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MY LITTLE PONY
Season 7

Shadow Play - Part 1
Ep 725

Teleplay 1st Draft

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TEASER**SC 1 - FADE UP ON AN ANCIENT TEXT**

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In classic Storybook-style (think MLP 001), we TRACK IN on an old book. A SWIRL OF STARS (i.e., the cutie mark of Starswirl the Bearded) is on the cover.

As the book opens we continue to PUSH IN, dissolving to a series of WATERCOLOR-STYLE IMAGES as the wizened voice of STARSWIRL THE BEARDED can be heard...

1 STARSWIRL (V.O.)
Long ago a group of ponies
represented all the best qualities
of Equestria: strength, loyalty,
healing, beauty, hope, and magic.

With each quality we see a stylistic, watercolor depiction of the pony to which it corresponds (all of whom we've met in earlier episodes): Strength, ROCKHOOF; loyalty, FLASH PRANCE; healing, MAGE MEADOWBROOK; beauty, MISTMANE; hope, SOMNAMBULA; and magic, Starswirl. These are the PILLARS OF OLD EQUESTRIA.

2 STARSWIRL (V.O.)
These six pillars of Equestria were
brought together by a seventh pony
to protect and maintain those
ideals... or so we thought.

ANOTHER WATERCOLOR-STYLE IMAGE - of the six pillars looking down on another PONY who is obscured by their shadows.

The pony in the shadow regards the others guiltily - a collection of items gathered around him: a shield, a shovel, a mask, a flower, a blindfold, and a book (these are the pillars' artifacts).

3 STARSWIRL (V.O.)
But we soon discovered the pony who
claimed to want to use our
abilities to protect Equestria,
only wanted them for himself.

ANOTHER WATERCOLOR IMAGE - of the six pillars towering over the other pony, now cowering in their shadows, as Starswirl points away - gesturing for him to leave their presence.

4 STARSWIRL (V.O.)
Outcast and alone, this power-mad
pony turned to dark magic to
satisfy his thirst.

WATERCOLOR IMAGE - of the other pony, now transformed into the fearsome PONY OF SHADOWS!

5 STARSWIRL (V.O.)
Transformed into a creature of darkness, this Pony of Shadows returned to seek his revenge by draining light from the world.

WATERCOLOR IMAGE - of the six pillars and the Pony of Shadows locked in battle (i.e., blasts of magic and shadow, etc.).

6 STARSWIRL (V.O.)
To safeguard against the darkness, we planted the Tree of Harmony to bind the powers of goodness and light together - protecting them for all time, but the Pony of Shadows was determined to destroy the sapling before it took root.

WATERCOLOR IMAGE - of the pillars surrounding a much smaller version of the TREE OF HARMONY.

7 STARSWIRL (V.O.)
Desperate, we devised a plan to keep the Tree and Equestria safe forever...

As Starswirl's voice trails off...

SC 2 - INT. CANTERLOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

SUNBURST stands before CELESTIA and LUNA reading from the same ancient looking book. The MANE SIX, STARLIGHT, and SPIKE stand nearby.

8 SUNBURST
(reading)"...I only hope it will be enough."

Sunburst turns the last page and looks up at the royal sisters

9 SUNBURST (CONT'D)
That's it. That's where it ends.

Off everypony's shocked expressions we...

END TEASER

MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE**SC 3 - INT. CANTERLOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - RESUME**

Sunburst closes the book. Celestia magics it up to her throne so she and Luna can look at it.

10 CELESTIA
This is quite a discovery,
Sunburst.

11 LUNA
We had thought all the writings of
Starswirl the Bearded had be found
ages ago.

12 SUNBURST
I'm just as surprised as you, but
there it was. In a collection of
books I bought at an antique store
in Ponyville.

13 STARLIGHT
If I knew the shop had stuff like
that, I might have been more
interested.

Sunburst and Starlight share a smile. Twilight steps forward.

14 TWILIGHT
Sunburst brought it to me, but once
I saw what it was, I wanted to
bring it here right away.

Celestia and Luna share a look.

15 CELESTIA
And why is that?

16 TWILIGHT
It's Starswirl the Bearded's! The
last thing he ever wrote from the
looks of it.

17 SUNBURST
Just discovering that these pillars
of Old Equestria were real is
amazing!

18 FLUTTERSHY
I sort of already discovered Mage
Meadowbrook was the legendary
Mysterious Mask.

19 RAINBOW DASH
Yeah, but Flash Prance was real
too!

20 APPLEJACK
And Rockhoof.

21 RARITY
And Mistmane.

22 PINKIE PIE
And Somnambula too?

23 SUNBURST
They were all real. And they knew
each other. It's pretty exciting.

24 APPLEJACK
I'm not so excited about the Pony
of Shadows being real. That's one
boogie-pony I wish was made up.

25 CELESTIA
While it is an amazing discovery,
the pillars lived long ago. (to
Twilight) I'm not sure what your
interest in them is now.

