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MY LITTLE PONY 6

Heroes and Horseshoes

615

Outline by: Ed Valentine

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TEASER**SC. 1 - EXT. SCHOOL – DAY**

On their way to school, a YOUNG BLANK FLANK trots excitedly around the CUTIE MARK CRUSADERS. This young pony clearly worships them, and is following in their hoofsteps since he's doing just what they were doing not too long ago: asking a bazillion questions about what it's like to have your Cutie Mark and how to get it. He wonders if, when he gets his cutie mark, he will be as serene and wise as SCOOTALOO, APPLEBLOOM, and SWEETIE BELLE now are—since getting their cutie marks clearly means they now know everything. Apple Bloom smiles, warning him that getting a cutie mark doesn't make a pony perfect, just older.

Suddenly, there's a stampede out of the schoolhouse! Ponies are running and leaping everywhere in a happy frenzy. Miss CHEERILEE gallops out, too, and tells the surprised Crusaders that classes are cancelled. The Crusaders don't understand – Is there an emergency? What happened? What's going on here?!?! Miss Cheerilee explains the situation: the first gopher of spring has been sighted—the sign that it's time to play the annual Hunt for the Horseshoes!

WHOO-HOO! The Crusaders are over the moon. Sweetie Belle, especially, is ready to go, go, go and play her cute little heart out—in fact she starts to get kind of crazed and she talks about how much she wants to WIN! Apple Bloom turns to the young Blank Flank, “See what I mean?”

END TEASER**MAIN TITLES****ACT ONE****SC. 2 - EXT. SCHOOL – DAY**

Cheerilee announces classes are cancelled for the next two days—and she's as excited as any of the students (since she's the game's official referee)! She calms down the excited ponies and reminds them about the game and its rules, since it's been a year since this annual event took place: the Hunt for the Horseshoes is a game where teams hide their lucky horseshoe. Each team then has to find the other teams' horseshoes before the other teams find theirs. (It's like a Ponyville version of “Capture the Flag”). The newest recipients of their Cutie Marks each get to be in charge—and that means for the first time in their lives the Crusaders won't just be players, they'll be Team Captains! Yay!

But Sweetie Belle is concerned: in past, the CMCs have always played on the same team, and they've never played against each other. In fact, it feels really weird to be in direct competition. Scoot tells her not to worry. They'll do exactly what the older ponies would do—put friendship first. The three of them vow that no matter what happens they'll be friendly competitors and good sports, and they shake hooves to seal their good sportsmanship pact. The Crusaders are pumped—now they can get ready to enjoy the Hunt!

In short order they draw straws to pick their teams—but as the Crusaders break off into three groups, Sweetie Belle sees there's a big problem: when stacked up against the other teams, her team looks a bit ragged and scrawny. The luck of the draw gave her ponies like PIPSQUEAK and TWIST, while Scoot and Apple Bloom's teams have the bigger, stronger, and smarter ponies. Sweetie Belle tries to put a brave face on it—but when Pipsqueak trips over his hooves and knocks the whole team into a mud puddle, Sweetie Belle realizes she's in trouble!

Sweetie Belle feigns confidence in front of the other CMCs, though she's quaking in her horseshoes. She tells them she's so sure of her team, in fact, that she's cancelling practice for the day. To Apple Bloom and Scootaloo's surprise, Sweetie Belle calls out a chipper “See you in the morning! Don't start without me!” and she zips on outta there. The other two are confused and find this a little bit suspicious: What's this all about? Where is she off to? They trot off after her, wondering where Sweetie Belle is headed.

SC. 3 - INT. RARITY’S BOUTIQUE – DAY

RARITY works at her table, cutting a large swath of silken fabric when Sweetie Belle suddenly appears at her side—causing her to mess up the cut she was making. Sweetie Belle apologizes and then goes about explaining her situation: she’s captain of a Horseshoe Hunt team for the first time, but her team looks to have very little chance of winning. Rarity waxes poetic about her days as a team captain: her team won due almost entirely to her fashion sense, well, camouflage sense. She employed a two pronged strategy. First she disguised the hiding place of her own team’s horseshoe so that nopony could ever find it, then she designed an entire line of camouflage clothing for her teammates, enabling them all to sneak up on the opposing teams’ locations completely undetected. “Ah, those were the days!” Rarity gleefully intones. Sweetie Belle is dutifully impressed then hems and haws, and finally asks Rarity if there is any way she would consider helping her own team out. She turns to find Rarity has already packed her “field” sewing kit. “I thought you’d never ask!”

As Rarity and Sweetie Belle exit, Apple Bloom and Scootaloo’s heads pop up at the window—they’ve been listening the entire time. They share a determined look.

