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MY LITTLE PONY 6

Where the Apple Lies

623

Story by: Meghan McCarthy

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TEASER**SC. 1 - INT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE – DAY**

Before she dismisses them for the day, CHERILEE tells the class she hopes they'll all sign up to help make the upcoming school fair the best yet. DIAMOND TIARA promises that her daddy will provide all the decorations, and volunteers APPLE BLOOM to have Sweet Apple Acres cater the whole affair. As the whole class looks to Apple Bloom expectantly, she hems and haws. But when Cheerilee says she should probably ask Applejack or Granny Smith before committing to anything, Apple Bloom corrects her. Wanting to feel important, Apple Bloom lies and says she doesn't need to ask permission since she's practically Applejack's right hoof. She promises that Sweet Apple Acres will cater the whole fair, with plenty of cider to drink and the full gamut of apple baked goods that will be sure to make this year's fair the best ever.

Cherilee excuses the class, but as Apple Bloom turns from her spot in the front of the class, PAN TO APPLEJACK, standing in the classroom doorway, shaking her head. She heard everything.

OFF Apple Bloom, busted...

END TEASER**MAIN TITLES****ACT ONE****SC. 2 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – DAY**

Applejack and Apple Bloom walk down the path toward home. Applejack says that even though Sweet Apple Acres would be happy to cater the school fair, Apple Bloom shouldn't have lied to make herself sound so important. AB is ashamed, saying she doesn't expect AJ to understand. AJ presses and AB asks what the harm is in telling a little white lie about being more important than she is; it's not like it hurt anypony. As they approach...

SC. 3 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES, FARMHOUSE – CONTINUOUS

...where GRANNY SMITH stands out front directing BIG MCINTOSH as he stacks bales of hay. AJ stresses the importance of honesty to her little sister as they approach. AB says she's sorry, but not everypony was born honest like Applejack. Granny guffaws: "You think Applejack was always honest? Heck, she lied so much when she was a filly the whole family ended up in the hospital." AB: "Are you serious?!" Big Mac chimes in: "Eeyup."

Embarrassed, AJ says there's no need to go into all that, but AB wants to hear every gory detail. As Granny narrates, everything goes wavy and we...

SC. 4 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – FLASHBACK

The same location, but we're picking up after the events of MLP123 (The Cutie Mark Chronicles), when a young Applejack has just returned from Manehattan. Young AJ says now that she's back and she got her apple cutie mark, she knows that Sweet Apple Acres is where she's meant to be. In fact, she can't wait to run the place one day. Big Mac has a lot to say on the subject (in fact, we discover he was a bit of a motor-mouth in his youth), reminding AJ that he's the oldest and therefore he should be running the farm. Granny Smith cuts them both off before they can start fighting and reminds them that she's in charge, she's not going anywhere, and they have a lot of work to do. She sends them into town to get more spray for the Apple Blossom Blight. It's been awful this year and they need to be diligent or cider season will be a disaster.

OFF Big Mac and AJ resuming their bickering as they head toward town...

SC. 5 - EXT. PONYVILLE – DAY

In town, Applejack and her brother run into FILTHY RICH and his fiancée, SPOILED MILK. Spoiled Milk is supercilious when she's introduced to "farm workers," but Rich makes light of her comments, confiding in AJ that sometimes he worries she's just marrying him to change her last name. Rich compliments AJ on her decision to return to the farm, explaining that he recently took over his family business. He's confident that she'll be the Apple in charge at Sweet Apple Acres in no time, and, with that in mind, he has a proposition.

He wants to sell Sweet Apple Acres' famous apple cider exclusively at Rich's Barnyard Bargains. He figures it's a win-win for Applejack – he'll buy the cider from the farm and they don't have to waste their time with the lines and crowds out at the orchard. Big Mac starts to rattle through a list of reasons that Applejack is not the pony to talk to about this, and also why it's not a good idea in the first place. Rich says if she's worried, they can start slow – if Applejack can bring him a few barrels of cider early, he'll sell them in the store and she can see for herself that he's got a good idea. Unless, of course, Big Mac is right and he should talk to Granny Smith instead. Big Mac starts talking again, but Applejack tells Filthy Rich not to listen to him; he's always running his mouth. She agrees to the deal. OFF Rich and AJ shaking hooves...

SC. 6 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES, BARN – LATER

Applejack enters through the arch, with Big Mac talking her ear off about why she shouldn't have made a deal with Filthy Rich without checking with Granny first, she's not running the farm yet, just because she has three apples on her cutie mark and he only has one doesn't mean hers is better than his, etc. AJ tells Big Mac that he's getting himself all worked up over nothing. Filthy Rich's plan makes good sense – Granny will see it that way too.

