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COOK
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my LITTLE PONY™

MICRO-SERIES



featuring
RARITY

IDW

#4 • CVR B

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RARITY

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Featuring
RARITY



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YOUR FASHION SHOW TODAY WAS AMAZING, RARITY! INSPIRING! TREMENDOUS! STUPENDOUS! ...UH... PUNCTUAL? ER... UM... PERSPIRING?

WELL, THANK YOU, SPIKE. WHAT A TIRING DAY... THIS IS THE LARGEST SHOW I'VE EVER ATTEMPTED, AND IT WAS JUST A WARM-UP FOR THE CANTERLOT FASHION EXTRAVAGANZA AT THE END OF THE MONTH!

I BET YOU CAN'T WAIT TO PUT YER' HOOVES UP AT THE AFTER PARTY!

BACKSTAGE
KAZUMI THEATER
DRESSING ROOMS
COATS & STALLIONS ONLY



YEAH! LET'S GO GET OUR APPLE CIDER ON! THERE'S A PLATE OF FANCY CARROT STICKS WITH MY NAME ON THEM!

OH, I'LL BE ALONG IN A FEW MOMENTS. I HAVE TO STEAM-PRESS A GOWN OR TWO BEFORE I PUT THEM BACK ON THE HANGER... MAYBE DOUBLE-CHECK THAT THE GREEN TAFFETA DRESS HASN'T LOST ANY FEATHERS...

ARE YOU SURE? IT'S YOUR PARTY AFTER ALL...

YES. A PARTY. YOU CAN'T BE LATE FOR A PARTY! THAT WOULD BE AWFUL.



IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN STAY BEHIND AND HELP WITH? I'M SURE...

NO! NO... I'D LIKE TO SEE TO IT MYSELF, YOU ALL GO AND HAVE FUN! I'LL BE ALONG.





COME ON, EVERYBODY! PINKIE PIE AND I PUT TOGETHER THE PERFECT AFTER PARTY! THERE ARE RADISHES MADE INTO FLOWERS!

AND THERE'S A NEW GAME I INVENTED CALLED "PIN THE BUSTLE ON THE BALLGOWN"!

ER... WHAT'S A BUSTLE?



A FEW HOURS LATER...

RARITY! MY GOODNESS, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? SPIKE WENT LOOKING FOR YOU OVER TWO HOURS AGO.

OH, JUST MAKING SURE THINGS WERE PERFECT BEFORE I PUT THEM AWAY. SPIKE IS STILL COUNTING THE BEADS ON THE TRIM OF *YAWN* SOMETHING... SOMETHING...

GATOR!!

hic!



I NEED TO MAKE SURE IT'S ALL READY TO SHIP OFF TO CANTERLOT. NOT A STITCH OUT OF PLACE... NO METALLIC ACCENTS TOO... SHINY...

RARITY! EVERYTHING LOOKED PERFECT TONIGHT... YOU'RE MORE THAN READY FOR YOUR BIG SHOW IN CANTERLOT, AND WE'LL ALL BE THERE TO SUPPORT YOU!



YOU'RE WORKING TOO HARD... WHO ARE YOU, TWILIGHT?

TOO HARD? IF ANYTHING I'M NOT WORKING HARD ENOUGH! THE EXTRAVAGANZA IS... IS...

RAINBOW!

OH... POOR DEAR. SHE REALLY DOES NEED TO TAKE A BREAK.

AND SHE NEEDS TO BEFORE SHE CRACKS! TRUST ME... I SHOULD KNOW.

HEY YA'ALL! I SAW AN AD IN THE FARMER'S ROWDY WEEKLY ROUND-UP NEWSLETTER THAT JUST MIGHT HELP HER!

THE NEXT MORNING...

THIS IS PERFECT FER' YOU, RARITY! A WEEK AT "FLAX & WHEAT'S NEW AGE ALL-NATURAL WELLNESS CENTER"! WITH A NAME THAT LONG, IT MUST BE FANCY... AND YOU'LL BE BACK GOOD N' RESTED FER' YER SHOW!

OH, I DON'T KNOW IF A WEEK AT A SPA IS SUCH A GOOD IDEA, I HAVE SO MUCH TO DO... HERE, I'M GOING TO PACK SOME OF MY SUPPLIES JUST IN CASE I HAVE A BURST OF INSPIRATION.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. EVERYTHING IS PACKED AND READY TO GO TO CANTERLOT! SPIKE IS TAKING EVERY BOX HIMSELF!



I'M... *HURK* HAPPY TO DO IT FOR YOU, RARITY!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT A THING, RARITY. SPIKE AND I WILL TAKE CARE OF IT ALL. YOU GO RELAX, BE PAMPERED, AND GO TO CANTERLOT REFRESHED AND READY TO SEIZE THE DAY!

SOME PAMPERING WOULD BE NICE...

C'MON...



"MUD ON YOUR FACE," "SAUNAS," "HEALTHY DIET"... THIS IS ALL STUFF YOU LIKE, YOU'LL BE IN HOG HEAVEN!

IT'S AN EXPRESSION.

HOG WHAT?



AAAAH!

HONK HONK

THAT MUST BE THE VALET HERE TO PICK YOU UP!

YOU KNOW, I'M ACTUALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS. IT WILL BE NICE TO RELAX...



I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS SLIGHTLY LESS THAN I WAS TWO MINUTES AGO...

HEY, IT'S GOT TWO WHEELS AND ROLLS. IT'LL GET YA' THERE!

...MAYBE.



DON'T FORGET TO WRITE!

I MEANT TO



SO... YOU... WORK AT THE RETREAT?

HUH? ER, YEAH! I'M, LIKE, FLAX SEED OF "FLAX AND WHEAT."



ER... SO... YOU... UH... PULL THE WAGON YOURSELF?

WE, LIKE, BELIEVE IN ALL-NATURAL HORSE POWER.

DID YOU KNOW THAT FLAX SEED... THE GRAIN, NOT ME, IS LIKE, BENEFICIAL TO YOUR AURA?

WHAT...?



THIS IS A BUMPY ROAD, BUCKLE YOUR BELTS!

I CAN'T! THEY'RE ALL PACKED!



UH... MR. FLAX, HOW LONG IS THE TRIP?

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA! MR. FLAX WAS MY FATHER. AND NO WORRIES, THREE HOURS AND WE'LL BE, LIKE, CLOSE-ISH.

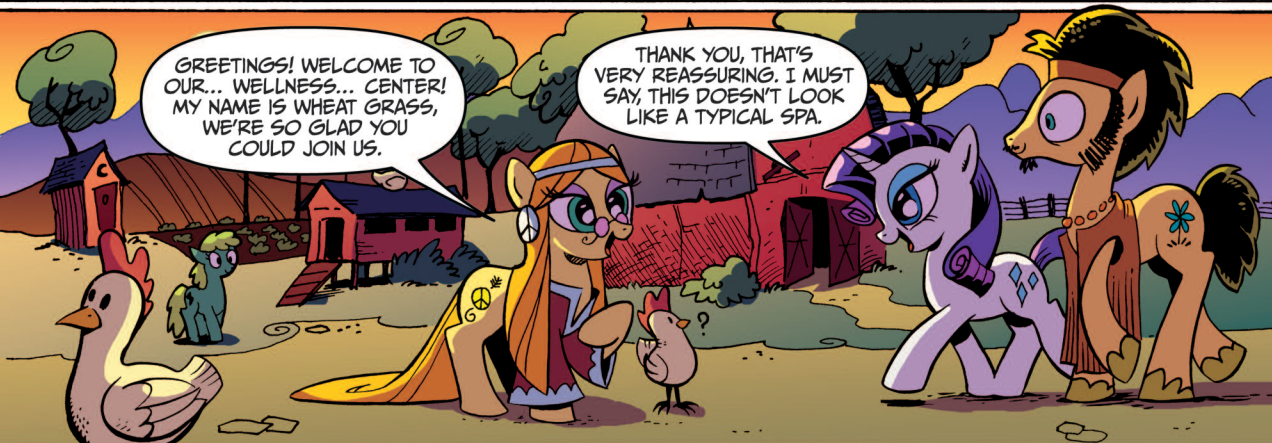


LIKE, WELCOME TO
FLAX & WHEAT'S NEW AGE
ALL-NATURAL WELLNESS
CENTER!

