

## THE BEST MOTHER'S DAY EVER

by *GeodesicDragon*

As the first rays of the sun broke through the cloud and shone brightly upon Sweet Apple Acres, the quiet stillness of the early morning was broken by the eager shouting of a small filly.

"Ma and Pa are comin' home tomorrow!"

She bounded down the stairs of her home, two at a time, arriving at the bottom with a loud thump. Racing into an adjacent room, she leapt onto the back of a large colt. He grunted at the sudden weight on his back, but soon found himself smiling at the antics of the younger pony who was using him as a seat.

"Ma and Pa are comin' home tomorrow, Big Macintosh!" the filly said. "An' tomorrow, as ya know, is Mother's Day. Ya wanna help me make sure Ma has the best day ever?"

"Eeyup." Big Macintosh nodded. "You an' me, Applejack, workin' together ta make sure Ma gets the love she deserves."

Applejack grinned, but was prevented from speaking by another voice cutting in. "I hope you younguns have somethin' wonderful in mind fer tomorrow — Celestia knows yer Ma deserves the best."

"I was thinkin' we could get her the kinds of things she likes," Applejack said. "Y'know, spoil 'er rotten fer bein' so great ta us." She smiled warmly. "D'you think that's a good idea, Granny?"

Granny Smith nodded. "I don't think yer Ma will mind *what* y'all get her," she said. "She'll love it because it's a gift that her children are givin' her from their hearts." She pointed at the door. "So get yer keisters into town and start shopping!"

"But what about Apple Bloom, Granny?" Applejack asked. "Should we bring her along as well?"

"Don't y'all worry about yer sister," Granny Smith replied. "I may not be as spry as I once was, but I still know a thing or two about lookin' after foals. Shoot, I took care of yer Ma fer long enough. Now, git goin' — the sooner ya start, the sooner ya finish."

Neither sibling had to be told twice, bolting out of the door with large smiles on their faces.

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"Okay, Mac, here's my idea." Applejack hurried alongside her brother, trying to keep up with his large strides. "I was thinkin' that we get Ma some flowers an' a real nice cake. Have ya been savin' up yer allowance like I have?"

Big Macintosh produced a small bag from the saddlebag he carried, shaking it and listening to the jingling of coins. "Eeyup."

"All righty then," Applejack said, as Ponyville town square came into view. The market was in full swing, and the air was filled with the shouting of the many vendors. Applejack nudged her brother slightly. "Come on, Mac, an' we'll get the flowers first."

The two of them approached a small wooden stall, behind which stood an Earth pony mare with a pink coat and yellow mane. By her side stood a yellow Earth pony filly with a two tone raspberry mane. The filly, upon seeing the Apple siblings approaching, smiled and waved at them. Applejack waved back, while Big Macintosh simply bowed his head slightly.

Applejack addressed the mare first. "Howdy, Miss Holly Bush, how are ya this fine day?"

Holly Bush chuckled. "Good morning to you as well, Applejack, Big Macintosh," she replied. "Are you here to purchase something?"

Applejack nodded. "We sure are!" she said eagerly. "We want ta get some real nice flowers fer Mother's Day tomorrow. Have ya got any daffodils at all? Ma loves 'em a whole lot."

"Do I have daffodils?" Holly Bush shook her head and tutted, though the smile on her face betrayed her stern tone. "What kind of silly question is that?" She looked at the filly by her side. "Roseluck, would you be a dear and fetch a bouquet of daffodils?"

"Sure thing, Mum!" Roseluck said, disappearing under the counter. She reappeared a few moments later with a bunch of daffodils, tied together with a bow, held in her forehoof. "Here you go, Applejack!"

"Thanks, Roseluck," Applejack replied. "I sure hope that Ma will love these. Now then, Miss Holly, how much do I owe ya?"

"That will be five bits, please." Holly Bush took the money Applejack passed to her, putting it in a box under the counter. "And I dare say that your mother will love them, Applejack — after all, I've never met a pony who didn't appreciate my products."

Applejack smiled. "That's rightly true," she said. "An' how about you, Roseluck? Are ya still hopin' to follow in yer Ma's hoofsteps?"

"I sure am!" Roseluck nodded. "Ever since I got my cutie mark, Mum has been teaching me how to be a florist. I'm good with all kinds of flowers, but roses are by far my favourites to work with."

