head a notch.*)

**Twilight:** No. I know it took some time, but I’ve never been more ready for anything in my life. (*Stand.*) Just because I’m ready to sit on the throne in Canterlot doesn’t mean I’m ready to leave Ponyville.

(*She floats up a newspaper, the camera shifting to a close-up that picks it out as an issue of the Foal Free Press—the newspaper put out by the students at the Ponyville schoolhouse. As she continues, the pages flip to show photos of the battle against Chrysalis, Cozy Glow, and Lord Tirek and their petrified final state, among others. The front page even shows birds using the statue as a place to rest their wings.*)

**Twilight:** (*from o.s.*) When we were all fighting to save Equestria from Tirek, Chrysalis, and Cozy Glow, I was too busy to think about it. But now it’s all happening at once!

**Spike:** (*from o.s., gripping a page*) What is? (*Both again.*)

**Twilight:** (*voice trembling*) The coronation, moving, leaving our friends…

**Spike:** I thought we’d all be ruling Equestria together.

**Twilight:** (*closing paper, setting it down*) Of course we will, but it won’t be the same. (*pacing, sitting on haunches*) They all have lives here. We’re moving away and they’re not, and I can’t help but feel like we’re leaving them behind. What if we all just drift apart?

**Spike:** I guess I hadn’t thought about it like that. (*smiling*) Maybe you should talk to them. I bet they’re feeling the same way.

**Twilight:** (*smiling, standing*) You’re right, Spike. Thanks. (*crossing floor, rubbing his head*) Sometimes talking to a good friend is all it takes.

(*Furred and scaly cheeks meet in a cheerful nuzzle. Dissolve to a close-up of a crate filled with glass jugs; Applejack’s hoof reaches into view to set a lid in place and apply a rubber stamp of a dripping apple within a circle—a beverage shipment. Pan to a second crate loaded with apples, which gets closed and stamped with an image of a circled apple. Another pan frames a crate full of jars, which gets lidded and receives a stamp of a circle enclosing an apple above two wavy lines—applesauce or jam, evidently. From here, cut to a slow tilt down the length of a checklist on a clipboard held by Applejack, several lines marked off one way or another; she apples her stamp to an empty box, then lowers the sheet. All of this packing has been taking place in the barnyard at Sweet Apple Acres during the day, and Big Macintosh is pushing a crate toward a half-loaded cart with his head. Twilight leans into view, with Spike riding on her back.*)

**Twilight:** (*to the o.s. Applejack*) So you’re not worried about how things might change with me living in Canterlot? (*Cut to the blond mare, gesturing with an apple.*)

**Applejack:** Of course not! Change is natural, like the seasons. That’s just life on the farm.

**Twilight:** (*deflated*) I guess so.

**Applejack:** Anyhoo, I really need to get all these boxes packed and sorted. There’s a lot more work now that the folks beyond Equestria are comin’ to the coronation too.

(*Her casual demeanor fails to put Twilight at ease. Wipe to Pinkie Pie’s party-planning cave beneath Sugarcube Corner; she sits on the floor, facing a standing Twilight and a hovering Spike.*)

**Pinkie:** Worried? Pfft! No way! Unless you’re talking about the coronation, because then, yes. Obviously the cakes are handled, but there’s the whole rest of the party to stay on top of.

(*She does the following during this line. Stand up; dart over to a bin full of wrapping paper and pull out one roll; open a filing cabinet and extract a folder; kick the drawer shut and zip away; inspect a party hat; climb up, open another drawer in the cabinet, and stuff in several wayward balloons. Finally she slams this shut, hops down, and whisks back over to Twilight.*)

**Pinkie:** (*hushed*) But honestly, I’m not convinced Gummy really took care of the fireworks.

(*Pan quickly to the baby alligator in question, who has a lit sparkler clamped in his toothless jaws and offers an out-of-sync blink, then cut back to the action. Pinkie continues to dart here and there, rooting around for supplies, as Twilight speaks.*)

**Twilight:** But what about after the coronation? Don’t you think things are gonna be…different?

**Pinkie:** Well, since I’ll be in charge of all the Canterlot galas from now on, I’ll have to go there a lot more. So I guess that’s different, but I don’t think I mind.

(*Zoom in slowly on the less-than-reassured Twilight as she continues rummaging.*)

**Twilight:** No. Of course not.

(*Wipe to a close-up of her on the grounds of Sweet Feather Sanctuary. Birds and butterflies fly around her head in a choreographed formation, eliciting a smile of wonder, and two swans descend gently with a makeshift tiara of leaves and twigs held in their beaks. This is carefully set on her head; from here; cut to Fluttershy sitting on her haunches and clapping as the critters gather in.*)

**Fluttershy:** Wonderful work, everyone! We couldn’t be more ready. (*She stands and addresses one of several doves.*) Josephine, if you and the rest of the doves leave now, we should all arrive in Canterlot at the same time. (*They fly off; she turns to the swans.*) Eloise and Hubert, you should go too. (*One nods.*) I know it’s a long way, but don’t worry. I’ll bring plenty of snacks to restore your energy before we perform.

(*These two also take wing; now she approaches several hummingbirds and butterflies hovering near an open cage and a glass-walled terrarium.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*opening the latter lid*) Everyone else gets to ride, since the trip’s too much for your little wings. We need everyone in tip-top shape for the coronation.