IT'S... UM...
CHARMING?

FUTURE SITE
OF A NEW
BARNYARD
BARGAIN

GOOP'S
FOR
STUFF



GREETINGS! WELCOME TO
OUR... WELLNESS... CENTER!
MY NAME IS WHEAT GRASS,
WE'RE SO GLAD YOU
COULD JOIN US.

THANK YOU, THAT'S
VERY REASSURING. I MUST
SAY, THIS DOESN'T LOOK
LIKE A TYPICAL SPA.



OH, WE
HAVEN'T BEEN OPEN
LONG. WE'RE...
RENOVATING!

...RENOVATING
SPIRITS AND
MINDS.



WE HAVE MUD... DY
EXPERIENCES, ER, A SAUNA,
ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE, LOTS OF
THINGS TO DO TO HELP
YOUR... WELLNESS.

DELIGHTFUL! I CAN'T WAIT
FOR A CHANCE TO RELAX,
I'VE BEEN WORKING SO
HARD LATELY.

YEAH, RELAXIN'.
THAT'S WHAT WE DO.
COME WITH ME AND I'LL
SHOW YOU WHERE YOU
CAN MELLOW OUT!



NOW, I BELIEVE I BOOKED THE LUXURY SUITE FOR THE WEEK...

YEAH. IT'S PRETTY GROOVY...



IN FACT, IT'S OUR ONLY ROOM THAT'S INSIDE!



I'LL, UH, LET YOU UNPACK AND SETTLE IN. SEE YOU AT BREAKFAST.

WELL, MAYBE THIS ISN'T... SO BAD.

WATCH OUT FOR THE SKYLIGHT, MA'AM. 'NIGHT.



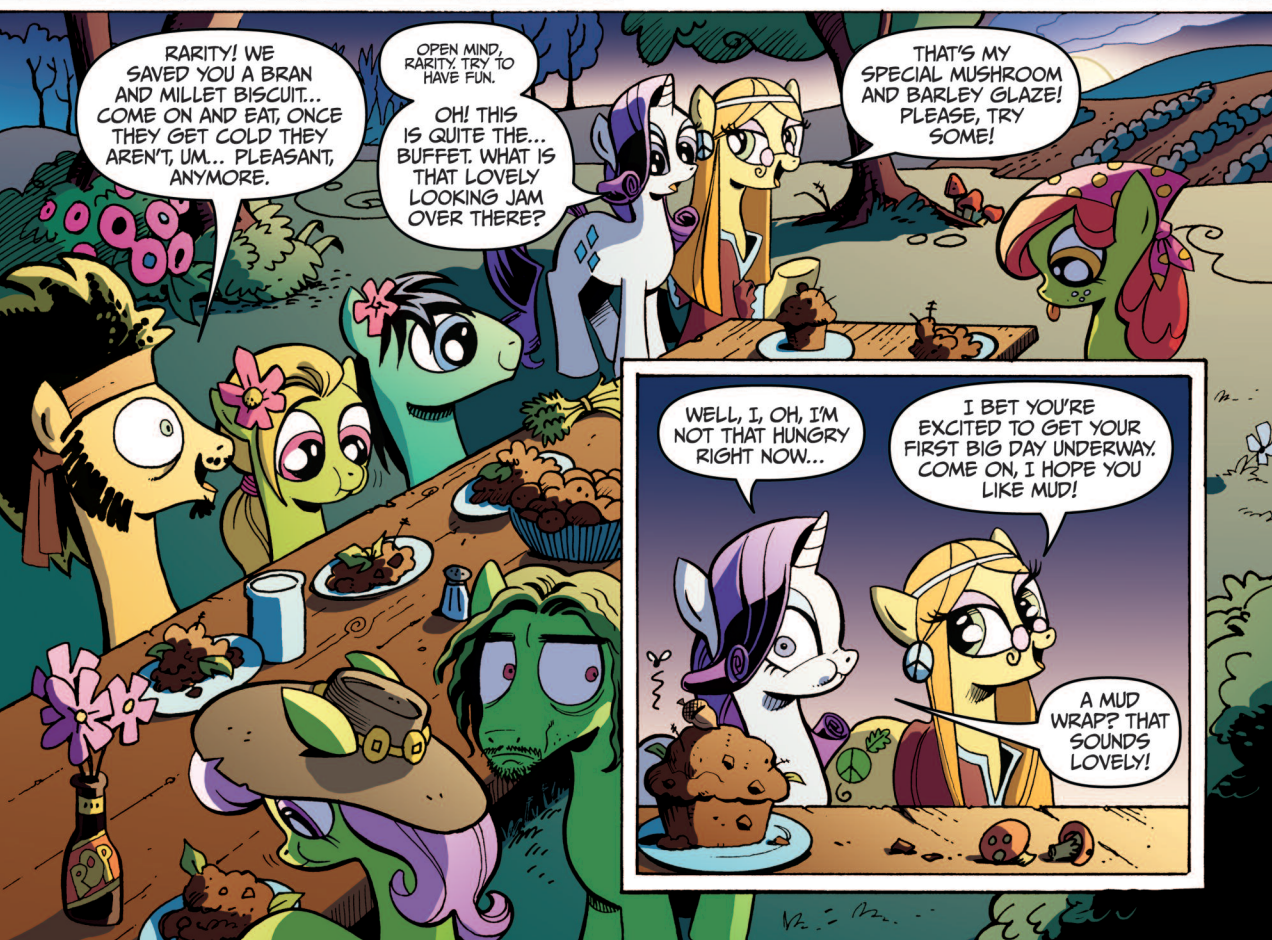
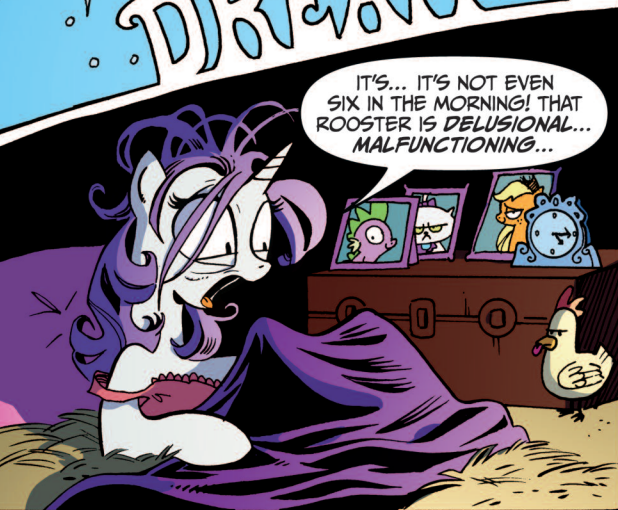
SIGH. AND MAYBE I'LL JUST SLEEP ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE... "ROOM."