26 TWILIGHT
Really? Starswirl is the most
important wizard ever! He wrote
this and then vanished.

27 SUNBURST
They all did. Maybe we can find out
what happened to them.

28 LUNA
Starswirl was a great wizard and a
good friend. If you think this
journal might solve the mystery of
his disappearance, then you should
look into it.

29 CELESTIA
(thinking) It is a revelation that
the Pillars planted the Tree of
Harmony. Given its connection to
the Map of Friendship, looking into
this might provide you with a
better understanding of how to use
it.

30 SUNBURST
There's parts of the journal I
can't make out and haven't been
able to translate from Olde Ponish.

Twilight BAMFS up next to the book. She looks at the pages.

31 TWILIGHT
Well, I just happen to be an expert
in Olde Ponish. Plus, nopony knows
Starswirl better than me.

Celestia and Luna look over at Twilight, standing beside
their throne.

32 TWILIGHT (CONT'D)
Sorry.

She BAMFS back down with the others and levitates the book
down to her.

33 TWILIGHT (CONT'D)
Once I get this back to my library,
I'll have it all figured out in no
time.

Spike and the others gather around.

34 SPIKE
And we can help!

As the ponies all <CHEER>...

SC 4 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Twilight looks down at the book, a candle next to her has
burned down to a wax stub. Spike <YAWNS> as he replaces it
with a fresh candle.

35 SPIKE
Figure it all out yet, Twilight?

WHIP PAN to the end of the table where Sunburst lifts his
head from his hooves, startled awake.

36 SUNBURST
Wha-WHAT? What did you figure out?

37 TWILIGHT
(frowns) Nothing. Translating Olde
Ponish is one thing, but there's
parts where Starswirl's hornwriting
is like another language all by
itself!

WHIP PAN to the other end of the table where the rest of the
Mane Six are all asleep. Pinkie <SNORES> and falls off her
chair - rousing the rest.

38 APPLEJACK
(yawns) Much as we wanna help,
Twilight. I don't see what any of
us can do outside of fall asleep.

Starlight enters with tea. She sets it down beside Twilight
who pours over the pages.

39 TWILIGHT
There has to be some clue that
points to where we should start.

Starlight looks over Twilight's shoulder and points to a
drawing/diagram of a TEMPLE-LIKE STRUCTURE similar to
Stonehenge.

40 STARLIGHT
(reading) "Hearg sylfum se
Ponhenge," What's that?

41 TWILIGHT
(shocked) The Temple of Ponhenge!
You can read that?

42 STARLIGHT
(nods) The hornwriting's pretty
sloppy, but it's nowhere near as
bad as mine. (continues) "Toward
dol grimlic of fola firgenbeorg?"

Sunburst rushes over and looks down at the book.

43 SUNBURST
At the base of Foal Mountain...

44 STARLIGHT
(reading) "User endemest scield..."

They all turn to Twilight.

45 TWILIGHT
(ominous) Our last stand.

Pinkie suddenly pops into frame.

46 PINKIE PIE
Well, if that's not a clue, I don't
know what is!

They all look down at the book. As we PUSH IN on the
drawing...

DISSOLVE TO:

SC 5 - EST. FOAL MOUNTAIN - PONHENG - NIGHT

The same temple-like structure, though overgrown and worn
down by time, stands in a grove of trees at the base of a
lonely gray mountain.

SC 6 - EXT. PONHENG - NIGHT

Six stone slabs (think Stonehenge) surround a central raised
dais. In front of each slab is a smaller stone pedestal.

A BLAST of magic clears away a thicket of vines as Twilight
enters the clearing, floating the book in front of her. The
rest follow.

47 TWILIGHT
This is it. Ponhenge. I can't
believe it.

48 SUNBURST
It's a good thing Starlight was
able to decipher Starswirl's
hornwriting so we could find our
way here.

The others fan out around the stones. Rarity notices some
ornate runes carved into them.

49 RARITY
These are lovely. (to Starlight) I
don't suppose you could decipher
them too?

50 STARLIGHT
Uhh... yeah, no. My talents are
limited to bad penmanship.

Sunburst and Twilight rush over.

51 TWILIGHT
I've never even seen this language
before. (to Sunburst) Have you?

Sunburst shakes his head. Dash pulls at a vine that's grown over one of the slabs. It snaps and she tumbles into a bush.

52 RAINBOW DASH
I don't think anypony's seen any of
this for a long time.

Applejack helps her up.

53 APPLEJACK
It'd take a whole team of ponies to
clear away all this brush.

Fluttershy taps at the base of another stone and a piece crumbles away.

