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MY LITTLE PONY 3

Ep 312

"Spa Day"

Outline by

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TEASER

In Ponyville, TWILIGHT asks SPIKE if he is sure he feels up to watching all the sidekicks while she and other ponies head off to visit the Crystal Empire. (As seen in Episode 308 - Just for Sidekicks) Spike assures her that it'll be a "piece of cake" and heads off to begin looking after his charges in the library. But rather than follow Spike, this time we follow Twilight as she turns her attention to RARITY, PINKIE PIE, APPLEJACK, RAINBOW DASH and FLUTTERSHY as they all prepare to embark on their trip. Rarity in particular is excited at the prospect of vacationing in the fabulous Crystal Empire at the behest and pleasure of royalty! But Twilight soberly reminds her that they've been asked to come to help serve as the welcoming committee for a very important visitor who is due to arrive there shortly: the Head of the Equestria Games (the pony equivalent of the Olympics). He will be there to assess whether the Crystal Empire will be selected to host the next games... an enormous honor for any kingdom, and certainly quite the coup for a ruler as new to the job as Cadence is. Rarity concedes that's all well and good, but certainly they'll have some time for rest and relaxation, some time for travel, time for shopping, and above all... some royal-quality pampering and spa time! Twilight's dismissive – they're going there on serious business to help Cadence and all that stuff will simply have to take a backseat. Rarity keeps angling to wedge spa time into their plans, but Twilight holds her ground, till Rarity finally relents, pouting: "Oh... poo."

ACT I

At the Crystal Empire castle, Twilight checks in on PRINCESS CADENCE, who seems frazzled as she ensures that their plans for the Head of Games' upcoming visit are in place. Cadence expresses her gratitude to the ponies for coming all this way to be the welcoming committee. She's sure they'll do a great job. It's her own job that she's more concerned about – in particular, her make-or-break presentation that's to culminate his visit, where she attempts to sell him on all the great reasons to pick the Crystal Empire to host the games. All the hard work of construction and preparation comes down to this. Would the ponies be willing to listen to a trial run to let Cadence know if the presentation seems okay? All the ponies eagerly agree.

CUT TO: Cadence in the midst of the trial run of her presentation... leading the ponies around to all the wonderful facilities and amenities the Crystal Empire has to offer. As Cadence continues to do her thing, the ponies murmur amongst themselves how great it's all going, to the point where an overly-supportive Pinkie Pie interrupts with a "You go, girl!" Pinkie then hushes up as Cadence regains her flow, ramping up towards a climactic conclusion in front of the Equestrian Collossious... the huge stadium with an impressive gazebo-like structure in the middle where the main event of the Equestria Games (TBD) will be held. (SHINING ARMOR is putting the finishing touches on the gazebo and is rushing to have it finished in time for the Head of Games arrival.) Cadence finishes her presentation, and the ponies respond enthusiastically.

But Cadence still frets... she feels especially badly that the Collossious wasn't finished in time. [Shining Armor: "I'm doing the best I can, sweetheart." Cadence: "No, no, it's not you honey. You're doing everything you can!"] They still plan to build a dome over it. Until it is complete, she has given the Crystal Pegasi strict orders to keep all rain clouds away.

Cadence knows she's being silly, but says she can't help it, what with so much at stake and with her whole kingdom counting on her she's letting her nerves get the best of her and she doesn't know what to do. Twilight can see they have to figure out some way to help her relax. Pinkie floats some ridiculous suggestions of how to do this, but then Rarity pipes up with a suggestion of her own: a relaxing spa day, perhaps? Cadence loves the idea. Rarity can barely contain her elation.

The ponies and Cadence drink in the ambiance of the Crystal Empire's most luxurious (and only) spa. Rarity's completely in her element, and Cadence already looks more relaxed. The ponies agree this was a good idea as they all settle in for some major pampering. Meanwhile, Rarity's just getting warmed up. She begins ordering treatments so extravagant and exotic that some of the staff has no idea what she's talking about, causing Rarity to huff at these "newbies" and even to handle some of the treatments herself. Rarity's enthusiasm gets so over the top that Cadence begins to get stressed out by all the relaxation! Twilight gently suggests to Rarity that she dial it back a notch.