Granny overhears the tail end of this as she approaches and asks what all the hubbub is about. AJ proudly tells her she made a deal that's gonna be great for the farm and all she needs to do is give a couple barrels of cider to Filthy Rich before the season starts. AJ smirks at Big Mac when she's done, then Granny replies, "Absolutely not!"

OFF Applejack, swapping her smile for Big Mac's frown, and vice versa...

END ACT ONE**ACT TWO****SC. 7 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES, BARN – RESUMING**

Resume on Granny repeating that Applejack cannot give Filthy Rich cider before the season starts – sure, Rich has been good to Sweet Apple Acres, especially when it's Zap Apple Jam season, but even his grandpappy, Stinkin' Rich, understood that when it comes to cider, it's always been first come, first served to anypony who wants to stand in line at Sweet Apple Acres, and it always will be.

Applejack understands Granny's point, but doesn't see the harm in at least giving Filthy a couple barrels of cider ahead of time, just this once. Granny reminds her that making cider is iffy business – cider apples have to be picked at just the right time or the cider will be too tart or too sweet. And the crop yield depends on weather and blight, last year's harvest, etc. If they give two barrels to Filthy Rich, that means somepony else will miss out. Sorry, but Applejack will have to tell him no.

SC. 8 - EXT. PONYVILLE – DAY

Applejack and Big Mac head to Filthy Rich's and discuss what she'll say. AJ isn't keen on embarrassing herself, but Big Mac says the cleanest and easiest thing to do is just tell the unvarnished truth. AJ grudgingly agrees. Applejack takes a breath, steels herself, and steps into...

SC. 9 - INT. RICH'S BARNYARD BARGAINS – CONTINUOUS

Filthy Rich is happy to see Applejack again and steamrollers over her as she tries to break the bad news to him, instead directing her to the new display counter that he's set up because of AJ's promise to provide him with cider. AJ grimaces, her job having been made that much tougher, but Big Mac nudges her into telling Rich she won't be able to get him any cider before anypony else.

Rich is upset. He did all this based on Applejack's word. She looks to Big Mac, who starts to repeat what Granny said about the fairness of everypony waiting in line, but AJ cuts him off, instead giving the explanation that Granny gave her about the difficulties with the harvest – the blight, the weather, etc. To Rich this sounds like Applejack is making excuses and can't run the farm, and he worries about all their other dealings if she's going to be in charge.

Big Mac starts to say that Applejack isn't in charge, but AJ cuts him off and flat-out lies to Rich – the truth is that Granny has been sick lately. Rich is surprised; he had no idea. Big Mac: "Yeah, nobody knew till just now." AJ tells Rich they wanted to keep it quiet, and she's been doing her best to keep it all together, but being shorthanded, they just haven't been able to keep up with things like normal. Filthy Rich apologizes and asks if there's anything he can do. Applejack sheepishly says all she asks is for his understanding during this difficult time.

OFF Big Mac, giving Applejack a look...

SC. 10 - INT. SWEET APPLE ACRES, FARMHOUSE – LATER

...where Applejack tells Big Mac not to give her that look. Big Mac starts in about how what she said was not what they agreed on and that she's only gonna cause more trouble, when Granny Smith enters the room with supper, and Applejack stomps on Big Mac's hoof to shut him up. Granny sets the pot down on the table and heads back into the kitchen. While she's gone, AJ reminds Big Mac of what Rich said to them – if she had told the truth, he might have stopped doing business with Sweet Apple Acres altogether. And losing that much business could ruin the farm.

Granny comes back again, but Applejack reminds her of something she forgot in the kitchen so she and Big Mac can finish their conversation. Big Mac sees AJ's point, but thinks that telling Filthy Rich that Granny was sick doesn't seem like the best plan. AJ: "Well, it worked, didn't it?"

Just then, there's a knock on the door. Big Mac opens it to find Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk. Spoiled Milk looks like she'd rather be anywhere else, but Rich tells Big Mac they just stopped by to wish Granny a speedy recovery. They even brought flowers. Big Mac turns his back to them and gives Applejack a death stare: "Look, sis, they brought Granny flowers. Ain't that sweet?"

Applejack is about to respond, then sees Granny entering the room and quickly excuses herself to dash over and stop Granny before Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk can see her. Applejack intercepts Granny, and now has to add more lies on top of the first – she comes up with a lie to get Granny out to the barn while Big Mac shows their guests in, then returns and begins showing them back out, lying again when it's apparent that Big Mac isn't able to cover for her and is rambling incoherently out of nervousness.