(*By the time she finishes, the birds are in the cage, the butterflies in the box, and Spike is hovering by Twilight’s side. Securing both enclosures, Fluttershy crosses to the pair.*)

**Fluttershy:** I’m glad we got the chance for one last rehearsal. Everyone’s so excited, but I can’t imagine anypony’s more excited than you! (*Gasp.*) Moving to Canterlot, being crowned—I can’t think of a single bad thing about any of it!

**Twilight:** (*forcing a chuckle*) Yeah, me neither.

(*Fluttershy fails to pick up on her case of nerves, but Spike gets the message loud and clear. Wipe to a long overhead shot of the Wonderbolts’ compound and zoom in slowly on the central runway plateau. Several squad members stand at one end, a few others are in the grass to one side, and Rainbow Dash stands at the center of the tarmac near Twilight and Spike. All the pegasi are in their flight suits.*)

**Rainbow:** In three, two, one…

(*Close-up of the Ponyville trio; she has put down the hood of her suit and foregone the goggles in favor of a cap and whistle hanging around her neck, and Twilight has shed her prop tiara.*)

**Rainbow:** (*checking/pocketing a stopwatch*) …aaaaand…

(*Two Wonderbolts buzz past and through them, barely clearing the runway before pulling up, and two trios zoom overhead to leave smoke trails in the colors of Twilight’s mane/tail. Next they approach each other in pairs, clap their front hooves together, and backflip away; the first two pairs get it right, but the third—Spitfire and Soarin’—instead clunk their heads together and drop out of the sky. Rainbow whooshes away and swiftly tows back a cloud in her teeth, which she positions to catch them.*)

**Spitfire:** (*raising goggles*) Look, Rainbow Dash. (*hovering out, landing*) I know this is important to you and we all want the routine to be special, but are you sure it needs to be this complicated?

**Rainbow:** Of course! And I know we can pull it off. (*over her shoulder*) Uh, sorry, Twilight. (*turning to her*) I don’t have time to talk. We’ve got a lot more work to do before the coronation.

(*Twilight heaves a deep sigh and lets her head droop almost all the way to the pavement. Wipe to Rarity’s upper-story workspace and living quarters in the Carousel Boutique. She has a measuring tape around her shoulders and is using her aura to add a waist sash to a sweeping gown on one of her pony-shaped mannequins. It is short-sleeved, in varied shades of light/medium blue with a layered train and small copies of Twilight’s cutie mark around the hem, and pale blue shoes. Twilight and Spike watch the work in progress.*)

**Rarity:** Darling, change is an integral part of fashion. (*taking measurements*) I myself am considering opening boutiques for non-ponies. Things must evolve, or they become stale. For example…

(*Neither she nor Twilight sees the little guy take notice of a bucket brimming with gems, fly over to it, and help himself to a little snack under these words. Her next move is to cross the room and magically whisk away a sheet covering something on a low stand with an ear-to-ear grin; this proves to be a terrarium containing two large spiders with stars on their backs and two very small sewing machines. Cut to within, the camera aimed at her as the arachnids work the rigs and Twilight moves for a better look.*)

**Rarity:** …I was just struck with a sudden inspiration to change my design for your gown by including the webs of these star spiders.

(*Outside again; she floats up one strand as Spike strolls up, munching on a gem.*)

**Rarity:** They glow for a short while after they’re spun. They won’t have much time to weave the sash, but the effect will be dazzling! (*Cut to a downcast Twilight; she continues o.s., moving the strand around her and Spike.*) You see, darling? Change can be fabulous if you embrace it.

(*Back to her on the end of this, now so lost in the creative process that the departure of Princess and dragon does not faze her one iota. Dissolve to the library within the Castle of Friendship, now completely cleaned out; Twilight sits in the middle of the floor, silently contemplating the shelves that are as bare as the day she moved into the place. A widening shaft of light falls onto her, cast by an o.s. set of opening doors, and Spike walks into view and stops.*)

**Spike:** Starlight is supposed to come over soon. There’s a little something we wanted to give you before we leave.

(*Long pause. Cut to a close-up of the Power Ponies comic Twilight found, lying on the floor at her hooves.*)

**Spike:** (*walking into view, picking it up*) You know what? I think you’re right, Twilight. I *should* take my comics to Canterlot. We can’t leave the Power Ponies behind.

**Twilight:** I don’t think the Power Ponies care, Spike, just like all of our friends. (*Applejack’s shadow extends toward them.*)

**Applejack:** (*from o.s.*) All right, Twilight. Are you ready?

(*Cut to her at the doorway, the other four mares popping up around her. Rainbow is out of her flight suit, cap, and whistle, and Rarity has shed her measuring tape and lit her horn.*)

**Applejack:** We all wanted to see you off— (*Rarity levitates the star spiders’ terrarium into view; Fluttershy carries her hummingbirds’ cage.*) —but there’s still a lot to do.

**Spike:** Aren’t you coming on the train?

**Applejack:** I-I gotta go with Big Mac so we can go over our packin’ list, or we won’t know who gets what deliveries.

**Rainbow:** And I’m gonna meet the Wonderbolts so we can go over the routine one last time.

**Pinkie:** I’m going with Gummy. He said he knows when the fireworks display should start— (*frantically*) —but does anypony really believe that?!?