Meanwhile, a messenger arrives at the spa looking for Princess Cadence. Not wanting to have Cadence's latest treatment interrupted, Twilight intercepts the messenger, informing him he'll have to wait till she's done. The messenger gets antsy, explaining that he's got lots of other stuff still to do to help make the facilities spotless as soon as possible.... could Twilight maybe pass along the message for him so he can return to his other duties? Twilight: "Yes, of course." So the messenger informs her that they recently received an "inside scoop" that the Head of Games is arriving earlier than expected, so Cadence will have to rush to the train station immediately to be there in time to meet him as he gets off the train. As the messenger exits, Twilight starts freaking out: he's here now?!? And Cadence has to stop what she's doing right now and rush over immediately? She'll be more stressed than ever!

The ponies quickly run through some options to see if there's any other alternative, but it's no use. As they glumly brace themselves to pass along the message to Cadence, Cadence – with cucumbers on her eyes – blissfully thanks them all for this soothing and relaxing experience. It's just what she needed... and she's sure that just another few hours of this is all it will take for her to be ready as soon as the Head of Games gets here. Honestly, she has no idea what she would have done were it not for this... probably blown it entirely, she chuckles. The ponies all exchange worried looks, swallowing hard.

ACT II

With Rarity left behind at the spa to keep Cadence blissfully unaware of this recent turn of events, the rest of the ponies rush to the train station to intercept the Head of Games and keep him occupied so Cadence can complete her spa day and be fully prepared to give her best-possible presentation as scheduled. Everypony's onboard with this. After all, they'll only need to keep the guy busy for a few hours... how hard could that be? Now if they can just make it to the train station in time. Once there, the ponies look around frantically for anyone who might look important enough to be the Head of Games. What if he's been here already just waiting and waiting? He must be so upset.

Just then another train pulls into the station, and the ponies spot someone stepping out of one of the cars who looks like their man... er, pony. They rush over and graciously welcome him to the Crystal Empire. The equally gracious and impeccably dressed man exclaims he hadn't expected so many ponies to be there to greet his arrival, he had simply planned to show up and walk around and check things out on his own. With "pshaws", the ponies explain that Cadence herself would have been here but she's busy making the place ready for his visit. Their visitor expresses deep appreciation that the town is going to such great lengths on his behalf, he hardly would have expected as much, adding that usually when he visits a town they don't go to such lengths to make him feel welcome. He likes it here already! The ponies discreetly congratulate one another on getting a leg up on the competition already after just meeting the guy! The ponies inform him that Cadence will be ready to receive him shortly, but, in the meantime, how'd he like a tour of the castle? The man admits there's hardly a thing he can think of that he'd enjoy more. The ponies smile.

On their way to the castle, the guest introduces himself as a Sir Walter Pillsbottom, and says he's had great interest in the Crystal Empire since it first appeared, though he's never been here in the flesh. The ponies take this as their cue to begin talking up the various things about the Crystal Empire they also like... but everything they mention, the visitor seems to know some detail about it that somehow has escaped their notice. Hmm... this guy sure is well-informed for a guy who's never been here before...

Arriving at the castle, Twilight leaves the rest of the ponies behind to keep Pillsbottom entertained while she goes to get Shining Armor. Certainly he'll be more equipped than they are to give Pillsbottom a tour of the castle. After all, it is his home.

Twilight arrives at the Collossious and brings Shining Armor up to speed on what's happening, and says it's crucial that he lead the castle tour because whoever gives a tour to the inquisitive and well-informed Head of the Games had better be able to go into great detail. Shining Armor insists he can't leave till the gazebo is done, but agrees that buying Cadence some more time to relax is crucial. He's seen how nervous she's been preparing for this day.

Meanwhile, the other ponies - deciding the awkwardness of standing around waiting for Twilight to return has become unbearable – begin giving Pillsbottom the castle tour. Bluffing their way through and giving info on stuff they know next-to-nothing about is hard enough, but it turns out that Pillsbottom has studied-up quite a bit in advance of his visit, as is his custom. He asks all sorts of interested questions, and the ponies all begin vamping their way through as best they can... while it becomes more and more clear that Pillsbottom clearly knows way more about this castle, and the stuff in it, than they do.

Twilight arrives back on the scene and, seeing how bad things have gotten, quickly attempts to wrest control of the situation, though she fares just as badly as her friends. Finally, when things are getting really bad, Pinkie Pie blurts out something ridiculous... and Pillsbottom cracks a smile, momentarily relieving the tension. That's when Pillsbottom says the castle's nice and all, but there's plenty more of the Crystal Empire he'd like to see while he's here. The ponies grab that cue to get the heck out of there.

