

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 9
It's the Great Seedling, Applejack!
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Outline by: Dave Rapp

Distribution:

Production:

Devon Cody
Jim Miller
Denny Lu
Mike Myhre
Zoe Borroz
Nicole Dubuc
Josh Haber
Jada McDermott

Discovery Family:

Linda Shima Tsuno
Beth Mohammed

Hasbro Studios:

Stephen Davis
Meghan McCarthy
Eliza Hart
Leslie Wishnevski
Finn Arnesen
Nina Scales
Tyla Bucher
Loretta Masters
Narae Song
Bill Cheungcp
Molly Shaffer
Emily Thompson
Kevin Farrell
Lauren Devereux
Michael Kelly

Hasbro Brand:

Jamie Cipolla
Julie Sanfilippo
Matt Riordan
Andrea Ehret
Samantha Lomow
Gretchen Forrest
Brian Chapman

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IT'S THE GREAT SEEDLING, APPLEJACK!

Outline by Dave Rapp

TEASER**SC. 1 - INT. CAROUSEL BOUTIQUE – DAY**

RARITY explains the importance of leaving enough tail room in a bustle to SWEETIE BELLE, who works at a sewing machine, when APPLE BLOOM enters, excited. She finally found the perfect pattern and she wants Rarity to make her a harvest dress so she can impress the Great Seedling! Rarity adores the pattern and would love to make Apple Bloom a harvest dress to impress the Great Seedling! She just has one question – who or what is the Great Seedling?

Apple Bloom is sure they must've heard of the Great Seedling, but Sweetie Belle confirms they've never heard of it. Apple Bloom launches into an impassioned explanation of this agricultural legend that dates back to when Earth Ponies were first exposed to magic. Rarity and Sweetie Belle can barely keep up as an ever-more-excited Apple Bloom talks about how every harvest time, farms are supposed to welcome the Great Seedling with signs, decorations, etc., and if the Great Seedling is impressed with your offering, you'll have a banner harvest! Apple Bloom has been into it ever since Granny Smith told her about it as a foal. Surely this must strike a familiar chord with Rarity and Sweetie Belle now! Rarity apologizes. She hasn't been involved in many harvests, per say. Sweetie Belle concurs: "In the word of Big Mac... 'Nope.'" OFF the nonplussed Apple Bloom...

END TEASER**MAIN TITLES****ACT ONE****SC. 2 - INT. CAROUSEL BOUTIQUE – RESUMING**

Back with Rarity and Sweetie Belle talking to Apple Bloom as Rarity measures her for the dress. Rarity explains that Apple Bloom shouldn't be too disappointed they don't know about the Great Seedling. Unless you're a farmer, it's probably not something that comes up often. Apple Bloom agrees, but mentions that planning the welcome for the Great Seedling makes the hard work of harvest time a lot more fun, and she has some BIG plans this year, including the dress. Rarity tells Apple Bloom she'll get right on making the dress, but is interrupted when APPLEJACK shows up, looking for Apple Bloom. Applejack thinks her sister shouldn't be here wasting precious time over a dress when there's so much to do at the farm. Rarity has enough to get going on the dress and dismisses Apple Bloom, who reluctantly trots back to the farm as Applejack stays behind to talk to Rarity.

Applejack confides in Rarity that she's flummoxed that Apple Bloom is still into all this Great Seedling business. And not just into it, but getting out of hand about it. MINI-MONTAGE as Applejack narrates how Apple Bloom's prep has gotten more elaborate over time: At first it was small stuff – leaving a pile of apples with a little smiley face flag sticking out of it at the front gate. But Apple Bloom always had big ideas. One year she strung garland through all the trees in the south fork – it messed up the applebucking something awful and took hours to undo. And last year, she threw a barn dance! (SEE Apple Bloom getting jiggy on the dance floor all by herself as the rest of the family chuckles.) Apple Blooms antics have always been fun and all, but this year is different – every nine years or so all the different kinds of apples come ripe at the same time, and the harvest is at its most intense. Applejack is worried, Big Mac is losing sleep coming up with a schedule, and even Granny Smith is stressed. Applejack needs her sister to put her energy into preparing for the harvest instead of trying to impress some piece of ponylore. Rarity sees Applejack's point, but thinks it's harmless to let Apple Bloom indulge a little bit. There must be some sort of compromise between practicality and fantasy. Applejack concedes that Rarity may have a point, and, overjoyed, Rarity volunteers to come out to the farm to help facilitate said compromise. And they're off to...

