

MLP 420 Premise
“For Whom the Sweetie Belle Toils”
by Dave Polsky

With Sweetie Belle's assistance, Rarity puts final touches on costumes she designed for Sapphire Shores' latest tour. Sapphire adored the work Rarity did for her in the past and personally requested these designs, which Rarity is about to showcase to Sapphire and her entourage here in Ponyville. Then, based on Sapphire's notes, she'll make some quick adjustments in time to bring the finished costumes to Canterlot to dress Sapphire and her dancers/backup singers for their first concert. Rarity's thrilled, and Sweetie Belle is more than happy to help her big sister ensure everything's perfect. By the time they get to the actual event, however, there's more and more to do but Sweetie Belle's having a great time. Perhaps this will be her opportunity to shine, too... so she keeps being a trouper and doing whatever Rarity asks of her to the best of her ability, no matter how outlandish or difficult. Rarity's designs end up being a hit and Sapphire's notes are minimal.

At the event's conclusion, praise gets heaped on Rarity and Rarity graciously proceeds to thank everyone who helped make this event such a success, but – to Sweetie Belle's shock and amazement – Rarity somehow gets distracted and neglects to thank Sweetie Belle! On the way back home together, Rarity - despite Sweetie Belle's many subtle (and not-so-subtle) prompts - still has no clue that she forgot to thank Sweetie Belle. Later that evening, a resentful Sweetie Belle secretly commits a minor act of sabotage in retaliation and takes mischievous satisfaction in this just before dropping off to sleep... and as she dreams, Luna makes a sudden appearance, startling her awake.

The next day, the other CMCs check in on a sleep-deprived Sweetie Belle. Sweetie Belle explains that Luna kept appearing in her dream, and each time she'd wake right up. The CMCs commiserate with Sweetie Belle over getting dissed by her sister, and the idea that Rarity got so much praise while Sweetie Belle got zilch has Sweetie Belle especially rankled. Back at home, Sweetie Belle fronts as a petulant teenager. Rarity's confused by the sudden change in behavior, and Sweetie Belle's monosyllabic responses to her questions fail to clear anything up. But Rarity's too busy to dig too deeply: she needs to get the updated costumes to Canterlot by tomorrow. Now, however, when she asks for Sweetie Belle's help, Sweetie Belle's unwilling. The only thing Sweetie Belle agrees to do is make sure an important box gets loaded on Rarity's cart before she leaves... and then - quite deliberately - she "forgets" to do it. After Rarity consequently leaves that night without it, Sweetie Belle falls asleep again, and this time when Luna appears, Luna makes sure not to startle Sweetie Belle so that she remains asleep. Luna guides Sweetie Belle on a tour of her own past with Celestia, revealing the mistakes she made while growing up with her own big sister... mistakes that bear striking resemblance to Sweetie Belle's recent behavior. These tableaux then dissolve into a Ghost of Christmas Future type

scenario, where Luna reveals to Sweetie Belle how her relationship with Rarity could turn out if she continued down this path. Sweetie Belle is mortified - the box! She's got to get it to Rarity before it's too late!

After Sweetie Belle awakens, she recruits the help of her fellow CMCs to get the box delivered on time. Meanwhile, at the site of the concert, a distressed Rarity searches for the all-important box. Rarity can't seem to remember not packing it, and likewise - in another demonstration of the slightly forgetful manner that led to her forgetting to thank Sweetie Belle earlier - can't seem to remember asking anyone else to do it either. What could have happened to that box??? Meanwhile, racing against the clock, the CMCs confront obstacles that Sweetie Belle overcomes by using skills Rarity off-handedly taught her while preparing together for the showcase in Ponyville. When the CMCs arrive in the nick of time, a grateful Rarity heaps praise upon Sweetie Belle. Sweetie Belle, however, admits she's not worthy of the praise, and reminds Rarity that it was she who was supposed to load the box in the first place. But Rarity generously forgives, acknowledging that it was her own faults that in part motivated Sweetie Belle's questionable choices. All is mended and Rarity can finally get Sapphire and her crew ready to perform. When Sweetie Belle then sees praise once again heaped on her sister, she notices her resentment is gone. All she feels is pride. As the show begins, Sweetie Belle looks out to see that Luna and Celestia are in attendance. Luna gives Sweetie Belle a little nod, acknowledging her for heeding her cautionary tale.