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MY LITTLE PONY

"Applebump Season"

EP004

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Outline: October 21, 2009
Notes Due: October 28, 2009

APPLE JACK and her brother BIG APPLE survey **Big Apple Orchard** with wide eyes. Their trees have produced a bumper crop of apples this year! The only trouble is, Big Apple can't help Apple Jack harvest them this year due to a rodeo injury. So it's going to be up to Apple Jack to do it by herself. Not one to be daunted by any challenge, Apple Jack assures her brother that she's up to the task for this year's Applebump Season!

Suddenly, the ground begins to shake. Apple Jack and Big Apple give each other worried looks. Up in the skies above Ponyville, RAINBOW DASH sees a big herd of cows is running full force towards the town. "STAMPEDE!!!!" yells Rainbow Dash.

Upon hearing Rainbow Dash's cry, all the ponies of Ponyville break into a panic as the ground trembles and a dust cloud rises. Suddenly, Apple Jack comes galloping in to the rescue! But these cows are tough to wrangle. Unsure if their friend can stop the stampede all on her own, Rainbow Dash and TWILIGHT TWINKLE ask Apple Jack if she needs any help. But Apple Jack confidently says that she can handle it herself! She tosses her lasso, ropes the lead cow with ease and then turns all the cows away from Ponyville. Once they are a safe distance from town, Apple Jack stops the herd in their tracks. The cows apologize profusely to Apple Jack, explaining that they saw a snake that spooked them.

Everypony in Ponyville cheers for Apple Jack as she rears up on her hind legs and spins her lasso overhead. She rides off into the sunset leaving everyone in awe. Basking in the glow of Apple Jack's amazing feat, Twilight, the Mayor, and the other ponies all agree that they must do something special acknowledging how Apple Jack single-hoofedly saved Ponyville.

The next day, all of Ponyville is decked out for a celebration in Apple Jack's honor. Twilight steps up to the podium, giving a speech about Apple Jack's dependability, stating that she is always there for everypony. Rainbow Dash jumps in, saying that Apple Jack is going to help her with her new aerial trick. RARITY adds that Apple Jack is also going to fix the carousel in her shop. PINKIE PIE chimes in that Apple Jack is helping her bake in the Sugarcube Sweet Shoppe this week. And even timid FLUTTERSHY speaks up, stating that Apple Jack is going to help her collect and count all the new bunnies. Twilight finally finishes her speech, commenting that Apple Jack would do anything for her friends.

So, with no further ado, the Mayor presents the Prized Pony of Ponyville Award to... Apple Jack! But Apple Jack isn't there! Embarrassed, the Mayor clears her throat and tries again. APPLE JACK! But again, no Apple Jack. The crowd shifts nervously as the Mayor composes herself and tries one more time. Apple Jack? Just then, Apple Jack comes stumbling up to the podium. She looks a bit woozy and disoriented. Thanking the Mayor for the award, Apple Jack gives a very weird, disjointed acceptance speech and then just leaves as oddly as she came. Twilight knows that something's up and leaves to find out exactly what's wrong with Apple Jack.

When Twilight arrives at Big Apple Orchard, the problem becomes clear. Apple Jack is busy knocking apples out of the trees—WITH HER HEAD!!! When Twilight asks what she's doing, Apple Jack explains that it's Applebumping Season, which is the Apple Family's term for harvesting their orchards. Twilight asks why the Apple Family doesn't just buck the apples down with their hind legs. But Apple Jack shakes her weary head, explaining that applebumping is a much more efficient manner of harvesting. Why it's applebumping that's made Big Apple Orchard the most successful farm in all Equestria! Knowing that Apple Jack is a proud pony, Twilight delicately asks if she can help the Apple Family harvest their apples using her magic. But Apple Jack will hear none of it! Applebumping is the Apple Family way! Apple Jack then turns back to her tree and starts applebumping with even more vigor than before. So Twilight leaves, sad that she couldn't help their friend.

Over the next week in Ponyville, Apple Jack keeps her promises to help all her pony friends. But as her applebumping begins to take its toll, her help quickly becomes less and less helpful. In trying to "help" Rainbow Dash with her new aerial trick, she sends her crashing into the branches of the Tree of Knowing Library.

At Carousel Couture with Rarity, an addled Apple Jack "helps" by giving her nervous friend bad fashion and business advice. This leads Rarity to looking like a ridiculous circus pony and insulting the buyer who comes to critique her couture.

While at the Sugarcube Sweet Shoppe the usually lucid Apple Jack "helps" Pinkie Pie with some baking. But her ears are ringing from all that applebumping and she mishears all of Pinkie Pie's ingredients. Soon the streets of Ponyville are filled with pea-green ponies, sick from the bad baked goods.

With each of Apple Jack's failed attempts at "help," Twilight tries to offer her friend real help with harvesting the apples. But Apple Jack is too stubborn and refuses time and time again.

Finally, Apple Jack attempts to "help" Fluttershy count all the new baby bunnies in the Annual Rabbit Round-Up. But her head is aching, making her very cranky and impatient. This leads her to wrangling the little bunnies rodeo-style, stomping her hooves and frightening them to pieces. Desperate to get away from this scary pony, the bunnies start hopping frantically away, stampeding into Ponyville!

Once again, Rainbow Dash is up in the sky above Ponyville. "STAMPEDE!!!" she yells. Pony pandemonium breaks out once again as the wild rabbits attack.

Twilight shows up to see the aftermath of the bunny invasion. While everypony has reacted like this was the most horrible stampede in the history of Ponyville, in reality, all that's really happened is the bunnies have nibbled off the tops of flowers, matted down the grass, and frazzled the nerves of many a pony. When Twilight asks what caused the rabbit uprising, everypony is too distraught to answer. But then Twilight sees a guilty-looking Apple Jack slinking away. Twilight realizes that it

wasn't a "what" that caused this. It was a "who." And that who was Apple Jack.

When Twilight arrives at Big Apple Orchard, she sees a deliriously frantic Apple Jack applebumping like a crazy pony. Twilight tries to get her to calm down, but Apple Jack is at the height of stubbornness and on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Apple Jack finishes applebumping the last tree and, as the last apples fall into their baskets, she proudly announces that she did it! She finished Applebump Season by herself and without any help from Twilight! But as the woozy Apple Jack basks in the glory of her accomplishment, Big Apple points out that there is one last orchard still full off apples. Apple Jack just can't believe it and completely breaks down, crumpling in defeat.

Twilight gently approaches her friend and tells her that she completely respects the Apple Family ways. She even appreciates Apple Jack's stubborn streak. But, since Apple Jack is always there to help her friends, maybe she can put some of her pride aside to let a friend help her. Tired and sore, Apple Jack finally gives in and tells Twilight that she can use her magic to harvest the apples. Twilight concentrates and her Unicorn horn glows. With a FLASH all of the apples remove themselves effortlessly from the branches and place themselves gracefully into the baskets. Apple Jack is stunned. And very, very thankful for her friend's help.

In Twilight's report to the Queen, she notes that Apple Jack is one of the best friends a pony could ever have. She truly is dependable, trustworthy, and honest. But she's also stubborn as a mule. And while all her positive attributes mean she'll help any pony in need, her stubbornness makes it difficult for her friends to help her. So while friendship is about giving of ourselves to friends, it's also about accepting what our friends have to offer.

THE END