SC. 3 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – DAY

As they approach the farm, Applejack is ready to take Rarity's advice and apologize to Apple Bloom for being such a tough taskmaster, but when they get to the barn, they see that Apple Bloom has stacked all the hay bales near the farmhouse so she could climb up and hang her welcome banner for the Great Seedling. It's the last straw for Applejack, who tells Apple Bloom the hay is needed to cushion the apples' falls, because this year they have to buck by the wagonload, not the bushel. This energy needs to go into the harvest, not into hanging up a silly banner. She again points out how much work they have this year and how it's taking its toll on Big Mac, who stayed up all night making the harvest schedule. QUICK PAN REVEALS BIG MAC, snoring on his hooves. And now, because Apple Bloom wasted so much time on this silly old mare's tale, they're already behind. Crushed, Apple Bloom apologizes to Applejack. She tells Rarity to forget about making the dress for her, and trudges off to fix her mistake, head down. OFF Rarity, filled with empathy for Apple Bloom...

SC. 4 - EXT. FARMHOUSE – MOMENTS LATER

Apple Bloom approaches the ziggurat of hay, but is stopped by GRANNY SMITH, who's just come outside. Granny can see that Apple Bloom is down and wants to know why. Apple Bloom explains that Applejack thinks the Great Seedling is a bunch of hooey. Granny tells Apple Bloom that Applejack is just a big fuddy-duddy who's stressed about the harvest – if Apple Bloom wants to believe in the Great Seedling, she should go right ahead! Why, some of Granny's favorite memories of the harvest involve Apple Bloom's excitement about the Great Seedling. Apple Bloom appreciates Granny's attempt to cheer her up, but says she can't believe in the Great Seedling anymore – Applejack said it's not real, and she doesn't lie. Granny is sad as Apple Bloom starts pushing a hay bale back where it belongs. OFF Granny, scowling over at Applejack...

SC. 5 - INT. FARMHOUSE – NEXT MORNING

Applejack, Granny, Apple Bloom, and Big Mac all finish their breakfast as Applejack goes over the plans for the day. She notices that Big Mac is falling asleep in his oats and he has his yoke on wrong, and scolds him for staying up all night working on the harvest schedule. They've got a big day of work today and everyone needs to do their part! Unfortunately, no one is particularly excited about it – without Apple Bloom's excitement over the Great Seedling, all they can see is a long day of work ahead. They muster outside to...

SC. 6 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – CONTINUOUS

Applejack leads the unenthused crew to get their gear, only to find... a slew of apples laid out on the ground in an INTRICATE DESIGN of red, yellow and green. Applejack wonders what's going on, but Granny and Apple Bloom recognize it at once for what it is – the "apple circle" is the mark of the Great Seedling! He really does exist!! OFF Apple Bloom's ecstatic celebration, Granny's gloating, and Applejack's befuddlement...

END ACT ONE**ACT TWO****SC. 7 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – DAY**

Apple Bloom is beside herself – now that she has proof that the Great Seedling is real, she's going to redouble her efforts to make sure tonight's decorations are EVEN BIGGER than she originally planned! As she runs off to weave garland for the trees, Applejack turns to Granny, annoyed: "I can't believe you did this! You know how much work we have to do!" Granny's having none of it – she didn't do this, but she's glad someone did! It was wrong of Applejack to tell Apple Bloom the Great Seedling wasn't real. Apple Bloom's enthusiasm about the Great Seedling is what makes all this hard work tolerable. And it's a shame that Applejack doesn't remember it was the same way when she was a foal and the one who got excited about all the preparations. Applejack is slightly abashed, but more curious about who made the apple circle. She wakes Big Mac from another doze to ask if he did it, only to get a "Nope." Then it occurs to her that somepony else was there yesterday when she told Apple Bloom about the Great Seedling. Somepony who knows a lot about intricate designs... SMASH CUT TO:

SC. 8 - INT. CAROUSEL BOUTIQUE – DAY

Applejack confronts Rarity about the apple circle. Rarity denies making it, but thinks it's grand that somepony did! She agrees with Granny Smith that Applejack shouldn't have tried to take away Apple Bloom's excitement about harvest time. Applejack isn't convinced, though, because she realizes that Rarity is still working on Apple Bloom's dress. Why would she do that after Apple Bloom told her not to? Rarity blows this off – she has NEVER not finished a dress! Plus she was so taken with the design that she

worked on it all night; Applejack can ask Sweetie Belle if she doesn't believe Rarity. Stumped, Applejack decides to get to the bottom of this apple circle business. She asks Rarity if Shadow Spade would be willing to help her solve this mystery, but Rarity flat-out refuses, and won't even lend Applejack her fedora. OFF Applejack, disappointed but determined look...