54 FLUTTERSHY
Even then, I'm not sure we'd find
out what happened here a thousand
years ago.

Twilight walks in front of one of the stones facing the dais and <SIGHS>.

55 TWILIGHT
You're right. I knew it was a long
shot.

Spike pats her on the wing.

56 SPIKE
Cheer up, Twilight. Finding a whole
set of ancient ruins is pretty
impressive.

57 TWILIGHT
I guess I thought we'd get here and
everything would just magically be
explained.

With that, Twilight sets Starswirl's book down on the pedestal beside her. Immediately the book starts to GLOW.

58 SPIKE
Ah... Twilight?

As they stare at the glowing book, there's a FLASH of light and suddenly STARSWIRL THE BEARDED is standing beside them, his hoof on the book. Twilight looks up in awe.

59 TWILIGHT
Starswirl!? I-- I can't believe
it's you. I have so many questions.
I don't even know where to start--

Starswirl looks down at his book, not seeming to notice
Twilight at all.

60 TWILIGHT (CONT'D)
Starswirl?

61 SUNBURST
I don't think he can hear you. I
don't think any of them can.

PULL WIDE to reveal all the PILLARS OF OLD EQUESTRIA are
there and the stone temple looks like new. Each Pillar stands
by a separate stone (and next to each of the Mane Six)--
looks of determination on their faces.

Starswirl shoots a BLAST of magic from his horn at the dais
and a ball of CRACKLING ENERGY forms. As the ball expands,
DARKNESS pours out of it, spilling onto the dais.

The pool of darkness starts to gather, forming into a vague,
pony-like shape. The darkness pony spreads massive, shadowy
wings as two GLOWING EYES open and stare down at Starswirl
and the rest. This is the PONY OF SHADOWS.

62 PONY OF SHADOWS
You may have figured out how to
summon me, but you'll never defeat
me. I will find your "Tree of
Harmony" and destroy it!

With that, the Shadow Pony lowers his horn and sends a BLAST
OF PURE DARKNESS at Starswirl and the rest. As the Pony of
Shadows <LAUGHS>, what little light there is in the grove
starts to fade -- even the moon dims.

Starswirl gathers himself, his horn crackling with the energy
he has left as he stares up at the Shadow Pony.

63 STARSWIRL
We didn't come here to defeat
you...

Starswirl sends a BLAST of magic at his book and immediately,
the energy shoots around the circle connecting him to each of
the other Pillars.

64 PONY OF SHADOWS
What are you doing?!

Glowing with Starswirl's magic, the other Pillars face the Shadow Pony.

65 STARSWIRL
We came to contain you.

Suddenly, with a massive BLAST, the energy from Starswirl and the others collapses toward the center and in a FLASH OF LIGHT, they all vanish.

As the MAGICAL VISION fades, the stone temple returns to it's dilapidated, overgrown state. Twilight and the rest look around. Spike looks up to her.

66 SPIKE
Well, you asked for an explanation.

Off Twilight's look of shock we...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SC 7 - EXT. PONHENG - RESUME

Sunburst and the other ponies all stare at the ruins, in shock.

67 RAINBOW DASH
Uh... What just happened?

Twilight lifts the book from the pedestal. She floats it over and examines it.

68 TWILIGHT
I'm not sure.

69 STARLIGHT
It looked like Starswirl cast a spell that banished the Pony of Shadows.

Sunburst walks up and looks at the book more closely.

70 SUNBURST
Of course! Powerful magic like that would leave an impression on this place. Bringing the book back here let us see what happened.

71 APPLEJACK
Which was what?

72 TWILIGHT
Starswirl and the rest of the
pillars sacrificed themselves to
save Equestria.

Off the others' looks of shocked realization...

SC 8 - EST. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE - DAY

The sun shines over the Castle of Friendship - a stark
contrast to the preceding scene.

SC 9 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE - DAY

Sunburst walks through the hall with Starlight.

73 STARLIGHT
It's amazing to think one of the
great mysteries of Equestria was
solved with an old book from an
antique shop.

74 SUNBURST
Kind of gives you a new
appreciation for antiquing, huh?

The share a smile.

75 SUNBURST (CONT'D)
But I wouldn't say the mystery was
solved. It'll probably take years
studying the journal before we can
figure out Starswirl's spell.

Starlight nods as they walk into...

SC 10 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The two of them stop short as they look at Twilight
surrounded by stacks and stacks of books. Twilight looks up
at them excited.

76 TWILIGHT
I think I figured out Starswirl's
spell!

Off Starlight and Sunburst's looks of shock...

SC 11 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE - MAP ROOM - LATER

Starlight, Sunburst, Spike, and the rest of the Mane Six gather around the map as Twilight looks from the journal to the map, talking a mile a minute.