RARITY, YOU HAVE DONE WITHOUT LUXURY BEFORE. YOU CAN DO THIS. YOU ONCE SLEPT IN A BED WITHOUT A DUVET ON THE DOWN COMFORTER, YOU CAN HANDLE THIS.



IT WILL ALL BE BETTER IN THE MORNING WHEN THE FACIALS AND HOOFICURES START. YOU'LL SEE.





NOT A MUD WRAP.

WE ARE REJUVENATING OURSELVES AND THE EARTH! ISN'T THIS EXHILARATING?

IT'S SOMETHING ALL RIGHT.

ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE...

YES! IT'S... CLARIFYING!

WONDERFUL! YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE WHAT'S NEXT!

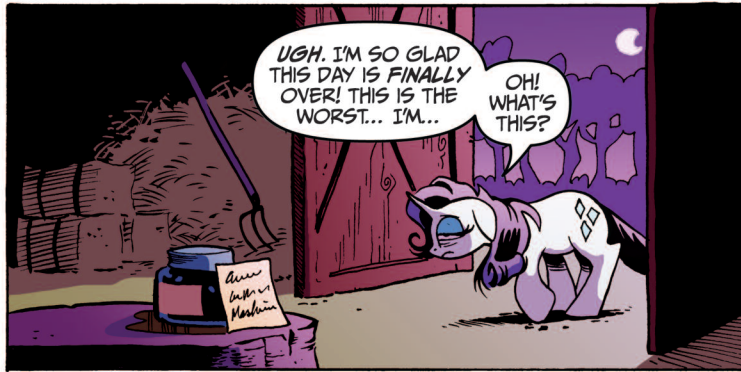
COMPOST



EXERCISE! THIS IS... MUCH NICER THAN... A NAP, OR A HOOFIGURE...

WHAT'S A HOOFIGURE?

SIGH...



UGH. I'M SO GLAD THIS DAY IS FINALLY OVER! THIS IS THE WORST... I'M...

OH! WHAT'S THIS?

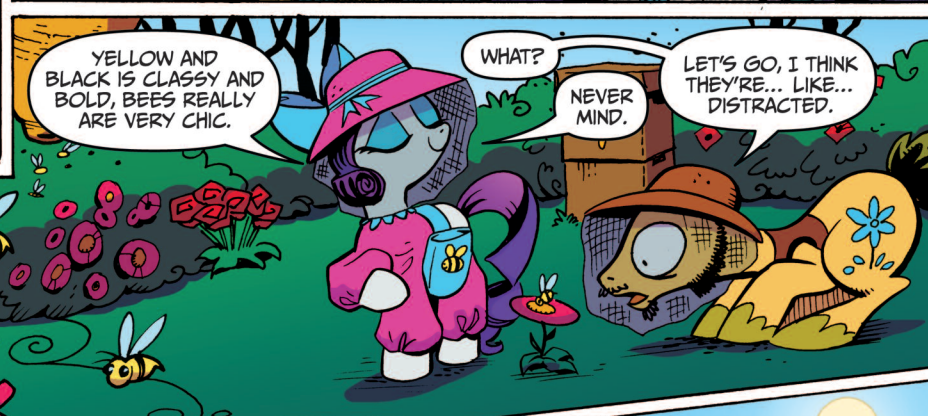


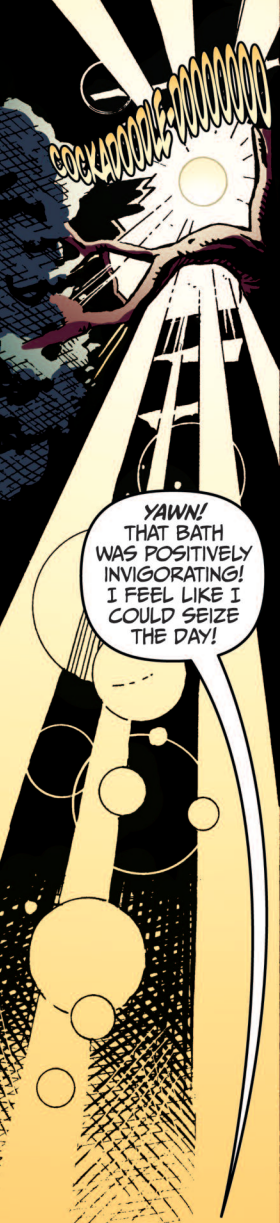
"THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK TODAY. ENJOY THIS JAR OF 'GOOPS FOR STUFF: APPLE-CARROT DEEP MANE CONDITIONER.'"

WELL, A DEEP CONDITIONING WOULD MAKE ME FEEL BETTER... AND IT SMELLS HEAVENLY!



YAWN! A DEEP CONDITIONING AND SOME SLEEP TOMORROW WILL BE A BETTER DAY. NOTHING COULD BE WORSE THAN TODAY!





YAWN!
THAT BATH
WAS POSITIVELY
INVIGORATING!
I FEEL LIKE I
COULD SEIZE
THE DAY!



...NOW YOU
NEED TO **SEIZE** THE
FLOWER BY THE ROOTS
AND PULL UP. WE NEED
THE WHOLE PLANT!

SEIZE THE
DAY... SEIZE
THE DAY...

...NO, SEIZE
THE ROOTS!

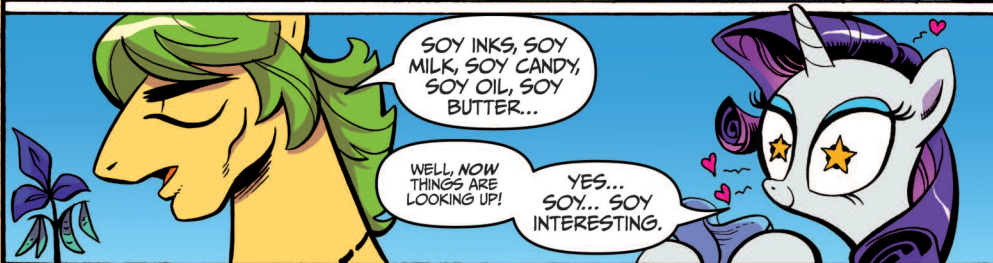


HERE, MY TWIN
BROTHER TEMPEH CAN
SHOW YOU THE ROPES.
THE GREENHOUSE IS
HIS DOMAIN!

I... LOVE...
GREEN.

WELL, HOWDY!
I LOVE GREEN
TOO! HEY, DO
YOU LIKE
SOY?

I... LOVE...
SOY.



SOY INKS, SOY
MILK, SOY CANDY,
SOY OIL, SOY
BUTTER...

WELL, NOW
THINGS ARE
LOOKING UP!

YES...
SOY... SOY
INTERESTING.



EIGHT HOURS OF
THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF
SOY. I SUPPOSE I'VE
HAD WORSE FIRST
DATES...

THANK CELESTIA,
ANOTHER BOTTLE! I
WONDER WHAT IT IS THIS
TIME... "AFTER TODAY, YOU
COULD PROBABLY USE
**"GOOPS FOR STUFF:
ROSEMARY AND HIBISCUS
HERBAL HOOF SCRUB"**,
ENJOY!"