SC. 9 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – LATER

Applejack returns to the apple circle, determined to find out how it appeared there. She finds a set of tracks, which she follows around the clearing, but they lead her straight back to Big Mac, who's asleep on his hooves again. Applejack tells him if he's gonna snooze on the job, he may as well help her solve this mystery.

She decides to take a macro approach first, climbing onto the roof of the farmhouse so she can get a good look at the symbol and discern any significance about its placement in the orchard. But when she asks Big Mac if the design looks familiar, she realizes he never made it onto the roof – he's asleep halfway out the window, with his head in a planter. Stymied, Applejack decides to take the micro approach. She's back down on the ground, looking at the individual apples in the pattern, trying to discern if there's a clue to the perpetrator's identity in the type of apples used or the color pattern. Big Mac's voice drifts down to her, naming the varieties of apples, but when he misidentifies one, she realizes that Big Mac is asleep yet again, and going through the harvest schedule in his sleep.

Realizing her assistant is not assisting and she has no ideas, Applejack ponders what to do next, when Rarity appears, delivering Apple Bloom's completed dress. Rarity sees the pathetic state of Applejack's "investigation," and can't resist ribbing her a little for it. Applejack doesn't think Shadow Spade could do any better and without realizing it, Rarity defends her detective persona by rattling off several possibilities Shadow Spade might have deduced: a wind funnel could've blown the apples off the tree and swirled them around; squirrels, fruit bats, or other animals in the orchard may have done some harvesting of their own; the wagon latch may have broken and the apples rolled out and down the hill to stop here. Impressed, Applejack thanks Rarity for her help, though Rarity insists that wasn't her intention.

Meanwhile, Apple Bloom rushes over to see her new dress. She can't wait to wear it, and shows Rarity (and Applejack, by default) what she's been working on all day – she unfurls a banner with the Great Seedling's mark on it, the colors matching the apple circle exactly. She's gonna hang it on the barn later. Rarity is thrilled, but Applejack points out that Apple Bloom wasted a lot of time making that when she should've been applebucking. Apple Bloom explains that she is actually helping the farm, because if the Great Seedling is impressed, it'll use its magic to make the apple trees bloom all year round! Sweet Apple Acres will be the busiest farm in Equestria!

Apple Bloom takes her dress inside, and Applejack, a determined glint in her eye, tells Rarity she's going to solve this mystery *tonight*! OFF Rarity's raised eyebrows...

SC. 10 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – NIGHT

Applejack bids good night to Big Mac, who heads inside, exhausted from the day's work. But she still has work to do to cover all the possibilities Rarity mentioned. She goes down her mental checklist as she moves around the barnyard: she's cleared away the apple circle and stacked all the apples in baskets at the bottom of the hill, so there's nowhere for them to roll; she double-checked the latches on the wagon and the barn door to make sure no new apples can roll out; she set up a wind sock near the site of the apple circle and rigged it to her window, so if the wind kicks up in the night it'll wake her up. Now she just has to spray repellent to keep tiny animals away, and set some traps just in case. But the long day has gotten to her too, and as she heads to the barn for the sprayer, her eyes droop. Next thing she knows it's...

SC. 11 - INT. BARN – NEXT MORNING

Apple Bloom yells excitedly for Applejack to wake up. She's gotta come see; she'll never believe it! Applejack looks around, realizing she fell asleep in the hay in the barn. She kicks herself for not finishing all her preparations as she follows Apple Bloom, Big Mac and Granny Smith outside to...

SC. 12 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – CONTINUOUS

Applejack blinks her eyes against the morning sun, then looks down. The apple circle is back again in the same spot. But Apple Bloom's excitement goes beyond that, and as Applejack widens her field of vision, PULL BACK to REVEAL there are several identical apple circles all over the barnyard! OFF Applejack's jaw dropping as Apple Bloom jumps for joy in the b.g....

END ACT TWO**ACT THREE****SC. 13 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – RESUMING**

Apple Bloom is ecstatic – the Great Seedling must've really liked her welcome to have responded with so many apple circles! As she runs around the barnyard checking them out, Applejack turns to Granny and Big Mac for answers, but they both swear they didn't do this. The glint of determination in Applejack's eye is turning into a spark of obsession – this wasn't an accident, and there's no Great Seedling, so somepony is doing this to her on purpose, and she's gonna find out who! OFF Big Mac and Granny Smith, backing away slowly...