77 TWILIGHT
(excited) Once Starlight set me on the right track with Starswirl's crazy hornwriting -- (awkward nerd laugh) I mean, he was a genius, so I guess we can forgive a little messiness -- I went through the journal again and it's amazing!

78 RARITY
Twilight, darling, we understand you're excited, but you need to slow down.

79 RAINBOW DASH
Yeah. What exactly is so amazing?

80 TWILIGHT
Only how Starswirl and the other Pillars were able to send the Pony of Shadows to limbo!

81 APPLEJACK
They did what now?

By way of explanation, Twilight shoots a beam of magic at the map and a glowing, miniature version of Ponhenge rises up - tiny pony shapes surrounding the central dais.

82 TWILIGHT
They used their magic to open a portal between worlds, to limbo, and pulled the Pony of Shadows inside.

A single point of light appears over the dais and expands into a sphere that encompasses the whole thing. Then, in a FLASH, it sucks back in - taking all the pony shapes with it.

The mini Ponhenge disappears as Twilight floats the journal over and flips through the pages.

83 TWILIGHT (CONT'D)
Starswirl thought the only way to trap the Pony of Shadows there was for the pillars to take him themselves.

84 APPLEJACK
So they got stuck in this "limbo"
too?

85 FLUTTERSHY
The Pony of Shadows must have been
really awful for them to do that.

86 PINKIE PIE
Yeah. Trapped for all time in limbo
with a bad guy does not sound like
fun.

Twilight sets the book down on the map and looks up at her
friends proudly.

87 TWILIGHT
No it doesn't. Luckily, I've
figured out a way to get them out.

They all look at Twilight in shock.

88 SUNBURST
Twilight, are you serious? You just
"figured out" how to save the most
legendary ponies of all time?

89 STARLIGHT
You're going to open a portal to
between worlds? Is that safe?

90 TWILIGHT
Starswirl was the greatest wizard
of all time. If there's even a
chance to save him, I have to try.

91 APPLEJACK
But the Pillars disappeared ages
ago, how can you rescue them now?

92 TWILIGHT
Limbo isn't like anywhere else.
Time stands still. If I can pull
them out, it'll be like they never
left.

The others all exchange looks of intrigue. Spike looks to
Twilight.

93 SPIKE
What can we do to help?

Twilight looks to the map, brightening.

94 TWILIGHT
If I'm right, I need to find items
that are connected to the pillars
in some way.

95 RAINBOW DASH
You mean, like, stuff that belonged
to them?

Twilight nods.

96 FLUTTERSHY
But they lived thousands of years
ago. How would we know what to look
for? Or where?

Twilight floats Starswirl's journal back up over the map.

97 TWILIGHT
Luckily, Starswirl took a lot of
notes...

With that, Twilight shoots a stream of magic at the map.
Glowing energy flows up from the map into the book. As the
pages flutter, beams of magic shoot out from the book to
different spots on the map.

98 TWILIGHT (CONT'D)
He wrote all about his friends,
where they lived, and the items
that were important to them.

As the surge of magical energy recedes, five glowing objects
remain - floating over different parts of the map. CLOSE on
each miniature glowing artifact as Twilight list them off.

99 TWILIGHT (CONT'D)
Rockhoof's shovel. Flash Prance's
shield. Mistmane's flower.
Meadowbrook's mask, and...

Pinkie jumps in.

100 PINKIE PIE
The blindfold Somnambula wore when
she faced that nasty sphinx and
saved a prince!

Twilight looks to her friends, pleased.

101 TWILIGHT
Exactly. Now all we need to do is
figure out who should get what.

The ponies all stare down at the map.

102 APPLEJACK
Well, I've loved Rockhoof's story
since I was a foal. I'll search for
the shovel

103 RAINBOW DASH
And Flash Prance is almost as
awesome as me. I can definitely
find his shield.

104 RARITY
I've always admired how Mistmane
sacrificed her own beauty to bring
beauty to the world. Finding her
actual flower would be divine.

105 FLUTTERSHY
I've already met some of
Meadowbrook's family. I'm sure I
could borrow her mask.

106 PINKIE PIE
And all I need to do is dive to the
bottom of a giant pit of green
slime in an ancient pyramid where
Somnambula rescued a prince from a
big, scary sphinx by walking across
a treacherous chasm wearing a
blindfold! Easy.

Off all of them looking at Pinkie.

107 TWILIGHT
Then it's settled. Everypony, fan
out and find the artifacts.
Sunburst, Starlight, and I will
have the spell ready by the time
you get back.

Off everypony's looks of excited determination...

TRANSITION TO:

SC 12 - EST. ROCKHOOF'S VILLAGE SITE - DAY

Applejack stands on some rocks looking out at the site of
Rockhoof's village (established in MLP716). It's a thousand
years later, so all that's left is a flat spot looking over a
ravine that stretches from a dormant volcano to the sea.