SC. 4 - EXT. A TREE UNDER A CLOUD IN THE SKY - DAY

Grunting from the effort, Scootaloo climbs to the top of a tall tree to converse with RAINBOW DASH, who’s drifting by on a cloud. Dash is thrilled to hear that her protégé has become a team captain. Dash explains that of course she was also the captain of a Hunt for the Horseshoes team back when she was a filly. She won all the horseshoes, of course, so—no pressure. But she tells Scoot not to worry—the important thing is to have fun. Scoot explains that she wasn’t worried until she found out that Rarity is going to be helping out Sweetie Belle’s team. Now she’s worried her own team doesn’t have a chance. She doesn’t think she can win against a team with a full grown pony on it. Dash immediately hops out of her cloud. “Well, we’ll just see about that!”

SC. 5 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – DAY

Apple Bloom comes charging up the path and across the fields to the orchard where APPLEJACK stands bucking apples. In one long breath Apple Bloom explains that it’s time for the Hunt for the Horseshoes and that she and her two friends are team captains but both Rarity and Rainbow Dash are going to be playing and now she is a hundred percent sure she’s going to lose because there’s no way she could possibly win against such stiff competition. Applejack tells her to slow down and explain what she’s talking about. Apple Bloom tells her that both Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo have convinced Rarity and Rainbow Dash to play for their teams. Applejack balks at this, “Well, that doesn’t sound very fair at all.” With that, she agrees to help too.

SC. 6 - EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE – DAY

The next morning Cheerilee bursts out of the school house in full referee gear, ready to help her students play the best game a young pony can play. But she stops short as she looks up to see Rarity, Rainbow Dash, and Applejack are ready to play as well.

END ACT ONE**ACT TWO****SC. 7 - EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE – SURROUNDING FIELDS – DAY**

On the field of play, Cheerilee makes it plain that she does not support the idea of the older ponies taking part in the game. Rarity explains that she has no intention of actually playing. She is present in a strictly advisory role only. Surprised (and a little disappointed) Dash agrees to do the same. Applejack feels better about the whole situation now that she knows the others won’t really be joining in and she agrees to stay out of it as well.

Miss Cheerilee agrees to allow the games to continue, despite the situation being highly irregular. Sweetie Belle is a little irked that her friends blunted the edge of her secret weapon, and it's not like her team got any better in the meantime. Rarity takes her aside and convinces her that the expertise she plans to provide will more than compensate for any shortcomings Sweetie Belle's team might have. Convinced, Sweetie Belle agrees, reminding herself that the game is all about friendship, fun, and sportsmanship anyway.

But the older ponies are already showing signs that they're stoked at the chance to compete with each other.

Rainbow Dash engages in some light banter—not quite trash talk, but she certainly lets Rarity and Applejack know that with the help of her expert advice, she expects Scootaloo's team to win. In any case, she says, "May the best team win!" Applejack smiles and tells Dash that she must mean her team, err—Apple Bloom's team, she means, of course. Rarity simply exudes quiet confidence, giving a wink to Sweetie Belle, secure in the knowledge that her camouflage skills will easily translate to her sister's team.

And then the time has come: "LET THE HUNT FOR THE HORSESHOES... BEGIN!" Miss Cheerilee blows a trumpet, aaaaaaand... the teams head off in different directions to hide their horseshoes. Scootaloo quickly leads her team one way "I know where to hide our horseshoe – over here!" but Rainbow Dash, running alongside, just as quickly corrects her, explaining that hiding your horseshoe is important, sure, but you also need to spy on the other teams to try and figure out where they are hiding theirs! Dash heads off and most of Scootaloo's team goes with her. Scootaloo stands and watches them go. "Oh. Okay. I guess."

SC. 8 - EXT. A BOG – DAY

Meanwhile, Rarity leads Sweetie Belle's team to what she calls the perfect hiding place: a stinky bog. Sweetie Belle balks—she was going to hide it in the Everfree Forest—but Rarity tells her that everyone would expect them to look there, and they have to hide it where it's least expected. Sweetie Belle isn't sure, but Rarity convinces her, "Well, if you aren't interested in my advice that's fine, though I thought your intention was to win." Sweetie Belle stops to consider: she did ask Rarity for her help, and her older sister does have a winning record, plus she and the rest of her team all totally look up to her—so Sweetie Belle lets Rarity hide the horseshoe where she wants to, despite her misgivings.