NO... NO. MY
LABOR CANNOT BE
BOUGHT FOR ANOTHER
DAY. IN THE MORNING, I'M
LEAVING. THIS ISN'T A
VACATION, IT'S... IT'S...
MANUAL LABOR! I HAVE
MUCH BETTER THINGS I
COULD BE DOING WITH MY
TIME GETTING READY
FOR THE CANTERLOT
EXTRAVAGANZA!

BUC.



BUT FIRST, A
HOOF SCRUB.





WE JUST WANTED TO HAVE OUR LITTLE FARM, MAKE OUR "GOOPS" AND LIVE IN NATURE. WE'RE NO GOOD AT THIS "BUSINESS" STUFF... THOSE PONIES BOWLED US OVER AND NOW WE'RE GOING TO LOSE IT ALL. *SIGH*.

OH. WHEAT GRASS, FLAX SEED... I'M SO SORRY.

...AND NOW IT LOOKS LIKE WE MAY HAVE TO GO LIVE IN THE SUBURBS. LIKE, MAYBE EVEN PONYVILLE. GAH!

EHM. FLAX.

NONE TAKEN.

EH, LIKE, NO OFFENSE?

WAIT, DID YOU SAY "MAKE YOUR GOOPS"? ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ALL THE BEAUTY PRODUCTS YOU'VE BEEN LEAVING IN THE BARN? YOU MADE THOSE?

THEY AREN'T BEAUTY PRODUCTS... THEY ARE SPIRITUAL ENHANCERS... FOR, LIKE, ENHANCING THE SPIRIT!

SIGH. THAT WAS ACTUALLY THE TAGLINE FOR A WHILE.

BUT... THOSE WERE ALL AMAZING!... AND YOU MADE THEM... *HERE*. THAT'S INCREDIBLE!

DEAR, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'VE BEEN *DOING* HERE? YOU'VE BEEN HELPING TO MAKE THEM YOUR WHOLE VISIT!

WE REALLY DO NEED A BETTER TAGLINE.

HRM. I'VE HEARD OF SUFFERING FOR BEAUTY...

POWER TO THE PONIES!

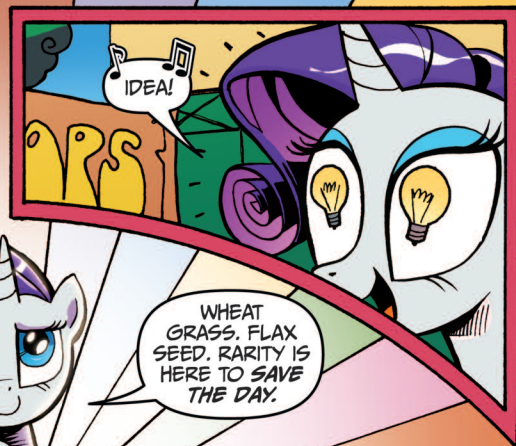
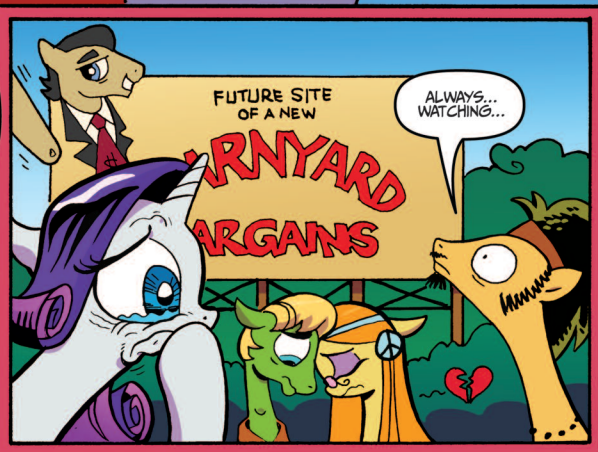
MYSTIC*
CRYSTAL
REVELATION

FREAK
OUT
Keep on
Trottin'

Harmony
& Understanding

MANE
THE MUSICAL
HOMEROGRAFT





WHEAT GRASS. FLAX SEED. RARITY IS HERE TO SAVE THE DAY.

JUST THE DAY? I THINK WE NEED, LIKE, A BUNCH OF DAYS.



I KNOW I PACKED THEM. I THINK THEY WERE UNDER THE CHARMEUSE SILK DAY DRESS... THE ONE WITH THE CAP SLEEVES...

AH, HERE THEY ARE!

AND NOW, IT'S MAGIC TIME! LET'S GET TO WORK AND SAVE YOUR BUSINESS!

GATHER ROUND, EVERYPONY! WE HAVE A PLAN ON HOW TO SAVE THIS FARM!

IF THIS WERE A MOVING PICTURE, THIS WOULD BE A GREAT PLACE FOR A MONTAGE!

UNCLE MONTAGE HASN'T WORKED HERE IN YEARS...

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WE WILL NEVER COMPROMISE THE INTEGRITY OF YOUR PRODUCT. IT WILL REMAIN ALL-NATURAL!

INTEGRITY IS, LIKE... IMPORTANT... RIGHT?



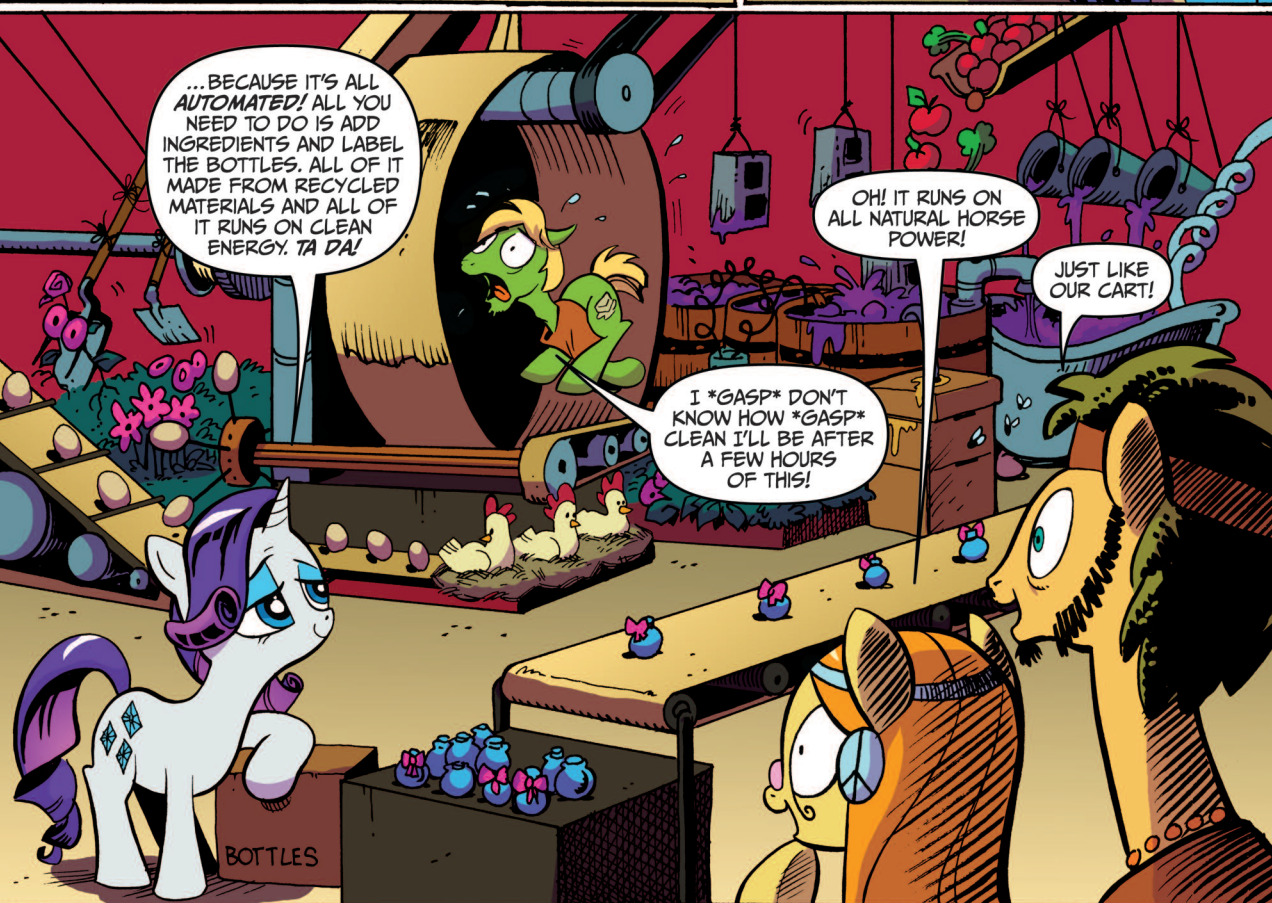
NEXT, WE REALLY NEED TO... UM, STREAMLINE THE BOTTLING PROCESS. WE CAN'T CREATE BEAUTY IN AN AREA THAT'S NOT BEAUTIFUL!