Applejack spots a small encampment and heads toward it.

SC 13 - EXT. ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG - DAY

Applejack walks into the camp to find several ponies standing in a large pit, carefully excavating stuff.

A few YOUNGER PONIES gather around an academic looking pony, PROFESSOR FOSSIL, as she unearths a viking-esque helmet.

108 YOUNGER PONY
(excited) Professor! It a Mighty
Helm headpiece! Maybe it belonged
to Rockhoof himself!

109 PROFESSOR FOSSIL
It's an impressive find, to be
sure, but I doubt it belonged to
Rockhoof - if he even existed.

110 APPLEJACK (O.S.)
Oh, I guarantee you he did.

The archeologist ponies all turn to see Applejack standing at the edge of the pit looking down at them.

111 PROFESSOR FOSSIL
(laughs) And I suppose that ravine
was dug with Rockhoof's trusty
shovel to save the village from an
erupting volcano.

112 APPLEJACK
Probably.

113 PROFESSOR FOSSIL
I love old legends as much as
anypony - that's why I became an
archeologist - but stories and
facts are different things.

Applejack looks to a collection of recently unearthed items: helmets, shields, spears, tools, etc.

114 APPLEJACK
But what's the point of digging all
this stuff up if there's no story
to go with them?

115 PROFESSOR FOSSIL
Stories make us feel good about the
past, but that doesn't mean they're
true - and pony strong enough to
save a village from rushing lava
with a shovel is preposterous!

Suddenly, one of the younger ponies removes a section of earth that supports a GIANT ROCK. The boulder shakes and starts to fall on top of the professor and her students.

Applejack grabs one of the ancient tools, a SHOVEL, and jumps into the pit. Quickly she uses the shovel to prop up the giant boulder while the professor and her students climb out.

Finally, Applejack pulls the shovel free and leaps out herself, letting the giant rock fall with a <CRASH>.

116 PROFESSOR FOSSIL (CONT'D)
(amazed) I can't believe it. You
saved us by holding up that rock.
That's amazing.

117 APPLEJACK
I bet if you told somepony else the
story it might sound preposterous.

The professor gives her a look.

118 PROFESSOR FOSSIL
I suppose some stories might be
true after all.

Suddenly the shovel starts to GLOW in Applejack's hooves. The Professor stares at it wide-eyed.

119 PROFESSOR FOSSIL (CONT'D)
And it looks to me like you might
be part of one.

As Applejack looks at the glowing shovel with wonder...

SC 14 - EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Rarity arrives in a quaint, Asian-influenced village (this is Mistmane's village from MLP716 - a thousand years later). She stops a VILLAGE PONY in the street.

120 RARITY
Excuse me. You wouldn't know where
I could find a perpetually blooming
magical flower that spreads beauty
throughout Equestria, would you?

The village pony cocks her head and Rarity, confused.

121 VILLAGE PONY
I don't know about magical, but if
your looking for flowers there's
the old botanical gardens outside
of town.

122 RARITY
Well, that was easy.

SC 15 - EST. BOTANICAL GARDENS - DAY

An expansive green house like the Botanical Garden of the University of Vienna (ref: <http://tinyurl.com/gojy76a>) sits at the end of a long dirt path.

As Rarity approaches she sees the once majestic structure is overgrown with weeds and has fallen into disrepair.

123 RARITY
Hmmm. Maybe not as easy as I
thought.

SC 16 - INT. BOTANICAL GARDENS - CONTINUOUS

Rarity pushes open a rusty old door and finds the inside is even more overgrown than the outside - it's an indoor jungle.

124 RARITY
Or not easy at all.

Suddenly something catches Rarity's eye. She looks up at a SHAFT OF SUNLIGHT shining through the glass ceiling and walks in to see where it falls.

SC 17 - INT. BOTANICAL GARDENS - CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Rarity pushes her way through the dense growth and into a clearing in the middle of the structure.

125 RARITY
I'm all for wild flowers, but this
is ridiculous.

She looks up and sees the shaft of sunlight lands on a small circular pedestal on which there's a single, perfect ORCHID.

As Rarity approaches, the orchid starts to GLOW. Rarity reaches toward it, and a small FLOATING SPADE smacks her on the hoof.

126 RARITY (CONT'D)
OW!

127 OLD GARDENER (O.S.)
You keep those hoofs to yourself,
dearie!

Rarity whips around to find a OLD GARDENER UNICORN staring at her with a frown. She points her little spade at Rarity, threateningly.

128 OLD GARDENER (CONT'D)
These gardens have been in my
family for generations, and I'm not
about to let some whippersnapper
take what's left.