But the minute she gives an inch, Rarity takes a mile: when Sweetie Belle presents her strategy to capture the other horseshoes, Rarity starts giving contradictory advice. She pulls out her camouflage outfits and starts giving them to every pony on the team. At Rarity's insistence—and without heeding Sweetie Belle's concerns, they head off to find Apple Bloom's horseshoe ... and Rarity takes the lead, without even waiting for Sweetie Belle to catch up! (Rarity isn't trying to be a jerk—she's just so excited to relive her glory days that she can't help taking over.) Sweetie Belle swallows her annoyance, telling herself that she just KNOWS it'll be worth all the trouble in the end when they win—but she's absolutely sure that the other adult ponies aren't being as difficult as Rarity.

SC. 9 - INT. BARN AT SWEET APPLE ACRES – DAY

Meanwhile, Apple Bloom is having a lot of the same trouble with her older sister! Applejack is having a rootin' tootin' good time, but she's basically taking over the team, second-guessing every decision Apple Bloom makes. Apple Bloom is frustrated since the other teammates are naturally following her older sister Applejack's lead – but Apple Bloom just doesn't know how to tell this to Applejack.

But just as Apple Bloom is getting so fed up that she's going to tell her sister to let her be in charge... all of a sudden, they're under a sneak attack led by Dash's (and Scootaloo's) team! Dash dives in through a high window leading the rest of the team as they raid the barn demanding to know the location of their horseshoe.

Her competitive fires stoked, Applejack vows that Dash will never get her horseshoe as long as she's guarding it. Then Applejack and Dash face off, trash talking and each insisting that they're the team leader who's going to win this Hunt. (Applejack and Scootaloo are stricken when they hear that: "But, but... they're not the team leaders. WE are!") But no one's listening to the Crusaders, least of all Applejack and Dash – who start to debate which of them will be the first to find and retrieve the horseshoe of "Rarity's Team," as they call it. Without a second thought, they lead their teams off, each eager to see who will be the first to get a horseshoe.

Apple Bloom and Scootaloo are left behind, crestfallen: the older ponies have undercut them yet again, but the CMCs have no idea what they could say to stop it. So with a resigned sigh, they follow behind their mentors. Scootaloo says she hopes Sweetie Belle isn't having a similar problem with Rarity.

SC. 10 - EXT. "FOREST" OUTSIDE PONYVILLE – DAY

For a beat there's nothing by trees. Then, one by one, the trees start to move. Suddenly, one of the trees trips and falls. Another "tree" walks over and bends down. Rarity sticks her head out of the middle of the stump and asks the fallen tree what's wrong. Pipsqueak answers that the camo-costume she made him is just too big and he's having trouble moving in it. Another "tree" walks up and Sweetie Belle sticks her head out of it. She wonders if maybe Pip shouldn't go back and guard their team's horseshoe, but Rarity insists that they need every team member on the hunt for the other teams' prizes. After all the game's not called Guard the Horseshoes it's called Hunt for the Horseshoes. Sweetie Belle steps out of her costume and is about to admonish Rarity for taking over when...

...Dash swoops in like a Valkyrie, knocking all of Rarity's tree team down. The rest of Scootaloo's team rushes in like a horde of Vikings. Dash orders them to search the tree team for their horseshoe, when suddenly Applejack's team rides over a ridge and pelts the opposing teams with applesauce, pushing them back. Determined to gather any intel she can on the opposing teams, Rarity climbs out of her costume and is immediately smacked with a water balloon from above. She looks up to see Dash, who dropped it trying to rattle the other team into revealing the location of their horseshoe. Rarity shouts up that she's hidden her team's horseshoe somewhere Dash would never find it. From her vantage point, Dash looks out over the town and muses that Rarity may have hidden it in Ponyville. Rarity mishears and thinks Dash is admitting that her team's horseshoe is hidden in Ponyville and Applejack similarly gets it wrong, "They've hidden their horseshoe in Ponyville, y'all!" and leads her team into the streets.

As the battle spills over into town, Scootaloo and Apple Bloom hang back to find Sweetie Belle upset at losing control of her team. Scoot and Apple Bloom tell her the very same thing happened to them. Thanks to the older ponies, now none of them having any fun. "But what can we do?" asks Sweetie Belle, saying they can't call out their elders. She figures that they just have to put up with it and get through the game as best they can. When Apple Bloom sighs that she has no idea where the game is headed, Scootaloo looks out at the town. She knows exactly where the game is headed: "All out warfare!!!" The Crusaders join her staring, and we reveal...

SC. 11 - EXT – PONYVILLE TOWN SQUARE – DAY

Rarity, Applejack, Rainbow Dash and "their" teams battle street to street in all out apple sauce and water balloon urban warfare. WIDE SHOT as the CMCs look out on the game, now being run by the older ponies like a war game. The Crusaders look on in dismay—and then get splattered with applesauce. "INCOMING!" The adult ponies just don't notice them at all, and the battle for the Horseshoes rages on.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SC. 12 - EXT – PONYVILLE TOWN SQUARE – DAY

We resume on the CMC's, wiping applesauce off their faces (it may look gross—but it tastes delicious. "Good crop this year!" Applejack shouts). The adult ponies are going at the hunt for the horseshoes with real intensity, and the concerned Crusaders have no idea what to do. Apple Bloom laments that they've created a monster: the grownups have completely taken over this game! Scootaloo corrects her. It's not a game. It's a WAR! All three of the Crusaders head off to their teams to try to stop the mayhem, somehow.