THIS IS, LIKE, ORGANIZED CHAOS.

PLUS, IT'S REALLY HARD TO FILL SUCH SMALL BOTTLES WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE THUMBS.



WHILE I CAN CERTAINLY APPRECIATE ARTISTIC ORGANIZATION, WE NEED TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE AS MUCH PRODUCT AS POSSIBLE. NO NEED TO GET YOUR HOOVES DIRTY ANYMORE...

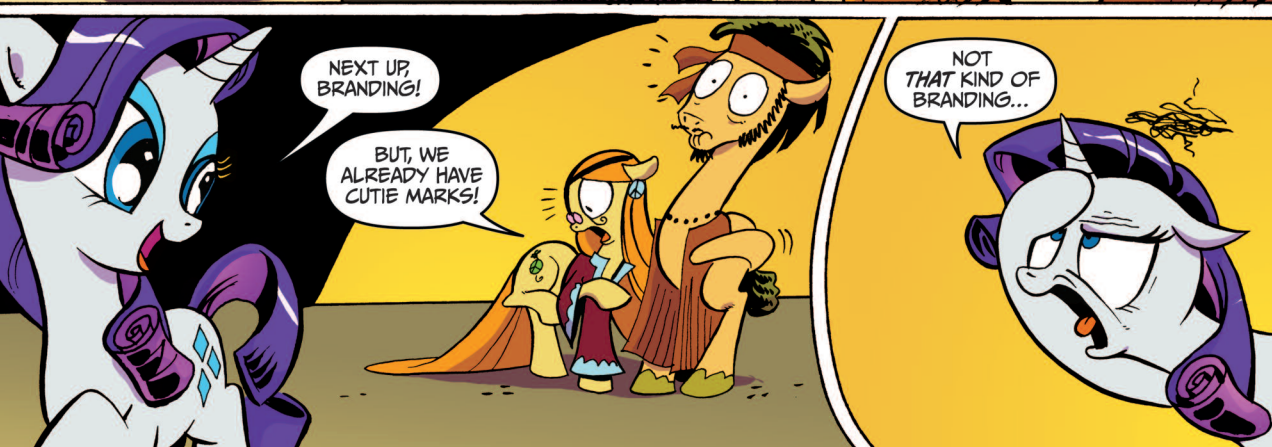


...BECAUSE IT'S ALL AUTOMATED! ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS ADD INGREDIENTS AND LABEL THE BOTTLES. ALL OF IT MADE FROM RECYCLED MATERIALS AND ALL OF IT RUNS ON CLEAN ENERGY. TA DA!

OH! IT RUNS ON ALL NATURAL HORSE POWER!

JUST LIKE OUR CART!

I *GASP* DON'T KNOW HOW *GASP* CLEAN I'LL BE AFTER A FEW HOURS OF THIS!



NEXT UP, BRANDING!

BUT, WE ALREADY HAVE CUTIE MARKS!

NOT THAT KIND OF BRANDING...



NOW, FLAX SEED, HOW MANY BOTTLES A DAY CAN YOU MAKE OF THE MILK AND HONEY BATH AND HOW MUCH DO YOU CHARGE FOR IT?

WELL, THAT DEPENDS UPON THE VIBE I GET FROM THE BEES...



HUMOR ME.

IF THE COWS AND THE BEES ARE, LIKE, IN ALIGNMENT... 11 BOTTLES. AND WE CHARGE 4 BITS FOR IT, DO YOU THINK THAT'S TOO HIGH?



TOO HIGH?! IT'S NOT NEARLY ENOUGH! ALL THE WORK THAT GOES INTO IT? NO WONDER YOU CAN'T SUPPORT THE FARM. FROM NOW ON, IT'S 80 BITS A BOTTLE.

80 BITS!? THAT'S... THAT'S UNBELIEVABLE!



NONSENSE. IT'S "EXCLUSIVE." I'D PAY TWICE THAT FOR THIS IN CANTERLOT. WITH YOUR NEW, ALL-RECYCLED MATERIAL PACKAGING AND THE QUALITY OF THE PRODUCT, IT'LL FLY OFF THE... ER, DILAPIDATED TABLE IN FRONT OF YOUR FARM.



THIS MAY NEED SOME COSMETIC WORK.

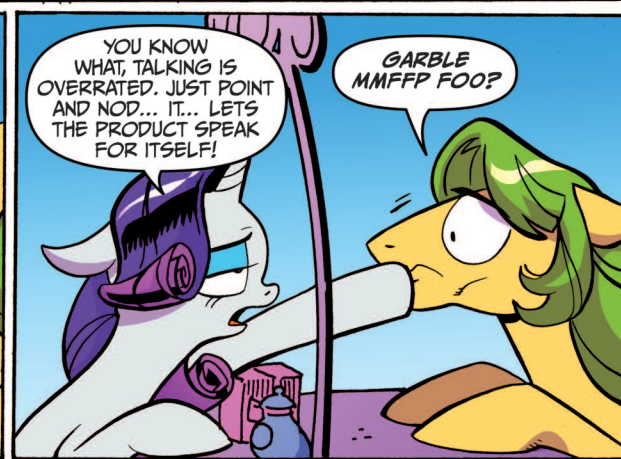
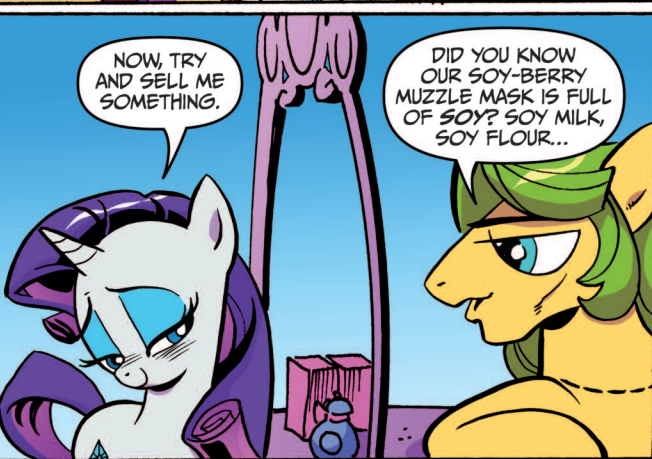
I'LL GO GET THE HAMMER!