SC. 14 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – LATER

Rarity trots up to the farm, interested to see how Apple Bloom's welcoming went and what Applejack's investigation turned up. She's surprised to see all the apple circles, and

as she trots up to check one out, a NET drops on her and Applejack jumps down from the trees, crying out her victory at the capture. Rarity is offended to be accosted in such a manner, but her upset turns to concern when she sees Applejack, who camouflaged herself with leaves and mud so she would blend in with the trees. She looks feral and unhinged.

Perplexed, Rarity asks what's going on. Applejack tells her she's come up with more possible explanations for the apple circles and pulls a list out of her hat that drops to the ground and rolls to Rarity's hooves. Applejack is manic as she tells Rarity that she had some good ideas yesterday, but she didn't dig deep enough. Say Rarity was right and animals were involved – they'd have to have someone pulling the strings, and who do they know who can talk to animals? Fluttershy! And sure, it could've been a wind funnel that blew the apples into this shape, but who controls the weather? That's right, it's a Pegasi conspiracy, with Rainbow Dash at the heart of it! Or what if this is a magic symbol? That means Twilight or Starlight could be behind it! Or any unicorn! She gives Rarity a suspicious look, but Rarity shuts her down – It's ridiculous for Applejack to suspect any of their other friends; they don't even know about the Great Seedling! And Rarity already told Applejack yesterday that she didn't do it; if Applejack doesn't believe she's being honest, she'll just go right now. Applejack waves this aside and keeps going down her list, each idea more far-fetched than the last – it's Discord playing a prank, a Griffon initiation rite, a coded message from the Breezies (they're big enough to carry apples, right?).

Rarity stops Applejack and, as Granny Smith and Apple Bloom approach, points out that Applejack was upset about Apple Bloom spending too much time and energy on the Great Seedling and not enough on the harvest, and now Applejack is doing the exact same thing. But Applejack is in too deep. She thinks her situation is different, because as soon as she finds out who's behind this, the farm can get back to normal. Rarity is flummoxed, unsure how to get through to her friend, but Apple Bloom steps in. She tells Applejack she doesn't really believe in the Great Seedling. It was just something fun they did as a family that made the hard work of the harvest more enjoyable. But she can see that it's only making everything worse now, so she'll take down all her stuff so they can get back to work.

Applejack watches Apple Bloom trot off, then shakes her head to clear it and turns to Rarity and Granny Smith. Applejack realizes what she's done and isn't proud of it. But she thinks she can fix it, if Rarity and Granny are willing to help. OFF Rarity, smiling...

SC. 15 - INT. FARMHOUSE – NIGHT

Big Mac and Granny Smith clean up from dinner as Rarity leads Apple Bloom down the stairs in her new harvest dress, looking adorable. Apple Bloom is confused – she took down all her Great Seedling decorations; why does Rarity want her to wear the dress? Rarity leads her out to...

SC. 16 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – CONTINUOUS

Where Applejack explains that this is why Apple Bloom is wearing the dress! Granny Smith and Big Mac join them as Applejack tells Apple Bloom to kick a barrel. Confused, Apple Bloom kicks the barrel, which rolls until it knocks over a rake, setting off a Rube Goldberg chain reaction that eventually leads to Apple Bloom's banner unfurling across the front of the farmhouse as FIREWORKS EXPLODE into the night sky above them! Apple Bloom is both stunned and overjoyed. Applejack apologizes to her little sister – she let her focus on hard work take all the fun out of something the whole family used to love doing together. Applejack admits that they may never figure out who made the apple circles, but one of the possible explanations could be the Great Seedling. If Apple Bloom wants to keep believing that, it's fine with Applejack. Apple Bloom: "Just as long as we get our work done, right?" They all laugh, and Rarity tells them how pleased she is to have finally been a part of the harvest this year. She has to get home to Sweetie Belle, but wishes Apple Bloom and Applejack good luck tonight. As she goes, Apple Bloom asks her sister why Rarity wished them luck. Applejack explains that she wants the two of them to stay up and wait for the Great Seedling tonight! Or whoever made those apple circles. OFF Apple Bloom, excited...

SC. 17 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – LATE NIGHT

PAN from the moon down across the farmhouse to FIND Applejack and Apple Bloom lying on some hay and sharing a blanket, both fast asleep. CONTINUE PANNING to FIND Big Mac, reciting the names of apple varieties as he sleepwalks across the barnyard. He bucks a tree, knocking some of the apples to the ground and some into a basket on his back. He walks to another tree, spilling more apples on the way, and bucks it, repeating the process. So this is how the apple circles were formed! Or is it? Because after he passes by, the ground GLOWS GOLD, and the apples rearrange themselves by color into the pattern we saw before. WIDEN OUT to see the Apple family sleeping as we hear a MISCHIEVOUS GIGGLE, and...

END