SC. 11 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – CONTINUOUS

Applejack hurries Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk to the fence, telling them that, while she truly appreciates the kindness of them stopping by, Granny can't have visitors right now. When Rich asks why not, AJ fumbles for an answer, then has to zip away again when she sees Granny exiting the barn behind them. AJ brings Granny back into the barn, questioning her about the sprayers under the guise of being worried about the Apple Blossom Blight. As Granny starts to talk about the worst year of blight that ever befell Sweet Apple Acres, Applejack zips back outside to find Big Mac telling Rich his life story as he stalls for time. AJ steps in and apologizes for Big Mac, lying that he's just so upset by Granny's condition. Rich asks what Granny's condition is and Spoiled Milk asks if it's contagious. Applejack says the first thing that comes into her head – Granny's got a case of Apple Blossom Blight! Rich is surprised; he thought only the trees got blight. Applejack agrees that that's usually the case, then improvises that the doctors think it's from working with the trees for so many years. Rich (and Big Mac): "Doctors?" AJ says

that yes, unfortunately, Granny's illness was so unique and the doctors were so concerned that they took her off to Ponyville General right before Filthy Rich showed up.

Rich is duly concerned, and gives his condolences to Applejack and Big Mac, then turns to go, telling Spoiled Milk they'd better hurry if they want to get more flowers before visiting hours are over. When Applejack asks what visiting hours he's talking about, Rich turns and tells her, "At the hospital, of course. Now more than ever we've gotta show Granny Smith our love and support." He asks if Big Mac and Applejack want to go with them, assuming they're heading that way themselves, but AJ lies once again, saying they've got some stuff to do around the farm before they can head to the hospital. Rich heads off, saying he's sure they'll see each other in Granny Smith's room at Ponyville General later, then.

OFF Applejack, wondering what to do now...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SC. 12 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – RESUMING

Big Mac upbraids Applejack: See where all your lies have gotten us? You should have told Filthy Rich the truth in the first place. Now what are you gonna do? But Applejack isn't listening – she runs off to...

SC. 13 – EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES, BARN – CONTINUOUS

Applejack rushes in (followed closely by Big Mac) to find Granny still sorting the sprayers. AJ tells her that they have to get to the hospital right away. Granny: "Why? Who's sick?" Big Mac: "You are." Granny is confused, but Applejack covers: "You're not sick, you're needed. At the hospital!" Applejack sees the sprayer and tells Granny that the Apple Blossom Blight is starting to infect ponies now. The hospital needs an expert, and nopony knows more about fighting Apple Blossom Blight than Granny Smith. Granny: "Well, what in tarnation are you waiting for? Let's go!"

OFF Big Mac, rolling his eyes...

SC. 14 - EXT. PONYVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL – DAY

As Applejack, Big Mac and Granny Smith approach Ponyville General, AJ spots Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk approaching from the other direction (Rich carries a giant horseshoe bouquet of flowers for Granny around his neck). AJ hustles Granny around to the back entrance, making up a story about avoiding all the ponies sick with Apple Blossom Blight. She looks to Big Mac to back her up, but he starts rambling facts about Apple Blossom Blight so he doesn't have to support his sister's lies. Applejack peeks around the corner to watch Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk go in the front door of the hospital, then ushers Granny into...

SC. 15 - INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY – MOMENTS LATER

Applejack gets Granny dressed up in scrubs and a mask (again lying to her about the blight becoming an epidemic), then leaves her with Big Mac while she goes to "check on where the presentation will be."

OFF Granny, mumbling through her surgical mask...

SC. 16 - INT. HOSPITAL, LOBBY – MOMENTS LATER

Applejack finds Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk, who are relieved to see her since they can't seem to find Granny's room, or any nurses who've heard of a pony with Apple Blossom Blight. AJ tells them Granny's room is just down the hall. And then a left, a right, down some stairs, up a lot more stairs, through the cafeteria, left three more times and you're right there. Easy as Granny's apple pie. She races off, leaving them looking confusedly at each other.

SC. 17 - INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY/ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

Applejack returns to Granny and Big Mac. She gives Granny similarly convoluted directions to where her presentation will be, promising to catch up with her, then pulls Big Mac into a room and tries to get him to get in bed and hide under the sheets pretending to be Granny (a la Little Red Riding Hood). She'll lead Filthy Rich in, Big Mac can moan a few times, and then this will all be over.

Big Mac balks at this, but AJ reminds him of what's on the line – if Filthy finds out, he could cut all ties with Sweet Apple Acres. Big Mac concedes the point, but wants Applejack to play the role of Granny. She's closer to Granny's size and this is all her dumb idea in the first place. AJ convinces him that pretending to be Granny is the easier role and that he'd just foul the whole thing up with his motormouth if he had to talk Filthy Rich through this without her help. So he should just get on the gurney and keep still and quiet no matter what.