129 RARITY
(intrigued) Your family's guarded
that flower for generations?

130 OLD GARDENER
Time was, all manner of plants and
flowers grew here. Ponies came from
far and wide to see them. But that
orchid's all that's left and I've
cared for it my whole life.

Rarity looks around at all the overgrown plants.

131 RARITY
What about everything else?

132 OLD GARDENER
Everything else? I just said that
flower's all there is.

With that, Rarity grins and charges up her horn as we
TRANSITION TO:

A MONTAGE

The Old Gardener watches, curious, as Rarity:

- Floats several pair of hedge clippers through the thick weeds, trimming and chopping as they go and leaving behind perfect rows of green.

- Uses several spades to dig up and smooth pebble paths, winding their way through the gardens.

- Levitates water cans and hoses around, spritzing the flowers and watering the trees as she goes.

- Uses pruning shears to shape and mold bushes and trees into various animal shapes.

- Finally she and the Old Gardener look out at the perfectly restored Botanical Gardens, pleased.

END MONTAGE

The Old Gardener looks at Rarity, impressed.

133 OLD GARDENER (CONT'D)
(in awe) The gardens have been here
the whole time.

134 RARITY
They just needed a little sprucing
up. But you might need to dedicate
a little of your flower time to
looking after them.

The Gardener walks up to the pedestal and takes the orchid.
She brings it over to Rarity and holds it out.

135 OLD GARDENER
You take it. It's been in my family
long enough. And I have a whole
garden to care for now.

136 RARITY
Goodness. Are you sure?

The Old Gardener nods. Please, Rarity takes the pot and the
flower starts to GLOW. Off both of their surprised looks...

SC 18 - EXT. DRAGONLANDS - DAY

Spike and Rainbow Dash make their way through the harsh
terrain of the Dragon Lands.

137 RAINBOW DASH
I can't believe Flash Prance's
shield ended up in the Dragon
Lands.

138 SPIKE
Good thing you've got a friend who
speaks dragon.

139 RAINBOW DASH
Don't we speak the same language?

140 SPIKE
Sure, but there's a lot of nuance
only a dragon can bring.

As they reach the next rise, they look out at a GROUP OF DRAGONS at the edge of a steep ravine. Spike's eyes light up.

141 SPIKE (CONT'D)
Like how to appreciate the Dragon
Land's favorite sport - gorge
surfing!

With that, Spike runs off toward the group. Dash shrugs and follows.

SC 19 - EXT. DRAGONLANDS - EDGE OF RAVINE - CONTINUOUS

Spike arrives just as one of the dragons leaps onto a slab of stone and tips it over the edge.

The whole group watches as the dragon rides the slab like a surfboard all the way down. The dragons all <CHEER>.

Dash flies up and joins them.

142 RAINBOW DASH
Okay. That was awesome.

That dragons all turn and stare at Dash. One of them steps forward.

143 DRAGON 1
Dragon Lord Ember commanded us to
make peace with ponies, but doesn't
mean you can surf in our spot.

144 SPIKE
Whoa! Fellas. It's cool. She's with
me.

A familiar dragon voice calls out.

145 GARBLE (O.S.)
What a surprise. The pony dragon's
sticking up for his pony friend.

Spike turns around to see GARBLE step out of the crowd. He's flips a triangular piece of metal in his claws - FLASH PRANCE'S SHIELD.

Dash's eyes go wide as she flies right up to him.

146 RAINBOW DASH
Where did you get that?

Dash reaches out for it, but Garble yanks it away.

147 GARBLE
Hey! Hooves off my gorge board! I
found it in the desert and finder's
keepers.

148 SPIKE
That's an ancient pony artifact.

149 RAINBOW DASH
And it doesn't belong to you.

150 GARBLE
Oh really? How about I race you for
it.

151 RAINBOW DASH
Pfft. No problem.

152 GARBLE
Um... no. Ponies can't surf here.
(points at Spike) I meant you.

Spike looks around.

153 SPIKE
Well, I would, but I don't have a
board.

A nearby dragon shoves a stone slab into Spike's claws. He
looks up at Dash with a sheepish smile.

MOMENTS LATER

Spike and Garble are perched at the edge of the ravine. One
of the dragons stands nearby.

154 DRAGON 1
On your marks... Get set... Surf!

Spike and Garble take off at the exact same time, but Garble
immediately cuts in front.

155 GARBLE
See ya at the bottom!

Spike swerves and starts tumbling head over rock slab.

156 SPIKE
WHAAAOOOOOAAAA!

Garble skillfully surfs down the steep incline as Spike somersaults down, somehow managing to hold on to his slab.

Spike hits a rock and catapults into the air, over Garble, and lands on his slab. Dash and the other Dragons <CHEER>.

Spike swerves and surfs out of sight. Garble follows.

SC 20 - EXT. DRAGONLANDS - RAVINE - CONTINUOUS

Spike slides to the bottom of the ravine and jumps off his slab, ecstatic. Garble slides down right behind him.

