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MY LITTLE PONY 5

Nightmare Mark

Episode

Written by: Josh Haber

Outline: Nov.25, 2013

TEASER**INT. CMC CLUBHOUSE – DAY**

APPLE BLOOM calls the latest meeting of the Cutie Mark Crusaders to order. She stands at a podium and tells SCOOTALOO and SWEETIE BELLE that she just got a letter from BABS SEED. The girls grill her for details and she finally reveals that Babs got her Cutie Mark! The others excitedly pepper Apple Bloom with questions. When did it happen? Who else knows? Does she feel any different? And, of course, WHAT IS IT?

Apple Bloom does her best to answer the questions and calm everybody down, but all the excitement quickly dies when she describes what Babs Seed's Cutie Mark is: a crossed makeup brush and scissors. Scootaloo is confused, "So, she's good at crafts?" Sweetie Belle gets it right away, "She's a beautician! She was always messing with her mane."

Apple Bloom confirms that Babs is going to beauty school in the fall, so they'll have to find somepony else to run the Manehattan branch of the CMCs. Scootaloo points out that they would have to do that anyway. Once Babs got her Cutie Mark she stopped being a CMC. Apple Bloom, "Wow, I guess you're right."

Sweetie Belle is glad that Babs is happy, but confesses that being a beautician wouldn't be for her. "Can you imagine getting a Cutie Mark for something you didn't like?" "No," Apple Bloom responds. "Or at least, I hadn't." Sweetie Belle tells her not to worry, Apple Bloom will naturally get something to do with apples. But Scootaloo points out that Babs didn't and wonders if that means she isn't an Apple anymore. Sweetie Belle tells her that's ridiculous, but Apple Bloom looks worried. "Wow, I've spent so much time thinking about how to get my Cutie Mark, I guess I never gave much thought to what would happen after." Off Apple Bloom's concerned look we...

END TEASER**ACT ONE****EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – ESTABLISHING - NIGHT****INT. APPLE BLOOM'S BEDROOM – DAY**

Apple Bloom talks to her big sister as she gets ready for bed. APPLEJACK listens patiently as Apple Bloom lists every Cutie Mark fear she can think of, "What if I don't like it? What if nobody likes me when I get it? What if it's not an apple? Will I have to move out? Will I still have friends? What if the CMCs drift apart? I mean, we won't really be CMCs anymore, so..." Finally, Applejack cuts her off. She tells her to stop worrying because everything will be fine. Besides, those are way too many questions to answer in one night. She tells Apple Bloom to sleep on it. Everything will be better in the morning.

INT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – MORNING

Apple Bloom wakes up the next morning feeling better. She heads downstairs and admits to her sister, "You're right Applejack. I feel much better. I don't know what I was so worried about." Applejack looks over, about to say, "I told you so," but stops. "Well, it's no wonder you were so worked up," Applejack says. Apple Bloom asks her what she's talking about and Applejack points at Apple Bloom's flank. She got her Cutie Mark! Apple Bloom, "I did? I did!! OMG! What is it? WHAT IS IT?" Apple Bloom runs around in circles until Granny finally grabs a mirror. Apple Bloom looks at the reflection of her Cutie Mark and sees... an old-fashioned can of BUG SPRAY with a pump. Apple Bloom is crestfallen and can't hide her disappointment. "What's it mean?"

Just then there is a knock on the door, Apple Bloom opens it to reveal a PEST CONTROL PONY with a similar bug spray Cutie Mark on his flank. "It means I can retire," he answers. He tells her that he's thrilled that Apple Bloom will be taking over as Ponyville's resident pest control expert. There's really only a few bugs they ever have to worry about—Headbugs (for obvious reasons), Flicks (because the itch and cause rhyme disease), and Twittermites (which will eat through everything in sight). He then explains the process of getting rid of them -- basically spraying a special mixture of magic smoke that annoys bugs so much they move on to the next town. With that, he hands her his pump sprayer and heads off to his retirement community on the other side of Equestria.

Apple Bloom watches him go, thoroughly confused and more than a little disappointed that this is the future her Cutie Mark portends. She's always shown an aptitude for mixing potions, does being good with bug spray really count? Applejack tries to throw a cool spin on it about how now Apple Bloom will be able to protect the apple crop, but her attempt to reassure her little sister falls short. Apple Bloom exits, dragging her spray can behind her.