**Fluttershy:** And I still need to pick up food for the swans and doves who flew ahead to Canterlot. If I don’t get them fed, they’ll be too pooped to perform. (*All enter the library.*)

**Twilight:** (*standing, with slight bitterness*) Well, I’ll be living in Canterlot alone. (*walking past them*) Might as well take the train alone, too. (*Pause.*) Bye, I guess. (*Rarity hustles to intercept.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, you won’t be traveling alone, darling. I’ll have just enough time on the train to weave the star spider sash for your gown. (*pushing her out*) But we should leave now. (*The other mares follow.*) There’s no time to dawdle if you want the coronation to be perfect.

(*The brain under the straight dark mane decides that it has finally had enough and orders the legs to stop; the remaining five do likewise to avoid running into her.*)

**Twilight:** That’s the problem! (*She rounds on them.*) You’re all so worried about making my coronation perfect— (*tearing up*) —that I’m leaving Ponyville and none of you even care!

(*A quintuple unison gasp of unadulterated disbelief, followed by a snap to black.*)

Act Two

**NOW**

(*Opening shot: fade in to Twilight, Luster, and Spike in the Canterlot Castle throne room. Twilight paces toward the dais, followed by her student.*)

**Luster:** Exactly! You moved away, your friends didn’t care, and that was that.   
**Twilight:** (*smiling, sitting on throne*) Actually, not exactly.

(*Wavering dissolve to…*)

**THEN**

(*…the confrontation outside the library in the Castle of Friendship. Spike has now joined Twilight’s friends and is still carrying his comic book.*)

**Applejack:** Of course we care that you’re movin’, Twilight. (*Close-up of Fluttershy.*)

**Fluttershy:** I can’t believe you’d think we don’t. (*Zoom out to frame Pinkie on the next line.*)

**Pinkie:** What could possibly make you think that?

**Twilight:** (*angrily*) I tried to talk to you all about how I was feeling, but you seemed more worried about what you had to do for the coronation!

**Spike:** It’s true. I was there.

**Rarity:** I suppose it gave us something else to focus on.

**Applejack:** I knew you were worried about everything changin’. I-I guess I thought if I made it seem like everything was okay, i-it would be.

**Fluttershy:** I was just trying to make you feel better. (*head drooping*) That way, I wouldn’t feel so terrible.

**Twilight:** Before I moved to Ponyville, I didn’t really know what friendship was. You’ve all taught me so much. (*fresh tears pooling in eyes*) I-I can’t believe it all might be ending!

(*She drops to her haunches and promptly finds herself on the receiving end of a consoling pat by Rarity as the others gather in.*)

**Twilight:** But when I imagine the future, all I can think about is that we won’t be together! I’m literally moving away from you and it’s terrifying!

**Fluttershy:** I’m scared too.

**Pinkie:** Me too.

**Rarity:** (*hoof to forehead*) Rattled to the core. (*She and Pinkie tear up.*)

**Applejack:** Ee-yup. (*Ditto, with a nibble on the lower lip.*)

**Rainbow:** I wouldn’t say “scared.”

(*The other twelve eyes, both watering and dry, fix themselves on her.*)

**Rainbow:** Buuuuut just because I won’t say it, doesn’t mean I don’t feel it.

**Pinkie:** (*sobbing*) I’m gonna miss you so much! (*She huddles on the floor; Twilight offers her a hoof to hold.*)

**Rarity:** (*floating up a handkerchief to dab her eyes*) I just can’t stop thinking about how much things are going to change.

**Rainbow:** (*scrubbing at her own wet eyes*) Wh-What if we don’t see each other?

**Fluttershy:** (*crying*) What if we don’t talk as much?

**Applejack:** What if we don’t stay friends?

(*Twilight and Spike can only watch helplessly as these five dissolve into full-throated wailing. Cut to a close-up of the violet mare, who manages to smile through her tears.*)

**Twilight:** I know it’s weird— (*They stand up; she wipes her eyes.*) —but knowing you’re all as upset as I am actually makes me less worried. (*Group hug.*)

**Spike:** (*from o.s.*) That’s nice— (*Cut to him.*) —but you should be more worried about missing the train to Canterlot!

(*On the end of this, he pulls out a pocket watch and the camera zooms in quickly to a close-up. Cut to just outside the front doors, which burst open in Twilight’s magic so all seven can gallop/fly out, then to Starlight Glimmer on her way up the path toward the entrance. Spike has stashed the timepiece, and a flat, wrapped gift box hovers under Starlight’s control.*)

**Starlight:** Sorry I’m so late. Actually thought I’d missed y— (*Cut to all eight on the next line.*)

**Spike:** THERE’S NO TIME!!

(*The departing travelers barrel past Starlight quickly enough to leave her spinning in place; she crashes dizzily onto her back, the present landing on the grass by the path. Wipe to the Ponyville train station as all seven scramble onto the platform and a whistle sounds off, then to the train itself—pulling away to begin its run.*)

**Twilight:** (*from o.s.*) Oh, no, we missed it!

(*The platform again; all deflate visibly and Rarity sets her terrarium down, but Twilight gets an idea.*)

**Twilight:** But maybe…

(*She fires up her horn and teleports the whole lot of them away to materialize in the aisle of one crowded car.*)