157 SPIKE
WOOO-HOOO! Take that, Garble. I
won. Now give up the shield.

Garble hops off the shield and flips it up into his claws skateboard-style. He steps toward Spike menacingly.

158 GARBLE
You know, Lord Ember only commanded
us to be nice to ponies. She never
said anything about pony loving
dragons.

Spike looks around to see he's cornered by the high walls of the ravine. Garble grins as he closes in. Off Spike's worried expression we...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SC 21 - EXT. DRAGONLANDS - RAVINE - RESUME

Garble takes another step toward Spike, who looks around nervous.

159 SPIKE
D-don't you think, Lord Ember's
command probably makes it
impossible for you to fight with
ponies or their friends?

160 GARBLE
I guess we're about to find out!

With that, Garble picks up a nearby boulder and tosses it at Spike. Spike covers up just as a RAINBOW <WHOOSH> flies between him and Garble, flipping the rock back at Garble and onto his tail.

161 GARBLE (CONT'D)
(in pain) <ARRRGGGHH!>

Spike looks up to see Rainbow Dash standing in front of him.

162 RAINBOW DASH
If you wanna pick on Spike, you're
going to have to get through me.

163 GARBLE
Ugh. Why does he always hide behind
ponies?

164 SPIKE
I wasn't hiding when I beat you
down the ridge.

165 GARBLE
You didn't beat me. You fell.

166 RAINBOW DASH
Wow, you must be slow, if all Spike
had to do to win was fall down.

167 GARBLE
I'm faster than you.

168 RAINBOW DASH
Doubt it.

Garble points toward a visible part of the ridge above

169 GARBLE
Fine. I'll race you back to the
top. If you win, you can have your
ancient pony artifact. But if I
win, you stop protecting your
little friend.

Spike shoots Dash a worried look, but she gives him a wink -
having an idea.

170 RAINBOW DASH
Okay. I'm pretty sure I could beat
you anyway, but with that heavy
hunk of metal on your back, there's
no way you'll win.

Garble takes the shield off and hefts it, considering.

171 GARBLE
Huh. Thanks for the tip.

With that, Garble drops the shield and takes off.

172 GARBLE (CONT'D)
See ya at the top, loser!

173 SPIKE
Hey! That's cheating.

Garble soars to the top of the ridge and lands triumphantly.

Dash smiles and picks up the shield. It starts to glow in her hooves. Garble looks down at them and frowns.

174 GARBLE
(shouts) Hey! That's mine!

Dash smiles as Spike hops on her back.

175 RAINBOW DASH
(shouts) Finders keepers, remember?

As they zoom off, one of the other dragon's walks up to Garble.

176 DRAGON 1
See, because that's what you said
to them--

Off Garble giving the other dragon a withering look...

SC 22 - EXT. HAYSEED SWAMP - DAY

CLOSE on the MASK OF MISTMANE (est. in MLP718) as it bobs up and down in frame.

PULL WIDE to reveal Cattail's wearing the mask as he shuffles around in front of a FLASH BEE HIVE. The BEES and the QUEEN all float around in front of him, entranced.

177 FLUTTERSHY
Just remember not to turn away from
them, Cattail. Flash bees, can get
pretty aggressive.

178 CATTAIL
Wouldn't it make more sense for you
to wear the mask that calms them.

179 FLUTTERSHY
It would--

Fluttershy carefully pulls the entire hive off of it's branch and flies with it to a much higher one.

180 FLUTTERSHY (CONT'D)
--if I didn't have to fly up here
to move their hive.

Fluttershy uses a little bayou mud to reattach the hive.

181 FLUTTERSHY (CONT'D)
There. Now the bees won't feel
threatened by the other swamp
creatures.

Fluttershy looks down at a few grateful SNAKES and FROGS.
Cattail slowly backs away from the bees and removes the mask.

The bees all snap out of their trance and fly back to their
hive, now much higher up. Cattail joins Fluttershy by the
tree and both look up to see the bees are high enough for all
the other animals to move freely below.

Cattail holds out the mask for Fluttershy.

182 CATTAIL
You know, you didn't have to help
with this. I'd have lent you the
mask anyway.

183 FLUTTERSHY
(smiles) I know. But I couldn't
leave without helping.

Fluttershy takes the mask and it GLOWS in her hooves. Cattail
looks at it, curious. Off Fluttershy's pleased look...

SC 23 - INT. PYRAMID NEAR SOMNAMBULA - DAY

DARING DO along with several other VILLAGERS of Somnambula
stand on the edge of chasm we saw in MLP717. It's still full
of undulating GREEN SLIME.