EXT. PONYVILLE – DAY

Apple Bloom continues to walk along, dragging her spray can. (There is something ever so-slightly-off about the background that cycles behind her.) Head hanging low she bumps into DIAMOND TIARA and SILVER SPOON who tease her mercilessly about her new career as an exterminator pony.

Apple Bloom tries to stand up for herself, saying that it's a very important job, but ultimately she isn't able to defend the Cutie Mark since she doesn't really like it herself. She drops the can and runs off in tears.

EXT. EDGE OF EVERFREE FOREST – DAY

Apple Bloom reaches the edge of the forest and wonders aloud how she could have been so unlucky or what she might have done to deserve such a terrible Cutie Mark. She wishes she could just get rid of it and start over. "Why don't you?" comes a voice. Apple Bloom turns to see a HOODED PONY emerge from the shadows. Apple Bloom asks the cowed figure what she means and the Hooded Pony tells her that removing a Cutie Mark is easy to do. All she has to do is ask. Apple Bloom eagerly tells the Hooded Pony to work whatever magic she needs to get rid of her awful bug spray Cutie Mark. With that, smoke curls out from the bottom of the Hooded Pony's cloak and surrounds Apple Bloom. When the smoke clears the Hooded Pony is gone and so is Apple Bloom's Cutie Mark. Relieved, Apple Bloom heads back into town.

EXT. PONYVILLE – DAY

Unfortunately, when she arrives a panic has set in and ponies everywhere are either heading out of town or packing up to do so. In fact, all of Ponyville is being evacuated. Apple Bloom asks MAYOR what's happening and Mayor points to a small cottage on a hill outside of town. A strange cloud drifts toward the cottage, surrounds it in a flurry of activity, then moves on, leaving the cottage a pile of dust. IT'S A TWITTERMITE INFESTATION!

Mayor explains that the pest control pony always dealt with these things in the past, but now that he's retired they have absolutely no defense. If only there was somepony who could do his job. Apple Bloom grabs the can from where she left it and runs toward the cloud of twittermites. She tries to spray them like before, but she no longer has the touch and the cloud of bugs floats past her. The swarm descends on Ponyville destroying everything while Apple Bloom watches the devastation, powerless to do anything to stop it. Apple Bloom looks to the sky screaming "NOOOOO!" and...

END ACT ONE**ACT TWO****EXT. PONYVILLE – DAY**

Apple Bloom is still screaming to the heavens then suddenly...

INT. APPLE BLOOM'S BEDROOM – MORNING

She wakes up sweating and breathing hard. She quickly looks around to discover that she's back in her room. It was all a dream. Still shaken by her nightmare, Apple Bloom climbs out of bed and looks out the window. Relieved there's no sign of an insect infestation, she quickly checks her flank to find... she's gotten her Cutie Mark! Again! But this time it's a MORTAR and PESTLE to reflect her innate talent for mixing potions. Now that's more like it! She just knew those lessons with Princess Twilight would pay off! The dream forgotten, she rushes downstairs, past her family in the kitchen, out of the house and heads straight for the clubhouse. Applejack shouts after her, "See. A good night's sleep cures just about everything."

INT. CMC CLUBHOUSE - DAY

Excited, Apple Bloom bursts into the clubhouse where she shows the other CMCs her new Cutie Mark. Scootaloo and Sweetie Belle congratulate her enthusiastically, but when Apple Bloom asks to see theirs she discovers that hers was the only Cutie Mark to appear. Apple Bloom is confused because she always assumed that they would all get their marks together. The others thought the same thing and are disappointed, but also happy for Apple Bloom. Apple Bloom decides they should call the CMC meeting to order and figure out how to proceed. But Scootaloo and Sweetie Belle are hesitant. After all, Apple Bloom isn't really a CMC anymore. Apple Bloom, "Oh. Right. I guess I'm not." She tells the other two to go ahead and she'll just sit in the back and be quiet, but Sweetie Belle tells her that, technically, the clubhouse is for CMCs only. Apple Bloom, "Oh. Well, I guess I should leave, then. See you later?" The others, "Ah... sure." Apple Bloom exits. From outside she hears Scootaloo call the meeting to order.

She starts to walk off and then turns back around to see...

The whole clubhouse has been boarded up. She peers inside but Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo aren't inside. "But they were just here..." she says, confused.

EXT. PONYVILLE – DAY

Apple Bloom searches for the other CMCs finally finding them in...