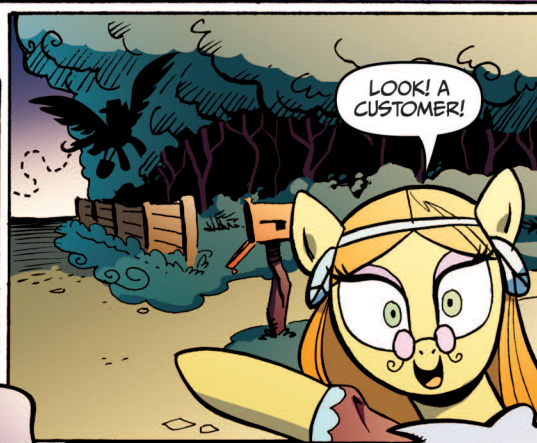
A WHAT?

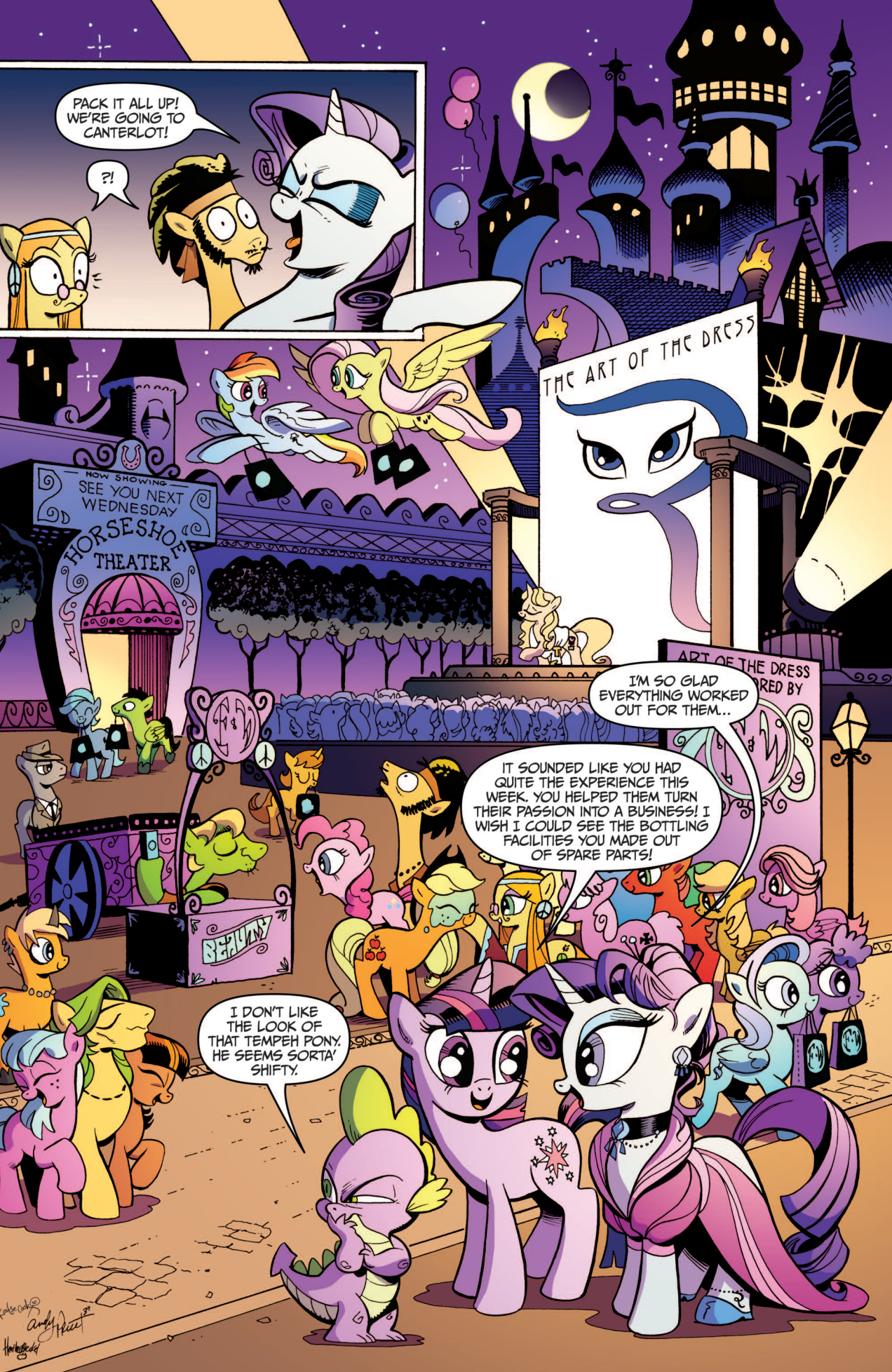
HIS EYES MOVE WITH ME.



OH! THE WHACK-A-NAIL-INTO-THE-WALL THINGY FOR HANGING PICTURES! MY FRIEND APPLEJACK HAS ONE!







PACK IT ALL UP!
WE'RE GOING TO
CANTERLOT!

?!

THE ART OF THE DRESS

NOW SHOWING
SEE YOU NEXT
WEDNESDAY
HORSESHOE
THEATER

I'M SO GLAD
EVERYTHING WORKED
OUT FOR THEM...

IT SOUNDED LIKE YOU HAD
QUITE THE EXPERIENCE THIS
WEEK. YOU HELPED THEM TURN
THEIR PASSION INTO A BUSINESS! I
WISH I COULD SEE THE BOTTLING
FACILITIES YOU MADE OUT OF
SPARE PARTS!

I DON'T LIKE
THE LOOK OF
THAT TEMPEH PONY.
HE SEEMS SORTA'
SHIFTY.

color by
andy
Hartley



RARITY! HOWEVER CAN WE THANK YOU? WE'VE ALREADY MADE ENOUGH TO SAVE THE FARM TEN TIMES OVER! WE MAY EVEN GET TO START *PAYING* TOFU AND TEMPEH!

WHOA... LET'S NOT GET CARRIED AWAY WITH OURSELVES HERE...



OH, IT WAS NOTHING. YOU TWO JUST NEEDED A LITTLE HELP... AND YOU REALLY DID NEED TO GET THE AMAZING THINGS YOU CAN MAKE OUT THERE TO ALL OF EQUESTRIA!



THOUGH, IF YOU CAN STAND ONE MORE PIECE OF ADVICE... IF YOU KEEP THE "WELLNESS CENTER" BIT UP, YOU CAN PROBABLY PULL BACK ON THE CRAZY HEALTH FOOD.

OH... THAT WASN'T HEALTH FOOD...

WHEAT GRASS HERE IS JUST A TERRIBLE COOK!



FLAX SEED! YOU REALLY *MUST* COME MEET MY ENTourage. YOU'RE THE NEXT PONY EVERY PONY SHOULD KNOW AFTER ALL!

LIKE, POPULARITY IS A SYSTEM OF RANKING SET UP BY THE ESTABLISHMENT...