**Twilight:** Okay. We’re on the train. Everything should be fine, right?

(*The discomfited looks on her friends’ faces suggest that it is not. Rarity hops onto an empty seat, floating up the terrarium and a folded length of pale blue fabric. This latter is pinned with a brooch that consists of the two central stars from Twilight’s cutie mark within an eight-pointed gold one.*)

**Rarity:** I’d worked out exactly how much time I needed to weave my star spider sash, and now I’m behind! (*Applejack and Spike claim a spot.*)

**Applejack:** I hope Big Mac can figure out who gets what deliveries on his own.

(*Pan quickly to the great red stallion, pushing a crate across the Canterlot Castle courtyard toward a highly critical Horte Cuisine. Two others have been stacked up to one side.*)

**Horte:** I assume these contain the finest sparkling apple juice?

(*The mark stamped on the lid has been smudged somewhat, but is still recognizable as the one for liquid products. Macintosh checks a clipboard and smiles broadly.*)

**Macintosh:** Ee-yup.

(*Wipe to a bakery going great guns, with a toque-wearing Rumble among the staff. Here comes Macintosh, pushing a crate in through the open doorway. A baker stallion turns to him.*)

**Baker:** Ah, the Sweet Apple Acres applesauce for my coronation parfait! (*He crosses to it.*) This *is* the applesauce?

(*The mark on this crate looks almost exactly like the one delivered to Horte, smudges and all. Macintosh checks his list with noticeable trepidation.*)

**Macintosh:** Uh…ee-yup.

(*Capped by a very shaky grin. Pan quickly back to the train car.*)

**Fluttershy:** (*gasping*) I don’t have the snacks the doves and swans will need to perform after their long flight! I’d better find the food car!

(*She shoves the cage of hummingbirds into Rarity’s hooves and gets moving. The unicorn sets it down next to the terrarium, whose occupants hiss at the tiny flyers and send them fleeing to the back wall. Rainbow opens a window.*)

**Rainbow:** And I need to meet the Wonderbolts!

(*She is gone in a multicolored blaze. Wipe to a long overhead shot of the team facilities as she rockets into view, the plateau now empty except for a lone figure on the runway. A close-up frames it as an earth pony stallion on janitor duty; on the next line, zoom out to show Rainbow hovering nearby.*)

**Rainbow:** Where’s the coronation team?

**Janitor:** (*stammering*) Th-They waited, but when you didn’t show, they thought you musta meant to meet outside of Canterlot.

(*The blue flyer claps both hooves to her face and pulls them down to stretch her cheeks, uttering a barely audible growl of supreme exasperation. Pan quickly to a spot just outside one window of the train car, Twilight gazing happily out as Pinkie ponders.*)

**Pinkie:** The only thing I’m worried about is Gummy handling the fireworks display. (*shakily*) But I’m sure it’s fine. (*Weak giggle.*)

**Twilight:** Well, it could always be worse.

(*Cut to inside the car, which decelerates rapidly to a stop in a horrid screech of brakes. Spike is thrown from his seat, losing hold of his comic book, and friends and strangers alike send vexed glares in the winged unicorn’s direction for her ignorance of the calamity those words always seem to bring. The camera cuts to a head-on view of the train and the reason for the unscheduled stop—a herd of sheep grazing on and around the tracks.*)

(*Wipe to a long shot of the Canterlot Castle courtyard at sunset. The prep work for the main event is now complete, and a few winged attendees start to gravitate toward the guests’ tables. Inside, Celestia and Princess Luna regard the panorama from just inside a doorway leading to a balcony as the sound of an opening door is heard; a winded, badly disheveled Twilight bursts into view.*)

**Luna:** (*crossing to her*) Goodness, Twilight! Are you all right?

**Twilight:** My friends and I had a few hiccups on the way, but everything’s fine now.

(*Behind her, a sheep wanders past in an adjoining corridor.*)

**Celestia:** We really are both just so proud of you. If you need a moment, that’s all right. It is your coronation.

(*A trumpet fanfare rings out; cut to a close-up of the doorway and zoom out to the sound of cheers drifting up from ground level. The camera movement brings the sisters into view on the start of the next line.*)

**Luna:** (*slightly worried*) Although it would be nice to get started. Are you ready?

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) *No!*

(*She races in, her aura carrying the gown and shoes she was working on in Act One along with the terrarium. The pale blue cloth she brought out on the train is pinned between the lid and the top edges of the walls and is now glowing faintly—the sash woven from the star spiders’ silk.*)

**Rarity:** She can’t possibly be crowned without her coronation gown!

**Celestia:** Very well.

(*She and Luna turn toward the balcony. Out in the courtyard, the crowd has thickened considerably; she cannot be seen from this distance.*)

**Celestia:** (*from castle*) Citizens of Equestria and beyond!

(*Cheers and stomps and fire-breathing greet these words; in close-up, the outgoing royals have emerged onto the balcony.*)

**Celestia:** My sister and I have ruled this land for quite some time, but even we know that change eventually comes to us all.