Outside, the ponies walk around with Pillsbottom, while Pinkie's goofy style continues to keep him entertained. Twilight observes that if they can just keep things going like this for a little bit longer, they'll be golden, because Cadence should be ready soon. [INSERT SHOT: of Cadence still in the thick of her spa day, with Rarity as happily attending to her as ever.] Pillsbottom then mentions that one regret he has is that he didn't get to see it rain, because he heard that the rain in the Crystal Empire is quite magical.

Rain! Now that's something Twilight and her friends know something about. Eager to keep Pillsbottom happy and even more eager to abandon the tour, Twilight encourages Rainbow Dash to bring in some clouds to make it rain. Dash happily obliges and takes to the sky to make it rain. Meanwhile, seeing this, some Crystal Pegasi follow suit to try and stop her.

The rain in the Crystal Empire does turn out to be magical, instead of water droplets falling from the sky, tiny diamond-like crystals begin to rain down on them. Pillsbottom is delighted. Rainbow Dash isn't quite as familiar with how these clouds work and that, coupled with the ensuing tug of war over the clouds with the Crystal Pegasi, spins things out of control... ultimately resulting in the gazebo in the Colossious - the crown jewel of Cadence's presentation – being pounded to a pulp and ruined. And just moments after Shining Armor has completed it! Rainbow Dash and the other ponies react in horror! Oh no! No amount of spa time is going to make Princess Cadence relaxed about this!

ACT III

The ponies are still in a state of shock but are snapped out of it when Pillsbottom begins to rave about what a great tour it's been and how much he loves the Crystal Empire. "Really?" Twilight asks with surprise. Pillsbottom goes on to say that when he decided

to come visit the Crystal Empire, he had no idea anyone expected him... much less would give him a royal welcome at the train station! Who woulda thunk a regular-old-tourist would get such grand treatment? Twilight gets a sinking feeling. "Regular-old-tourist?" She asks the guy point blank if he's the Head of Games. He isn't. The sinking feeling turns to horror: they got the wrong guy!!!

What's more, he's so impressed he intends to find Princess Cadence right now to praise her tour guides. Twilight quickly instructs some ponies to detain Pillsbottom so he can't make Cadence aware of their blunder, while she and the other ponies race back to the train station, hoping against hope that the true Head of Games is still there and not blind hopping mad.

Once at the train station, Twilight and others find out that the true Head of Games was there, but got tired of waiting so he headed off to – where else? – the local spa to unwind. The ponies react and race off to do more damage control.

What ensues is an elaborate and farcical series of complications. Twilight and the other ponies arrive at the spa and, finding the Head of Games there, do their best to keep both he and Princess Cadence from learning that the other is there at the same time. Likewise, Pinkie Pie has somehow let it slip that Pillsbottom definitely should not go looking for Cadence at the spa, so Pillsbottom has now arrived at the spa and will not be dissuaded from giving Cadence his highest praise of the Crystal Empire's enchanting tour guides... which means that the ponies must now also struggle to keep Cadence and Pillsbottom separated. At the center of all this is Rarity, who orchestrates elaborate and clever efforts to help keep each player from becoming aware of the presence of the other. Figuring into her machinations are spa treatments... hot towels covering faces, cucumbers covering eyes, mud masks rendering the players unrecognizable, etc.

This intricate farce continues and escalates to absurd proportions until finally all three players come crashing into each other, thus shattering any remaining pretense of a ruse. At once, Cadence knows everything.... the early arrival of the Head of Games, the efforts to keep this a secret, the mistaken identities, the failed efforts to keep everyone apart, etc. The most painful part is that the ponies did it all in the name of helping Cadence, and now they've ruined everything.

A long dreadful silence ensues... and then Cadence begins to laugh. And laugh and laugh and laugh. This all strikes her as so preposterous she can't help but break into hysterics. She is now completely relaxed about her presentation – pretty much the worst possible thing that could happen has in fact happened... what could she possibly have to worry about now?

We see the culmination of Cadence's presentation in front of the ruined gazebo, and her relaxed and carefree, roll-with-everything style completely wins over the Head of

Games. It's decided... the next Equestria Games will be held in the Crystal Empire. Hurrah!

As they board a train car to return to Ponyville, Twilight feels kind of badly that things went so awry and wonders if maybe she should have just not meddled in the first place and left well enough alone. But the other ponies reassure her that Cadence needed someone to be there for her, that Twilight's desire to help was genuine, and though maybe she didn't help in the way she intended, she ultimately helped nonetheless. The ponies marvel at how things worked out, and hope Spike's doing at least half as well with the sidekicks. (Little do they know that Spike and the sidekicks are, at that very moment, hiding inside the very same train car they're in.)

END.