

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 9
Hearth's Warming "Under Wraps"
Holiday Special
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HEARTH’S WARMING “UNDER WRAPS”

Holiday Special Beat Sheet by Mike Vogel

Hearth’s Warming Eve is here once again! Well... ALMOST. It’s a week ‘til the holiday and all of Ponyville is abuzz with anticipation. TWILIGHT SPARKLE is excited... and stressed. She’s hosting Hearth’s Warming at her castle for her sister-in-law PRINCESS CADANCE, her brother SHINING ARMOR, and her baby niece FLURRY HEART! They’ll be arriving in a few days, and she still has SO MUCH TO DO, including all of her gift shopping! The rest of the Mane Six want to make the season a bit easier for their BPF, so APPLEJACK suggests they do a Hat Helper gift trade. She explains that the Apple family holidays used to be SO big that they decided to cut back on the gift giving. So they each pulled one name out of a hat in secret and only had to buy THAT pony a present. Made things a WHOLE LOT easier. SPIKE and the Mane Six agree and the seven of them draw each other’s names (Spoiler alert, it’s NOT going to make things easier).

Twilight gets PINKIE PIE. At first, she’s delighted (Pinkie’s fun to shop for), but then she realizes that hers is the ONLY gift Pinkie is going to get. So it needs to be special. REALLY special. Twilight starts researching holiday gift ideas (because Twilight) and comes up with an AMAZING idea! There’s a legend of the FIRST HEARTH’S WARMING MEAL where Chancellor Puddinghead made a magical pudding that was SO delicious, songs and legends were written about it. But the recipe has been lost to history. Twilight discovers the recipe and decides to recreate it for Pinkie! She researches, gathers ingredients, even consults STARSWIRL! Cadance, Shining Armor, and Flurry Heart arrive, but Twilight is so focused on nailing the recipe, she doesn’t have time for their holiday fun.

Pinkie had already finished her Hearth’s Warming shopping for everypony (she’s on point with holiday planning) and so when she draws Twilight’s name, she already has a present in hoof. But then she realizes that THAT present was only good when she was giving Twilight a bunch of presents...NOW she needs something even MORE special. She gets SUUUUPER excited. This is going to be a challenge and Pinkie is HERE FOR IT. She decides to go on a quest... for the ONE GIFT TO RULE THEM ALL. Her travels will take her to the YAKS and beyond. She will find this EPIC gift, but it will be too much for anypony to look upon, and she’ll end up throwing it into a volcano before returning empty-hooved.

RARITY pulls Applejack’s name. She briefly considers a new outfit to up Applejack’s fashion game but stops herself: this is *Applejack*. She ends up finding the PERFECT one-of-a-kind designer cowgirl hat that she knows Applejack will love and orders it. Done and DONE! Unfortunately, the hat is accidentally shipped to Sweet Apple Orchard in Appleoosa instead of Sweet Apple Acres and Rarity must go retrieve it. When she arrives, she discovers the package was opened by the ponies that live there. When they find out Rarity is their “secret benefactor” that sent the gift, they are beside themselves. Their little filly LOVES it. They couldn’t afford to get her anything this year and Rarity SAVED THE HOLIDAY. Rarity can’t take the hat back now and it’s too late to get AJ anything else.

RAINBOW DASH gets FLUTTERSHY. She asks Fluttershy what she would want, but that proves difficult, because Fluttershy says she likes EVERYTHING. Rainbow Dash finally just

picks *something*, sure that Fluttershy will be happy with it, but DISCORD calls her out. Is that REALLY the BEST present for Fluttershy? He convinces Dash she needs to up her game and takes her on a ridiculous shopping journey, ultimately convincing her to bring back a crazy holiday beast!

Fluttershy gets Rarity, but ends up with Rainbow Dash after trading with Spike (see below). Applejack gets Spike and ends up asking Fluttershy for advice on a good gift for a non-pony. They decide to do their shopping together and head to Canterlot, where Fluttershy is scammed into buying the holiday’s “best most awesome 20% cooler than anything else” must-have gift. When Applejack sees the TBD gift she questions why Fluttershy would get THAT for Rainbow Dash...until she sees EVERYpony giving over their bits for this weird gift. Suspicious, Applejack investigates... and discovers FLIM and FLAM are up to their old tricks. They’re taking everypony’s bits and selling them this “impossible to find gift” that they have a warehouse filled with. Fluttershy and Applejack decide to stop Flim and Flam before they cheat more ponies!

Spike gets Rainbow Dash but quickly deduces which pony has Rarity (Fluttershy) and trades her. He is SO excited to get Rarity a gift. But he can’t decide what to get her! NOTHING seems good enough. He agonizes all the way up to the last minute where he stays up all night trying to make her something... but he falls asleep on his project...without ANY gift!!

Ultimately the Hat Helper plan designed to make the holiday stress-free ends up causing way more (funny) angst. Twilight’s pudding explodes, messing up the castle, Rainbow Dash’s beast gets loose and goes on a rampage, Pinkie acts out the quest of the gift that was too great to give. Applejack and Fluttershy only came away with boxes of Flim and Flam’s gift, and Rarity has nothing but her story of the hat that she couldn’t take from the young filly. And as for Spike...

Spike stands and sings a song to Rarity for her present. It’s a song about the most important gift, what her friendship means to him. As he sings the others join in. They realize that they give one another a great gift every day – the gift of each other. And as they all share their stories of what happened we realize the gifts all kind of DID work out. Fluttershy tames the holiday beast (and gets to be the hero who saved Hearth’s Warming)! Rarity’s story reminds Applejack of the special day her Mom gave her HER hat for the first time, Spike and Rainbow Dash think it’s awesome that Applejack and Fluttershy stopped Flim and Flam and Pinkie LOVES that Twilight TRIED to make legendary pudding. Pinkie rushes off and brings the presents she already had for everypony and as they all sit around the Hearth laughing about their crazy adventures, the Hearth’s Warming Heart appears above them. Looks like they captured the spirit of the season after all!