184 VILLAGER
I don't think anypony can find
anything in there.

185 DARING DO
I wouldn't give up hope just yet.

Suddenly there's a loud <POP>. The giant pool of slime starts
to recede - like a bathtub draining. Daring Do and the
villagers watch as the slime level gets lower and lower.

REVEAL - Pinkie standing at the bottom of the pit wearing
snorkeling equipment and water wings. She's next to a drain
holding up what looks like a long rag.

186 PINKIE PIE
This old blindfold was stuck in the
drain.

Daring Do shouts down from the top.

187 DARING DO
Pinkie, weren't you looking for a
blindfold.

188 PINKIE PIE
Oh, yeah!

Pinkie looks over as the blindfold starts to glow in her
hooves.

189 PINKIE PIE (CONT'D)
Ooooh! Glowie!

Off Pinkie, pleased...

SC 24 - EXT. PONHENG - DAY

Twilight stands in front of the dais, looking through
Starswirl's book. Sunburst looks over her shoulder.

190 SUNBURST
(excited) I can't believe we're
going to meet Starswirl the
Bearded.

Starlight finishes cleaning off the last pedestal.

191 STARLIGHT
I hope that's what happens.

Twilight looks over at her student.

192 TWILIGHT
What do you mean?

193 STARLIGHT
I just can't help wondering if
we're doing the right thing.

Twilight and Sunburst look at her like she's insane.

194 SUNBURST
What could possibly be wrong with
freeing the most legendary ponies
of all time from a thousand year-
old prison?

195 STARLIGHT
That's just it. Starswirl and the rest were the bravest and smartest ponies ever - if they thought the only way to save Equestria was to get stuck in limbo, maybe that's where they should stay.

196 TWILIGHT
Starswirl and the Pillars cast their banishment spell ages ago. We know things about magic now they couldn't have known then. And I've been studying Starswirl my whole life. If somepony discovered a way to save him, he'd want them to try.

197 SPIKE (O.S.)
That's good news.

Twilight, Starlight, and Sunburst turn to see Spike and Dash emerge from the dense overgrowth.

198 RAINBOW DASH
Otherwise, we'd have brought this shield for nothing!

As Dash holds up Flash Prance's shield, Applejack enters the clearing from the other side.

199 APPLEJACK
I hope you don't think you're the only one to find her artifact, because this here shovel says otherwise.

Applejack twirls Rockhoof's shovel in one hoof. Pinkie, Fluttershy, and Rarity appear, each holding their respective object.

200 RARITY
Honestly, you two. Not everything is a competition. (floating up her orchid) Though Mistmane's flower is by far the most attractive of the artifacts.

201 PINKIE PIE
You're just saying that because you didn't have to snorkel in a pit of green slime to get yours.

202 FLUTTERSHY
Or move a Flash Bee hive.

Twilight looks to her friends and smiles.

203 TWILIGHT
Good work everyone. Let's get
started.

Starlight gives Twilight a concerned look.

204 STARLIGHT
You're sure about this?

205 TWILIGHT
Absolutely.

Starlight nods and she and Sunburst step back. Twilight and the rest of the Mane Six take their places in front of each of the stone slabs. Each of them places their artifact on the pedestal in front of their slab.

Twilight gives them all a confident look, then rears back and shoots a BLAST of magic at Starswirl's book.

Just as in the vision earlier, magical energy shoots around the circle, connecting each of the pillars' objects.

The circle pulses with energy then in a FLASH OF LIGHT the Pillars of Old Equestria appear, each standing next to the item.

Starswirl the Bearded looks around disoriented.

206 STARSWIRL
What-- What happened?

Twilight looks at her idol in awe.

207 TWILIGHT
It worked! We brought you back.

208 STARSWIRL
Brought us back where?

209 TWILIGHT
You and the other pillars were
trapped in limbo, but I figured out
how to get you back. You're in
Equestria!

Suddenly, Starswirl's confusion turns to fear.

210 STARSWIRL
Oh, no. No, no, no, no-- You have
to send us back!

211 TWILIGHT
What? Why? I mean, I'm not even
sure I can.

Starswirl tries to do it himself. His horn glows, but he's obviously depleted and drops to a knee.

212 STARSWIRL
You can't bring us back--

213 TWILIGHT
But I did.

214 STARSWIRL
You can't bring just us back...

Starswirl points at the central dais as a ball of crackling energy starts to swirl above it.

Realization starts to dawn on Twilight's face as DARK ENERGY spills out of the glowing ball.

215 TWILIGHT
Oh, no...

The DARKNESS pours onto the dais in a pool, then coalesces, rising up in the shape of a towering, shadowy pony.

Two GLOWING EYES open and stare down at Starswirl and the rest as billowing, shadowy wings unfurl and THE PONY OF SHADOWS <LAUGHS>.

As Twilight and the rest look on in horror we...

FADE OUT

END PART ONE