CHUCKLE ISN'T HE A PIP? DIDN'T I TELL YOU HE WAS A PIP?

...WILL THERE BE FANCY CARROT STICKS?



YES... THE PONY... EVERY... PONY... SHOULD KNOW. *TWITCH*

THANK YOU AGAIN, RARITY. YOU'RE THE BEST PONY.



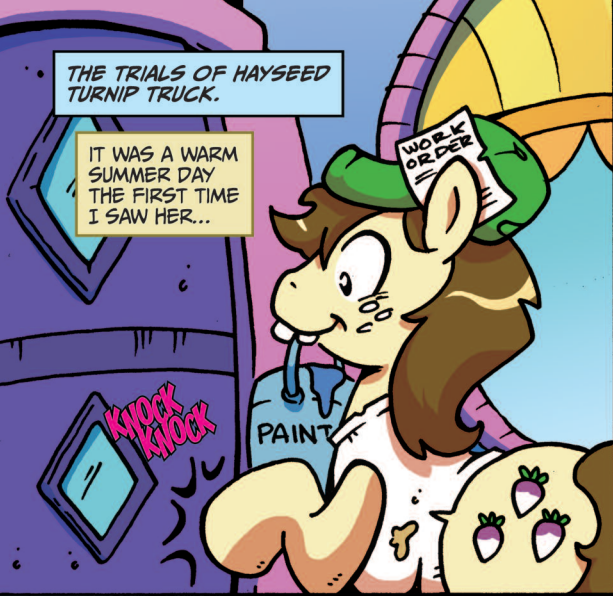
SIGH... WELL, I'M GLAD THEY'RE HAPPY.

YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY TOO! YOUR FASHION SHOW WAS A COMPLETE SUCCESS! SPIKE TOOK DOWN SO MANY ORDERS, WE RAN OUT OF PARCHMENT!



YES, THIS WHOLE EXPERIENCE WAS A TRIUMPH, WASN'T IT? AND, I GOT A LIFETIME SUPPLY OF PLUM & PEAR WITHERS CREAM!





THE TRIALS OF HAYSEED
TURNIP TRUCK.

IT WAS A WARM
SUMMER DAY
THE FIRST TIME
I SAW HER...



SHE WAS A VISION... THE
MOST PERFECT PONY I'D
EVER SEEN...

yes?

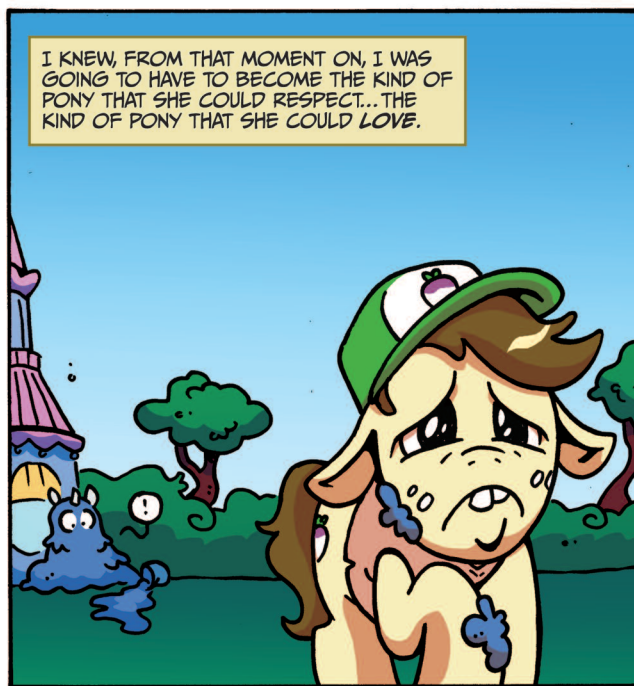
...AND I BLEW IT.



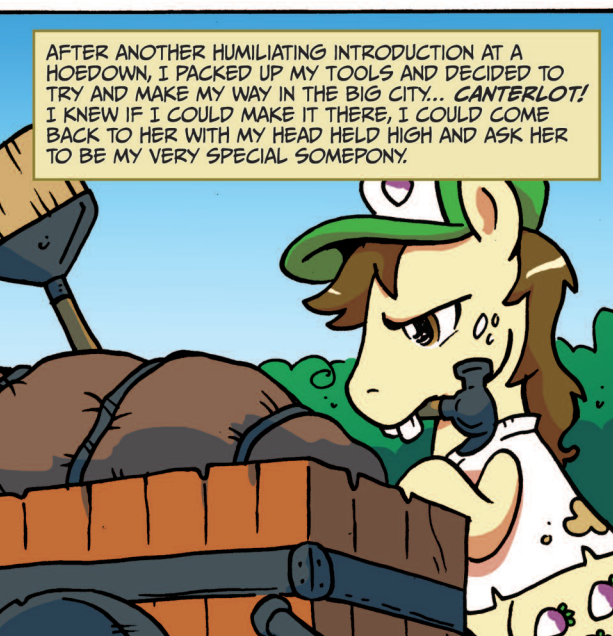
WELL HI...

EKK!

SPLASH



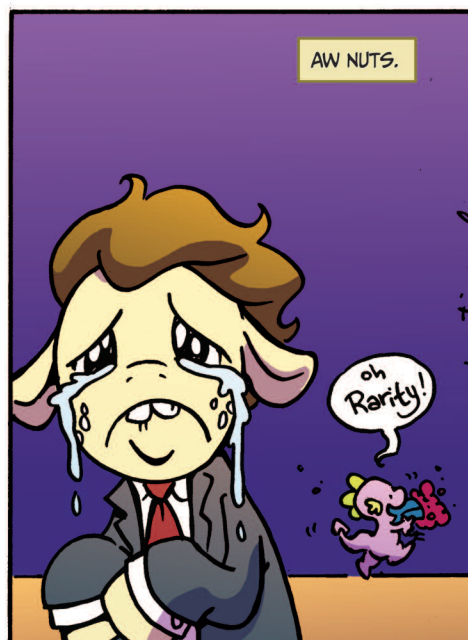
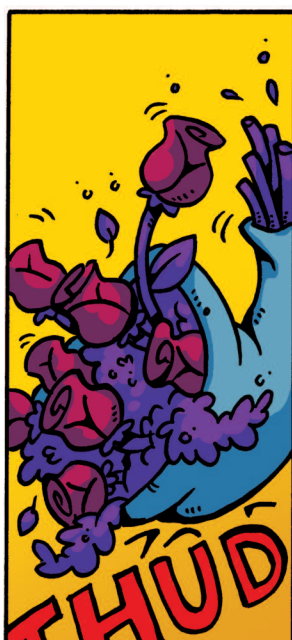
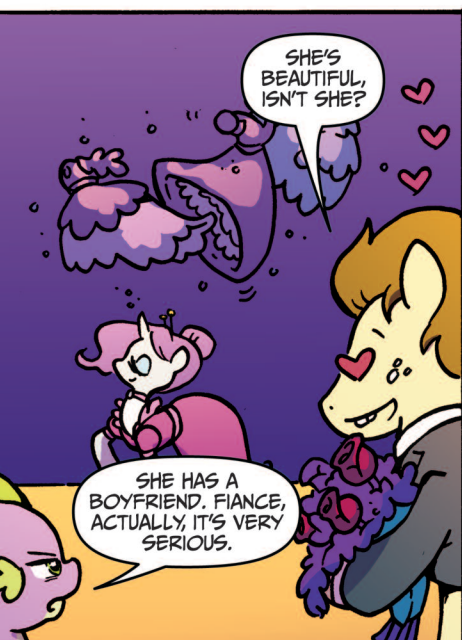
I KNEW, FROM THAT MOMENT ON, I WAS
GOING TO HAVE TO BECOME THE KIND OF
PONY THAT SHE COULD RESPECT...THE
KIND OF PONY THAT SHE COULD LOVE.