(*Cut/pan through the gathering area, filled with dozens of familiar faces, on the second half of this line.*)

**Celestia:** (*from o.s.*) And though we know it can be unsettling, it’s as natural as the rising and setting of the sun and the moon—

(*As she continues, cut to Twilight and Rarity. The incoming ruler is now in her gown and shoes, her mane neatly brushed and held back by a pale blue band, and she mutters to herself as the couturier’s magic makes a few last tweaks and gives her a 360-degree spin.*)

**Celestia:** (*from o.s.*) —both of which my sister and I feel confident leaving in the hooves of the pony who will come after us.

**Rarity:** (*over end of previous*) You look amazing. (*A thought occurs.*) Ooh! I almost forgot!

(*Now she levitates up the sash and loops it across Twilight’s chest, securing it with the stars-within-star brooch seen during the train ride. However, it also takes along both star spiders, unnoticed by all present.*)

**Celestia:** (*from outside*) And so, without further ado— (*Twilight walks toward the balcony.*) —I give you the new ruler of Equestria…

(*Rarity shuts the terrarium; cut to the sisters.*)

**Celestia:** …Princess Twilight Sparkle!

(*Who manages to step on the free end of her sash and tumble forward with a most undignified yell, landing on her back. Celestia’s soft gasp of shock is mirrored at rather higher volume by the audience, but Twilight is soon up on her hooves and flexing her corona to adjust the brooch.*)

**Twilight:** (*sheepishly*) Sorry.

(*Her dopey grin melts into a warm smile as Celestia and Luna kindle their horns. Their tiaras drift clear of their heads and toward each other, combining in a brilliant flash to form the one worn by Twilight’s older, taller self.*)

**Crowd:** (*from o.s., awed*) Ooooh…

(*One of the star spiders emerges from the loops of the sash and scuttles onto a violet wing, causing Luna some consternation.*)

**Luna:** Um, Twilight?

(*By the time the butterflies and hummingbirds from Fluttershy’s routine have swooped in for their part, both of the silk-spinners have worked their way out. A hissing swipe at one of the fine feathered friends prompts a lively argument. Zoom out to frame the yellow pegasus watching fearfully from a higher balcony to one side.*)

**Fluttershy:** Oh, dear.

(*She turns to the doves and swans, all of whom look plenty cranky.*)

**Fluttershy:** I know these aren’t the snacks I promised— (*Close-up of a single carrot lying on the stones; she continues o.s.*) —but it’s all I could find.

(*Zoom out to frame all the birds eyeing it and each other with clear hostility, then cut to Spitfire on a hilltop well away from the grounds. Sitting on her haunches and with her goggles up, she lowers the binoculars she has been using to scope out the area.*)

**Spitfire:** Well, Dash or no Dash, Twilight’s about to get that crown.

(*Setting them on the grass, she stands up; five other Wonderbolts are lined up behind her.*)

**Spitfire:** (*socking goggles in place*) Wonderbolts, roll out!

(*The six speedsters zoom away an instant before Rainbow flies up to the hill.*)

**Rainbow:** No, wait!

(*She blazes off after them. On the balcony, the skirmish between the birds and star spiders ends with Eloise and Hubert, the two swans, sullenly grabbing the new tiara in their beaks and lowering it toward Twilight’s head. At almost the same time, the Wonderbolts arc in and hover, spreading their smoke trails in her mane/tail colors, and fireworks begin to launch and burst in all directions. They have been ignited by Gummy, who stands among them on a hill with a piece of slow-burning fuse in his jaws, and a few of the explosions are far too close for the stunt flyers’ comfort. One dives for cover past the balcony, startling the swans into dropping the tiara; Twilight hurls herself forward over the railing to catch it and plummets out of view, drawing a collective gasp of horror from the crowd. After a long, unbearable beat of silence, the new ruler flies back up with the tiara sitting on her noggin at a decidedly un-Princess-like angle. Cut to Applejack, Pinkie, and Spike at one table, empty glasses at the ready.*)

**Applejack:** (*raising hers*) To Twilight!

(*Only now do all three realize that they have no beverages; Horte, off to one side, angrily motions for three unicorn waiters to get on the job. They levitate full pitchers and start to circulate through the crowd; when Applejack gets her glass filled, she is more than a little dismayed to find it full of thick gunk instead of easily flowing liquid. Evidently the smudged marks on the crates led Macintosh to make an error or two in his deliveries—Horte got the applesauce intended for the bakery instead of the juice he was expecting. Applejack throws a puzzled look across the courtyard; pan quickly to the rest of the immediate family, including Sugar Belle wearing her wedding ring on a thin gold necklace, at another table. Macintosh hunkers down and wraps his forelegs around his head, wishing he could be anyplace except on the wrong end of Granny Smith’s disapproving glare. Puzzled murmurs ripple through the crowd as Spike gulps down his “drink”; now Starlight is seen at the table with him, Applejack, and Pinkie.*)

**Luna:** (*shrugging*) Hm, close enough.

(*In close-up, Twilight just moans softly over the way the whole shebang has gone off the rails. Now the damage to her coiffure and gown can be seen more clearly.*)

**Luster:** (*voice over, wearily*) Okay…

(*Wavering dissolve to…*)

**NOW**

(*…Twilight, Luster, and Spike on the dais in the throne room.*)

**Luster:** …I get it now. Your coronation was such a disaster that you and your friends never really recovered, and that’s why you all drifted apart.