INT. RARITY'S BOUTIQUE – DAY

Scootaloo and Sweetie Belle have set up a make-shift clubhouse between drapes of fabric. She confronts them and they admit that it didn't feel right to keep meeting at Sweet Apple Acres when Apple Bloom isn't even a CMC anymore. Honestly, they don't even know if they're still supposed to be friends. Apple Bloom turns on her heels and makes a hasty exit.

EXT. EVERFREE FOREST – DAY

Distraught, Apple Bloom runs into the woods again and again she meets the Hooded Pony. Apple Bloom confesses that it seems like her new Cutie Mark is doing more harm than good. In fact, it's going to ruin her friendships. The Hooded Pony suggests she get rid of it, just to play it safe and Apple Bloom agrees. Again the Hooded Pony works her magic and as smoke rises from under her cloak we... SMOKE DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CMC CLUBHOUSE - DAY

Apple Bloom has invited her friends to meet up at the old clubhouse where she reveals that she's a blank flank again. Unfortunately, Scootaloo and Sweetie Belle reveal that they have now gotten their Cutie Marks. Apple Bloom stares in shock as they both explain that they have new responsibilities and can't spend their time meeting in an old clubhouse. With that, they exit, leaving Apple Bloom alone in the empty clubhouse. There is a sudden RUMBLING. Apple Bloom reacts in horror as the walls of the Clubhouse start to fall down around her. Just as she is about to be struck by the caving roof we... CUT TO:

INT. APPLE BLOOM'S BEDROOM – MORNING

Apple Bloom bolts up in bed. It was all a dream... again. Even more disturbed then before, Apple Bloom rushes to...

INT. KITCHEN – A MOMENT LATER

Apple Bloom tells her sister that she knows a good night's sleep is supposed to make her feel better, but she's pretty sure it's making her feel worse. When Applejack doesn't respond Apple Bloom turns and realizes the whole family is staring at her. "What are y'all lookin' at?" With that, Applejack points to a new CUTIE MARK on Apple Bloom's flank.

Apple Bloom is too anxious to even look and the others aren't any more enthusiastic. "What is it?" Apple Bloom asks. "I'll tell you what it isn't, it isn't an apple," Applejack responds.

"Welp, time for you to skidaddle," Granny Smith tells her, producing a suitcase out of nowhere. The family agrees that Apple Bloom is growing up and it's time for her to strike out on her own, to which Big Mac offers a wistful, "Yep." Then opens the door and pushes her out into a BLACK HOLE. Apple Bloom cries out "NOOOOOO!" as she falls into the abyss and we suddenly... CUT TO:

INT. APPLE BLOOM'S BEDROOM – MORNING

She wakes up, shaking. What is it with these nightmares? It seems like something terrible happens no matter what Cutie Mark she gets. Terrified to even look, Apple Bloom finally pulls back the covers and discovers a Cutie Mark that looks like an eyeball! As she leans in for a closer look, the eyeball Cutie Mark BLINKS and LOOKS BACK AT HER! Apple Bloom screams and...

Wakes up. Again she pulls back the covers to find a Cutie Mark that looks like a mouth. As the mouth starts chattering like a set of novelty teeth Apple Bloom screams and...

Wakes up again! In rapid succession she screams and wakes up again and again as she continues to discover more upsetting Cutie Marks. Finally she pulls the covers up over her head, talking to herself as she rocks back and forth. "Come on, Apple Bloom, wake up, wake up wake up WAKEUP!"

END ACT TWO**ACT THREE****INT. APPLE BLOOM’S BEDROOM – MORNING**

Apple Bloom huddles under the covers, scared of her own hind-quarters. Still under the blankets, she manages to work up the courage to look down at her flank and sees—nothing. “Whew. I never thought I’d be so happy to see a blank flank.” With that she pulls away the covers to find her bedroom is crowded with PONY LEGS, standing all by themselves, like pony drumsticks, each with their own Cutie Mark, but no pony attached.

Too terrified to even scream, Apple Bloom tries to slip quietly out of the room, but as soon as her hoof touches the floor the pony legs all start hopping up and down like pogo sticks. The legs jostle Apple Bloom, bumping into her with their flanks as she screams and dives for the door. Apple Bloom runs down the stairs and out of the house. As the crowd of hopping pony legs chase after her, Apple Bloom escapes into the woods.

EXT. EVERFREE FOREST – DAY

Dodging the odd pony leg, Apple Bloom searches for the Hooded Pony, assuming the mysterious figure is the cause of her troubles.