OFF Big Mac, reluctantly crawling into the bed as Applejack zips out the door...

SC. 18 - INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY – MOMENTS LATER

Applejack catches up with Granny, telling her the doctors are just getting the room ready for her and to wait right here for a second, when she sees Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk turn the corner looking more confused than ever. She quickly adjusts the "here" where Granny is supposed to wait, shoving her out of view, then trots down to get Rich's attention. She leads the two of them back to...

SC. 19 - INT. HOSPITAL, ROOM/HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

...only to find that "Granny" (aka Big Mac) is not there. Confused, AJ double-checks the door number, then looks around the hallway and spots an orderly wheeling a gurney down the hall with one of Big Mac's unmistakable red legs poking out from beneath the sheet. Oh no!

Applejack hustles Rich and Spoiled Milk out the door and double times them down the hall after who they think is Granny, when AJ spots the real Granny and breaks off to grab her, turning back just in time to see Big Mac get wheeled through a set of double doors. Applejack scans the hall, but can't find Filthy Rich or Spoiled Milk, so she pushes Granny down to the double doors and into...

SC. 20 - INT. HOSPITAL, OPERATING THEATER – MOMENTS LATER

Applejack and Granny find themselves standing on the floor of an old-fashioned operating theater in the round. Scanning the seats above, AJ notices Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk in the gallery. Other masked and gowned doctors and nurses usher Granny (still in her mask) toward the operating table. Applejack realizes that not only do they think Granny is the chief surgeon, but also that the patient on the table is Big Mac, still hiding under the sheets and unaware of his predicament.

Applejack realizes this has gone too far and tries to get to the table to explain what's going on, but the other doctors and nurses won't let her near because she's not gowned or masked. Meanwhile, Granny assumes this is where she's supposed to give her presentation and starts to talk in a muffled drawl about the symptoms of Apple Blossom Blight – how it drains all the colors from the leaves first and then turns the branches red as it works its way toward the trunk.

Filthy Rich and Spoiled Milk look on from the gallery, convinced they're about to watch a very sick Granny Smith undergo surgery. The real Granny pulls one of Big Mac's legs out from under the sheet to show the pale hoof and red foreleg. She says once the blight is this far along, the only thing to do is prune the branches. As a nurse pulls out a comically large saw and starts to hand it to Granny, Applejack breaks through the wall of doctors trying to usher her out and slides into the center of the room, yelling, "STOP!!" Big Mac hops off the table, wanting to make it very clear that he does not have Apple Blossom Blight and nopony's gonna prune anything off him. Granny pulls off her mask and asks what in tarnation is going on here. Filthy Rich stands up in the gallery and seconds that motion.

Applejack takes her hat in her hoof and gives a heartfelt apology, explaining that this whole thing was all her fault. She got too big for her britches, thinking she could make promises that weren't hers to make. Then she let her fool pride get the best of her and thought she could get out of it without embarrassing herself if she told a white lie. Well, that was bad, and it led to a lot of other lies that made everything a lot worse. She begs Filthy Rich not to penalize Granny and Sweet Apple Acres for her bad behavior, and promises everypony in the room that from now on she'll be the most honest pony in town.

Filthy and Granny are both flabbergasted, asking a series of questions about the whole charade. Big Mac steps forward and fields them with his now-trademark one-word answers. OFF this...

FLASH-FORWARD TO:

SC. 21 - INT. SWEET APPLE ACRES, FARMHOUSE – PRESENT

Back in present day, Apple Bloom stares at her big sister slack-jawed: "You did that?! Told all those lies?! You?!" Applejack nods glumly. It's not a story she's proud of, but she learned a lifelong lesson from it about the importance of being honest and she hopes Apple Bloom will too.

Apple Bloom can see now how one lie can lead to another and that lying to try to impress somepony is just silly. She turns to Big Mac, adding that she reckons liars need lots of words to explain themselves, but honest ponies barely have to talk at all. OFF Big Mac's smile and "Eeyup!"...

SC. 22 - INT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE – THE NEXT MORNING

Apple Bloom enters and approaches Cherilee, asking to address the class. As Applejack watches again from the doorway, this time nodding encouragingly, Apple Bloom says that she lied yesterday about practically running Sweet Apple Acres to make herself look more important. She knows it was wrong, and as much as she hopes she might run the farm one day, she knows it's in good hooves right now, because nopony's better than her big sister. OFF this...

END