**Spike:** Well…you’re half right.

(*Dismay settles across the young mare’s face as the view fades to black.*)

Act Three

**NOW**

(*Opening shot: fade in to Luster and Spike on the dais.*)

**Luster:** (*to the o.s. Twilight*) So…the coronation *wasn’t* a disaster and your friendships just faded away over time? (*Cut to a smiling Twilight.*)

**Twilight:** (*climbing off throne*) Not exactly.

(*One of the doors at the opposite end opens and Pinkie enters with a relieved sigh. Her mane/tail have fluffed out to even more exaggerated dimensions than when she was younger, the former now gathered into a loose bouffant. Various sweets, confetti, strings of pennants, and even small toys are worked into them.*)

**Pinkie:** Sorry I’m late, but it is *so* hard to find a sitter with a sense of humor for Li’l Cheese.

(*A rubber chicken comes flying into the room, marked with a number 6, and a light yellow earth pony filly gallops in after it. Li’l Cheese’s pink mane/tail are a shade darker than Pinkie’s coat and very curly, her eyes are bright green, and her cutie mark is a slice of pie filled with cheese. It is no stretch to pin her as the daughter of Pinkie and Cheese Sandwich, who has apparently had to replace Boneless Two at least four times since “The Last Laugh.” Li’l Cheese bounces Boneless Six off her head a couple of times, then lets it hit the carpet; her mother pats her head before both head toward the dais. Not far behind them is Rarity, who enters on the start of the next line. She is wearing a sparkly, dark blue fur cape with lighter two-tone collar trim; her mane/tail are just as elegant as ever, but now showing one gray streak apiece.*)

**Rarity:** Honestly, I would have been here sooner— (*tossing cape off one shoulder*) —but you would not believe how busy Yakyakistan is these days.

(*Up near the dais, Luster stares in bewilderment at the three new arrivals.*)

**Rainbow:** (*from o.s.*) Maybe we could get to places on time—

(*The doors again; now she and Applejack are entering side by side, on wing and hoof respectively. Rainbow now wears her mane in a swept-back style similar to Spitfire’s, while Applejack has her mane in a bun and her tail braided. A few of the blond hairs have sprung loose, and she sports Granny’s apple-patterned shawl in addition to her trusty brown hat. Rainbow’s clothing consists of an orange turtleneck worn under a dark gray flight jacket with a Wonderbolt insignia and rolled-up sleeves.*)

**Rainbow:** —if you let me do some of the chores instead of always doing everything yourself.

**Applejack:** Maybe I would if you did them the right way. (*They take notice of the others.*) Oh! Heh. Sorry. We’re not the last ones, are we?

(*A portal opens in the empty air off to one side, and Fluttershy bounds through—tail as full as ever, mane bound into a loop with a flower-shaped scrunchie. A smiling Discord leans partway through to pass her a lunch bag marked with her face and a sun; he then waves and retreats through the portal as it seals itself.*)

**Fluttershy:** Discord’s headed to an O-and-O convention, or he’d be joining us.

(*Ogres and Oubliettes, that is. Cut to Luster, who is now having even more trouble making sense of this get-together.*)

**Luster:** I just assumed that since you aren’t together all the time now— (*Zoom out slightly, framing Twilight.*)

**Twilight:** —that we aren’t friends?

(*The Ponyville seven share a laugh, but not an unkind one.*)

**Twilight:** That’s not the point of my story. It’s true my coronation was a disaster.

(*Wavering dissolve to…*)

**THEN**

(*…a long shot of the Canterlot Castle courtyard. The crowd has cleared out except for a group at one table. Zoom in slowly and cut to Applejack and Pinkie at it; the pink goofball takes a swig from a fresh glass of applesauce.*)

**Pinkie:** Well, at least the coronation is over.

(*Longer shot: Twilight’s friends are sitting here, and she plods to them with a weary sigh. Despite the general disarray of her appearance, her tiara is finally on straight. She takes a seat and flops her chin onto the table as if her whole head were filled with lead shot. A few suppressed giggles from the others turn into a gale of genuine, hearty laughter, with Twilight herself joining in soon enough.*)

**Twilight:** That was something.

(*Pan to frame the approaching Starlight and Spike on the next line; behind his back, Spike is holding the gift Starlight was bringing in Act Two.*)

**Starlight:** I was just about to say the same thing. I know maybe it wasn’t the coronation you planned, but it’s good to see all of you laughing.

**Spike:** We wanted to give this to you before you left Ponyville, but…things got a little hectic. (*He holds the box forward.*)

**Starlight:** Since you’re moving away, we thought if you missed any of us, or Ponyville, this might help.

(*Twilight hops off her seat and plies her field to unwrap the package—a photo album whose cover bears the crest of the School of Friendship. Flipping the pages reveals picture after picture of the adventures she and her friends have had—with the added feature that these images actually move.*)

**Twilight:** (*deeply touched*) Awww…

**Pinkie:** It’s a book of memories.

**Applejack:** And we all chipped in some.

**Fluttershy:** No matter how much things change, you’ll always have this to look back on.

**Twilight:** I love it. (*Close the cover.*) Thank you so much. But I don’t want to only look back. (*Tuck it away.*) Obviously the coronation wasn’t perfect, but that doesn’t matter. It’s our relationships that really count, and we have to maintain them.