SC. 13 – EXT – VARIOUS LOCATIONS – PONYVILLE

The game has brought out the competitive nature in the three adult ponies, and the 'game' has become a raging battle. Each one narrows her eyes and prepares to outwit, outlast, and outplay the others.

Thus begins a **FIGHT SONG**, in which we cross-cut between the three teams as Rainbow Dash, Rarity, and Applejack lay out their strategies for winning:

- Dash is like a maniac Viking – a berserker woman warrior, planning on surrounding her opponents and intimidating them into surrendering their horseshoes.
- Applejack plots strategy like a drill sergeant, mapping out the town and assigning ponies to search every nook and cranny. When her exhausted recruits complain she orders them to “Drop and give me 20!”
- Meanwhile, Rarity takes matter into her own hooves, giving a quasi-Shakespearean speech to rally the troops (Think “Once more onto the Breach Dear Friends!”)
- Meanwhile, the conflicted CMCs chime in with opposing verses, trying to get the older ponies to chill and just... you know: play the game! It’s supposed to be fun.

By the end of the song, Ponyville is a mess. Some ponies are running for cover, some are joining the battle—and some are even building barricades, Les Miserables-style! Ponyville has gone completely loco.

Then at the height of the song and the height of the madness—all three Crusaders join up in the middle of town. Exhausted, they decided they only have one option left to them and they run off.

END SONG

SC. 14 - EXT. PONYVILLE – DAY

As the battle rages on, the CMCs reappear in town square. Dash shouts from the rooftops, asking if the other teams are ready to surrender. Applejack answers back from a secure position that surrender isn’t an option, while Rarity shouts from the barricades that she’ll fight for as long as it takes. Suddenly another pony’s voice shouts back, “No you won’t!”

The CMC’s part to reveal Cheerilee. Cheerilee calls out for the teams to stop playing the game and come forward. Dash is crestfallen. She looks to Scootaloo. “You told on us?”

Each of the CMCs explain that they had to do something. The older ponies not only took over the game, but they took all of the fun out of it too. And that’s what the game is supposed to be about. Applejack is confused, too: “If you weren’t having fun, why didn’t you just tell us?” Apple Bloom tells her, frustrated: “We tried! But you wouldn’t listen!” Sweetie Belle adds: “Besides, you’re our mentors. You’re supposed to know best!”

Rarity has to admit it’s true: the CMCs are right. The older ponies really did forget what the game was supposed to be about, and who it was supposed to be for. Chastened, Rainbow Dash realizes they’ve taken over what is supposed to be a kid’s game—and she tells Scoot and the other Crusaders that grown up ponies don’t always know best and that friends have to speak up when there’s something wrong, no matter who’s younger and who’s older.

Rarity has an idea: why don’t they restart the Hunt for the Horseshoes, with the older ponies stepping out of the competition altogether. The CMCs and their younger pony teams think this sounds great...

SC. 15 - EXT. FIELDS AROUND SWEET APPLE ACRES – DAY

...so that’s exactly what happens! At the end of the day, the young ponies play a rag-tag game of Hunt for the Horseshoe. The terrible players are still terrible, everyone’s making a mess, and some ponies fall on their faces—but everybody’s romping, splashing in puddles, and kicking up their heels. It’s clear that everypony is having the time of their lives. So what if this version of Hunt for the Horseshoes has none of the warlike precision of the adult-run game? And so what if maybe none of these playful younguns will ever actually find any horseshoes? At least they’re having fun!

And while all this is going on, Rainbow Dash, Rarity, and Applejack watch the muddled Hunt from the sidelines. They’re out of the fray but completely content, wearing shades and lounging on lawn chairs while they sip umbrella drinks like soccer moms having margaritas during the big game. “This is the life,” sighs Applejack happily. Rarity

agrees: “This is where we belong. Now WHY did we want to play that silly game anyway?” Dash says she’s the happiest she’s been all day...

...but then she looks at the game and she can’t resist giving in to one last burst of aggression: “GO SCOOTALOO!!! GET THAT HORSESHOE!!! Er, I mean... This is the life – right, ponies?” Then she settles back into her lounge chair, flips down her sunglasses, and sighs happily. On the field, the young ponies play their pony games as we...FADE TO BLACK.

END