She calls out, demanding the Hooded Pony show herself, but thinks better of it when her shouts attract more pony legs. Driving deeper into the woods, Apple Bloom soon finds herself in a dark part of the forest she’s never seen before. Suddenly the Hooded Pony emerges from the shadows. “Looking for me?”

Apple Bloom demands to know what’s going on. Why has the Hooded Pony been tormenting her? Why does she keep having dreams about Cutie Marks and every conceivable horrible outcome about getting one? And most importantly, why can’t she wake up? But the Hooded Pony just laughs. “Who are you?” Apple Bloom asks the Hooded Pony.

Suddenly, MOONLIGHT fills the clearing and Luna appears. Apple Bloom reacts to her sudden arrival. “There is only one way to find out who this hooded pony is,” Luna says. With that she yanks the Hooded Pony’s cloak off to reveal...

Apple Bloom. The Hooded Pony is Apple Bloom! Apple Bloom reaches out to touch the hooded version of herself and it EXPLODES into a geyser of Cutie Marks (like when Ron Weasley destroys the horcrux with the Sword of Gryffindor—but a lot cuter). Churning in a wild vortex, the Cutie Mark tornado heads right for Apple Bloom!

As Luna calls for her to stop, Apple Bloom takes off at a gallop, the swarm of Cutie Marks chasing close behind. In a comedic Scooby Doo-like chase scene, Apple Bloom does her best to evade the onslaught of Cutie Marks, getting caught once or twice as a Cutie Mark attaches to her flank, forcing her to act out whatever ridiculous activity it represents. Luna appears throughout, urging Apple Bloom to stop running which, exhausted, she finally does.

As the Cutie Mark swarm closes in, Luna again tells Apple Bloom that she doesn’t need to run. Luna reminds her of whom she saw when she pulled the cloak away. “I saw myself.” With that, the swarm of Cutie Marks coalesces into a perfect Apple Bloom shape and hovers in front of Apple Bloom. Apple Bloom looks up at Luna, “I’ve been doing this to myself?”

Luna informs Apple Bloom that she let her fears about getting the wrong Cutie Mark turn her dreams into nightmares. If she continues to have those fears in her waking life, it too will become a bad dream from which she cannot wake up. Luna reminds her that no matter what Cutie Mark Apple Bloom gets, it will be an expression of whom Apple Bloom is inside. Apple Bloom nods in understanding.

“There is no wrong Cutie Mark,” Apple Bloom replies, “And worrying that there is one is only going to keep me from having fun discovering who I’m meant to be,” she adds. Luna nods. “Indeed.” With that, Apple Bloom reaches out and touches the Cutie Mark version of herself and...

INT. APPLE BLOOM AND APPLEJACK’S BEDROOM – MORNING

Apple Bloom wakes up. She quickly pulls back the covers and checks her hindquarters. It’s still blank, just like it was before she went to bed.

INT. KITCHEN – SOON AFTER

Apple Bloom enters and Applejack comments that Apple Bloom looks like she’s feeling better. “See? What did I tell ya? A good night’s sleep cures just about everything.” Apple Bloom smiles, “I guess so,” she says, “I just wish it hadn’t been so exhausting.” Off of Applejack’s curious expression we DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CMC CLUBHOUSE – DAY

Apple Bloom stands at the podium and calls the meeting of the CMCs to order. She tells them about her nightmares and admits to her friends that deep down she had a lot of fears and anxiety about getting her Cutie Mark. Fears she didn’t realize she had until she heard about Babs Seed getting hers. The others agree. Finding out about Babs Seed brought stuff up for them as well. Scootaloo admits that she spent the whole night worrying what would happen if she got a Cutie Mark she didn’t like. Sweetie Belle confesses that she couldn’t stop thinking about what would happen to their friendships once they stopped being CMCs.

“Wow,” Apple Bloom says, “I guess we’re all kinda scared of the same things.” The friends agree that they’ll help each other stay focused on the present and not worry so much about the future. And when the day comes when they do get their Cutie Marks, they’ll be sure to remind each other that they’ve gotten the one that fits them to a “T”. The girls then turn their attention to a new project, a “Congratulations On Your Cutie Mark” gift basket for Babs. “We wouldn’t want her to worry that just because she’s no longer a CMC we can’t be friends,” Apple Bloom says with a smile. The other girls agree and we... FADE OUT.

THE END