**Rarity:** But now that we’ll be living in different places, I’m not exactly sure how.

**Twilight:** I am. I suggest we meet once a moon. In fact, my first royal decree as ruler of Equestria is to establish this Council of Friendship. (*Cheers all around.*)

**Celestia:** (*from o.s.*) And what a wonderful decree it is.

(*Cut to her and Luna crossing the courtyard toward the group.*)

**Luna:** We always knew that whatever adversity you faced, you and your friends would find your way through it together.

**Celestia:** We know Equestria is in the perfect hooves with you and your friends looking out for it. (*Twilight steps toward them.*) And while we’ll always be here if you need us, it’s time for us to be on our way.

**Twilight:** (*taken aback*) You’re leaving? (*Close-up of Luna.*)

**Luna:** We hope you’ll come and visit us in Silver Shoals. (*Pan to Celestia.*)

**Celestia:** But now it’s time for you to rule on your own.

(*Cut to a slow pan across them and the rest of the Ponyville bunch, tears collecting in the purple eyes above Twilight’s tender smile.*)

**Celestia:** (*from o.s.*) You’re all more than capable.

**Twilight:** (*softly*) Thank you—for everything.

(*She launches herself into a cooing, giggling hug with her former teacher/ruler and everlasting role model, which quickly swells to a group embrace among these ten who could now write a dozen books on all the craziness their world can throw at them. Zoom out slowly, the view undergoing a wavering dissolve to…*)

**NOW**

(*…a close-up of a wondering Luster in the throne room.*)

**Luster:** (*to the o.s. Twilight*) So even though everything changed, and you moved away from your friends, you didn’t grow apart? (*Overhead shot of the entire group; slow pan.*) And this is the Council of Friendship. *That’s* what you’re all doing here? (*Cut to Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** Duh! This time, every moon. (*Pan to Applejack.*)

**Applejack:** Heh. What she means is, this is how we’ve been rulin’ together.

**Rarity:** And how we’ve continued to face every problem and threat to Equestria over the years.

**Pinkie:** But mostly, it’s how we keep in touch—

(*Spike spreads one wing to reveal Li’l Cheese hanging on.*)

**Pinkie:** (*pulling her down, cuddling her*) —no matter how busy life gets.

**Twilight:** Sometimes friendships can be hard, and it takes work to maintain them. But without friends, things can be a lot harder.

**Luster:** I never thought about friendship being something to work at. (*smiling*) A-And I don’t mind work. I-I guess if they don’t have to fade away, maybe making friends isn’t the waste of time I thought. (*sighing; face falls*) But I’ve been so focused on my studies, I wouldn’t know where to start.

**Twilight:** That’s all right, because I know exactly where to send you.

***Gentle acoustic guitar melody with closed hi-hat cymbal, moderate 4 (E major*)**

**Twilight:** When I started out, I was unsure

I thought I knew all that I needed, didn’t know what to expect

***Piano, flute, bass guitar, light percussion in***

But when my walls came down, I saw the truth

All along something was missing

And I think you’ll see it too

***Percussion builds***

(*She teleports the group to the Ponyville town square; overhead shot, zooming out slowly, followed by a slow pan down one street filled with known and new faces. Derpy Hooves swoops past, scattering letters from the mailbags she carries for her delivery rounds.*)

**Twilight:** This is where the magic happens

This is where the magic lives

(*She, Spike, and her friends gather and watch Luster begin to return the waves of passing ponies—tentatively at first, then with more enthusiasm.*)

Our friendships weave together, stronger

The bonds grow deeper, lasting longer

And the greatest spell you’ll know

Is how the magic of friendship grows

***Mandolin in; piano, flute out***

(*Pinkie, Rarity, and Li’l Cheese lead Luster to Sugarcube Corner and are met by Pound and Pumpkin Cake at the door. His cutie mark is a cake with one slice gone; hers is a whole pie.*)

**Pinkie:** And no matter how much time goes by

(*Close-up: the filly blows a raspberry and gets her mane tousled by Pumpkin, while Pound blows a noisemaker. Zoom out from them to frame Gummy—now grown to at least twice Pinkie’s height and three times her length. Pinkie jumps up to join Cheese on his back as he blows on his own party favor, and Gummy blinks as slowly as ever, still with no coordination between left eye and right. Cheese’s mane has picked up a few touches of gray.*)

The party will still be here, with some fun new games to try

(*Rainbow flashes past, the view wiping behind her contrail to the group gathered on bleachers for an airshow. She arcs gracefully through a couple of pole-mounted hoops, then flies to keep up with a squad of new Wonderbolts.*)

**Rainbow:** Big adventure’s waiting, obviously

Long as we’re still here together

(*The others zoom ahead as she rises to silhouette herself against the sun.*)

We’ll be flying happily

***Piano, flute, strings in; background lyrics in square brackets***

(*Now the group approaches the School of Friendship and is met at the doors by Silverstream, who leaps from the perimeter lake as a sea pony and lands on the step as a hippogriff.*)

**All six:** This is where the magic happens [where the magic happens]

(*Starlight and Sunburst are waiting for them in the entrance hall. She is in a white blouse with a gold brooch and a magenta blazer whose deep purple lapels match her skirt; he looks much as he did, except for a longer beard that has spread most of the way up his jawline.*)

This is where the magic lives [where the magic lives]