AFTER ANOTHER HUMILIATING INTRODUCTION AT A
HOEDOWN, I PACKED UP MY TOOLS AND DECIDED TO
TRY AND MAKE MY WAY IN THE BIG CITY... CANTERLOT!
I KNEW IF I COULD MAKE IT THERE, I COULD COME
BACK TO HER WITH MY HEAD HELD HIGH AND ASK HER
TO BE MY VERY SPECIAL SOMEONY.



IT HAD BEEN OVER A
YEAR SINCE I'D SEEN
HER! I OWNED MY OWN
BUSINESS... I WAS
MAKING BITS... I HAD
TO SAY "HELLO"!



READ ON FOR YOUR FREE FIRST LOOK AT
THE ORIGINAL CHAPTER BOOK STORY
FEATURING THE NEWLY-CROWNED
PRINCESS TWILIGHT SPARKLE!



CHAPTER 1

A Crown Achievement



All of Equestria had been celebrating since the joyous wedding of Shining Armor and Princess Mi Amore Cadenza. Cadance, as she was called, was one of the most loving mares in all of ponydom. The citizens of Equestria, including the newly recovered Crystal Empire, were living in a time of happiness and prosperity. Apples grew in the orchards, creatures big and small played in the lush green fields, and ponies of all three tribes lived in harmony. And now, another promising young royal had been inducted into the highest ranks of pony society. It seemed like the cherry on top of a delicious ice-cream sundae.

Ponies of all kinds from the far reaches of Princess Celestia's kingdom were curious about the new princess who had just been crowned. She wasn't just anypony. This was a young Unicorn pony with a violet-hued hide, a beautiful purple-and-pink-striped mane, and

incredible raw abilities. Her name was Twilight Sparkle, and she was indeed very special. Stories of her amazing magical gifts had even been passed along all the way from San Franciscolt to Manehattan. These tales had started to become legendary—especially the one about the time she took on the formidable ursa minor on her own, or better yet, the time she defeated the evil Queen Chrysalis in order to save the royal court of Canterlot. Everypony was excited to see what wonders would accompany such a unique princess's reign.

Twilight was excited, too. Not only did she bear an esteemed new title, but she had earned something unique as well. Twilight had received her very own set of wings. *Real* Pegasus wings! She was officially a part of a special breed of pony called an Alicorn. This meant that Twilight was now able to harness the magical powers of the Unicorns,



the flight abilities of the Pegasi, and the strength of a good, true heart of an Earth Pony. She was becoming more like her mentor, the talented and kind Princess Celestia, every day.

Although it was very exciting for Twilight to become an Alicorn, she didn't take her new gifts for granted. It was an honor to become part of something so rare and exclusive. She didn't care about all the shiny jewels and castle quarters she'd been given as part of the job. Twilight was happy to remain in Ponyville for now. She loved to spend time studying in her library with Spike, the baby dragon who was her number-one assistant, and having barrels of fun with her best friends. Luxurious castle furnishings could wait.

Ever since Princess Celestia had sent Twilight away from Canterlot to study and learn the magic of friendship, she had really felt that Ponyville was her true home. Twilight was uncertain how she would feel if she had to leave it. And ruling her own kingdom? That was another story.

It was true that Twilight Sparkle loved to help other ponies, to teach them the interesting facts she'd read about in the pages of her beloved books. She also enjoyed her position as designated leader of the Ponyville Winter Wrap-Up. But being in charge of the well-being of a kingdom of ponies

didn't seem easy. She could tell that much from having studied with Celestia for all this time. Twilight was nervous. She still had so much to learn about being a leader. But, then again, there was *always* more to learn. Twilight never seemed to be able to acquire enough knowledge on any subject. The world was so vast and fascinating!



One afternoon in Ponyville, just after the Pegasi had moved some clouds into the sky for a short rainfall, Twilight went home to scour every book in her library yet again. She was hoping for some guidance on exactly how a pony could become a great princess and leader. There was bound to be some information that could help a pony out. She thought she was on to something when she first laid a hoof on the pages of *The Princess Bridle*. It was one of her favorite stories about royal ponies, but not quite right.

"What about this one, Twi?" Spike exclaimed, pulling a dusty book with a teal cover from one of the low shelves. He couldn't reach the higher ones without a ladder. Twilight perused the book, titled *Purple Reign* by somepony named Crystal Ball. But that was no good, either. It just had a ton of song lyrics in it.



“Spike!” Twilight exclaimed. “What am I going to do?” She threw her hoof up into the air, exasperated. “I need somepony’s help. I just know there’s more to being a leader than what I already know.” Twilight began to pace around and around the room in her usual manner. She did this so often that the floorboards had worn down, forming a large circle. Spike liked to call it the Twilight Zone.

Spike furrowed his scaly brow and clapped his claws together. “That’s it!” He sprang up and knocked several titles from the shelf. A moment later, he appeared in the pile of fallen books clutching one with a familiar blue-and-yellow cover. Twilight recognized it immediately as *Daring Do and the Trek to the Terrifying Tower*. She had already read all the books in the series about the fearless pony adventurer at least three times. Twilight cocked her head to the side. “I don’t get it, Spike. What’s Daring Do got to ‘do’ with it?”

“Well, you know how Daring has to rescue a pony who’s been locked in a tower surrounded by a moat filled with sharp-toothed piranhas?”

“Yeah...so?”

“And you know how she has to dive into the water in order to get to the tower even though fish are secretly her biggest fear?”

“Spike! Spit it out, already!” Twilight exclaimed. “Do you have an idea on how to help me or not?” She was beginning to look a bit stressed. Her mane had gone frizzy and one of her eyes was twitching ever so slightly. Twilight took her responsibilities very seriously—sometimes too seriously.

“Well, basically Daring Do wants to overcome her fears once and for all. So she asks some older ex-adventurer ponies, like Professor A. B. Ravenhoof, for tips on how to do it!” Spike spread his short arms wide in triumph.

Aha! It was so obvious to Twilight now. She needed guidance. *Real* guidance from somepony who had been around the stable block a few times. “Why didn’t I think of that?” Twilight’s face lit up, thinking of all the ponies she could interview. “Good work, Spike! It’s perfect.” Spike blushed. He loved nothing more than to be a good assistant to his best friend. But he could hardly say “You’re welcome!” before Twilight Sparkle was out the door to find out about the great leaders of Equestria—straight from the horses’ mouths.



MAKE YOUR MARK

Special
activity section
in each chapter
book!

When ponies discover what makes them special, they earn their unique cutie mark! What sorts of things do you like to do that make you feel special? What do your friends like to do? List them below and design your own cutie marks!

Name	Hobbies	Favorite Colors	Cutie Mark
Twilight Sparkle	Magic, reading, stargazing	Purple, pink	
Fluttershy	Caring for animals	Pink, yellow	

(write your name here)			

(insert your friend's name)			

(insert your friend's name)			