(*Trixie, talking with a griffon student in a side corridor, has done away with her hat and cape. She now favors a short-sleeved tailcoat in the same color with lighter cuffs/lapels and stars sprinkled across the hem, and a matching tie with a white shirt. The youngster flies on and is welcomed into a classroom by the Cutie Mark Crusaders, whose only significant change is that Apple Bloom is now wearing Cousin Goldie Delicious’ shawl in addition to her bow.*)

Our friendships weave together, stronger

(*Scootaloo teaches the class, seeing eager hooves/talons go up from desk after desk.*)

The bonds grow deeper, lasting longer

(*The campus courtyard: Ocellus hovers to wave to Twilight, Starlight, Sunburst, Trixie, the Crusaders, and Luster, then flies up to a treetop to offer a mug of tea to Smolder. The dragon is lounging on a branch and doing a bit of midday stargazing with the help of a sextant; she readily accepts the mug and takes a pull.*)

And the greatest spell there is [the greatest spell there is]

What the magic of friendship gives

***Strings/bass/piano/percussion/horns only; vocal harmonies behind lyrics***

(*She lifts off, scattering leaves past the camera; behind them, wipe to Applejack leading Luster through Sweet Apple Acres.*)

**Applejack:** And it’s somethin’ true to pass on down

(*They find Macintosh and Sugar in the barnyard—he with mane neatly cut, hitching collar gone, and wearing a brown vest and off-white shirt with rolled-up sleeves, she with a faded streak in her mane and a blue-green scarf around her neck. A couple of puppies whose dark/light coloration pattern resembles that of the Apples’ past pet Winona are out playing, and a purple earth pony colt with a shock of pale orange mane/tail and deep green eyes—the couple’s son—bounds out of a full apple cart to get a hug from his aunt. Birdcatcher spots play across the bridge of his nose, and he has a cutie mark of a cupcake topped by an apple slice.*)

To generations yet to come

***Mandolin in***

(*A rain of apples shifts the view to the front door of the Carousel Boutique. Rarity leads Luster here just as it flies open and a light yellow unicorn filly with magenta mane/tail and green eyes races happily out. Her parentage comes to light when Yona greets the two visitors—now wearing gold bands on her legs, a dress styled after her old blanket, and clips of three blue gems to keep her braids secured—and is followed by Sandbar.*)

**Rarity:** And we’ll never stop believing in

(*She and the couple embrace joyously.*)

The generosity of the friendships we’ve won

***Mandolin/guitar/strings only with closed hi-hat; vocal harmonies out***

(*A flock of birds swarms past the camera; behind it, wipe to Fluttershy at Sweet Feather Sanctuary. Portals open and close behind her so a few small animals can enter the grounds.*)

**Fluttershy:** And because the love that I feel

(*Luster marvels at how easily they flock to her and Fluttershy, including more than a few white and mostly-white rabbits whose lineage can easily be traced back to her old pet Angel.*)

For every single living creature is something that is real

***Percussion in***

(*Discord flies in through a portal above them; next Twilight approaches and lifts off.*)

Friendship happens so naturally

**Twilight:** Oh, and how I used to wonder [ah-h-h-h]

(*She fires up her horn and sends out a curling rainbow.*)

What friendship could be

***Full instrumentation in***

(*Fade to white, against which one mare at a time trots/bounds/flies into view, leaving behind a swath of individuals who have benefited from meeting the crew against a differently colored background. In order, with the screen clearing for each: red for Pinkie, orange for Fluttershy, yellow for Rainbow, green for Applejack, blue for Rarity, purple for Twilight.*)

**All six:**  This is where the magic happens [where the magic happens]

This is where the magic lives [where the magic lives]

Our friendships weave together, stronger

The bonds grow deeper, lasting longer

And the greatest spell you’ll know [you’ll know]

Is how the magic of friendship grows

(*Twilight spreads her wings as her friends, Spike, and Luster gather on a hilltop overlooking Ponyville at sunset, and she bends to nuzzle her faithful student.*)

***Quiet piano, woodwinds, strings, mandolin, guitar only***

**Twilight:** How the magic of friendship grows

***Opening phrase of the series theme, marked by a horn flourish***

***Song ends with a final gentle chord***

(*Luster runs a short distance along a path and waves goodbye to Twilight as a small group congregates around her—pony, griffon, kirin, yak. The seven members of the old guard gaze proudly after her, knowing that the lessons they strove to instill in themselves and others will live on into the next generation, and the five younger creatures hurry away, perhaps to start into some adventures of their own.*)

(*As the sun sinks behind Twilight and company and their shadows lengthen on the hilltop, the camera zooms out to frame their image on the last page of a book resting on a stretch of grass. The facing page bears one legible word—“fin,” French and Spanish for “end”—and the cover slowly closes. The book is the same one that opened to begin the prologue of “Mare in the Moon”: bound in brown leather, with gold bands on the spine, and the cover depicting a unicorn’s head in gold with jeweled eyes. Fade to black.*)

CHANGES BETWEEN iTUNES VERSION AND DISCOVERY FAMILY PREMIERE

Prologue Begins with a fade in to a title card with the words “Many

moons later…” zooming toward the camera, then a cut to

the long shot of the repaired/expanded Canterlot

Opening theme Deleted

Closing credits Cover all three episodes, including separate listings for

the voice cast and storyboard staff involved with each