"Yer gonna be a great florist one day, of that I have no doubts." Applejack glanced at the town clock. "Well, we'd love to stay and chat – or listen, in mah brother's case – but we've still got plenty of stuff to be gettin' on with fer tomorrow." She passed the daffodils to Big Macintosh, who put them gently in his saddlebag. "Thanks fer yer time, you two, an' we hope ya both have a nice day!"

With a final wave, the two siblings turned and trotted away from the flower stand and in the direction of their next objective.

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The bell over the door announced the arrival of two new customers to Sugarcube Corner — two new arrivals who had to wait in the long line already threatening to snake out into the street.

"Aww, shucks." Applejack sighed. "Looks like we're gonna be waitin' fer a while — I guess we could decide what we want ta get."

"Eeyup." Big Macintosh pointed at the counter. "I can see a really nice lookin' raspberry tart over there that I reckon Ma would love." He cast a worried glance at the line of ponies in front of them. "I just hope that no pony else gets it before we do."

The line slowly started to dwindle, the quick reactions of the Cakes ensuring that the customers were served in a timely manner. Applejack and Big Macintosh made small talk with each other, and the ponies who came in behind them, until there was just one stallion left in the line ahead of them.

"Good morning, Skylar," Mrs. Cake said. "Thank you for your patience. Now, what can I get for you?"

"I don't mind waiting," Skylar replied, perusing the shelves for a moment. "It gave me a chance to decide what I would like — and what I would like is that raspberry tart."

At the sound of a small whimper from the filly standing behind him, Skylar spun around to see Applejack. She looked up at him mournfully, tears forming at the corners of her eyes.

"But, Mister Skylar," she said. "Mah brother an' I were really hopin' ta get that tart as part of our Ma's Mother's Day present." She looked down at the floor, scuffing a forehoof along it. "It's her favourite dessert, ya know."

"Aww, jeez." Skylar sighed. "Well, I guess I can forget about it just this once. After all, you two have waited long enough for your mother getting home." He stepped aside. "Go on, it's yours."

Applejack passed Big Macintosh some coins from her saddlebag as he stepped up to the counter, passing them to Mrs. Cake in return for the cake, then she walked over to Skylar and hugged him tightly. "Thank ya kindly, Mister Skylar."

Skylar ruffled Applejack's mane. "No problem, kid," he replied. "Now go on, before I change my mind." He grinned.

Applejack nodded. "I'll be sure ta let Ma know how kind ya were ta us," she said. "She might even give ya a little discount next time you come by the apple stall." She looked at Big Macintosh, who was gently putting the tart in his saddlebag. "Ready, Mac?"

"Eeyup."

"We've got everythin' we need, so let's head on home and decorate fer tomorrow. Thanks again, Mister Skylar. And thanks to you as well, Mrs. Cake. See ya later, everypony!"

At that, the two siblings left the bakery and ran all the way home with large smiles on their eager faces.

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"A little ta the left... no, the right... up a bit... down... perfect!"

Applejack pushed a pin into the wall and climbed down from Big Macintosh's back. She looked up at the banner now hanging up proudly, its large red letters proclaiming 'WELCOME HOME MA AND PA' with 'AND A VERY HAPPY MOTHERS DAY' written in even larger yellow letters below it.

The living room was lightly decorated with red streamers, matching the mane colour of the mare holding a small orange filly in an old photo which sat on the mantelpiece. In the centre of the room, on a wooden plate, the raspberry tart took pride of place next to a chipped vase holding the still-fresh daffodils.

Granny Smith let out a small whistle as she entered the room. "You younguns sure know how ta decorate," she said. "But y'all will have plenty of time fer partying tomorrow, since it's time yer little keisters were in yer beds."

Applejack stifled a yawn. "But I ain't tired, Granny!" she replied. "I want ta stay up until Ma and Pa get back."

Granny Smith shook her head and pointed towards the stairs. "If ya don't get ta sleep now, yer just gonna fall asleep durin' the party," she countered. "So no more arguin', missy, get ta bed."

Applejack sighed and trudged upstairs with Big Macintosh trailing closely behind. After brushing their teeth, the two siblings retired to their rooms, then settled into their beds.

With excitement lingering on their minds, it was some time before either of them finally succumbed to the lull of sleep.

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The next morning brought with it pouring rain and howling wind, but neither Applejack or Big Macintosh were deterred. With blinding speed, they thundered down the stairs into the living room.

"HAPPY MOTHER'S D—"

"Applejack. Big Macintosh." Granny Smith's voice, completely devoid of any and all emotion, brought the two to a grinding halt. "You two need to go into the kitchen — there's somepony who wants ta speak to you."

Neither sibling dared to question her, trotting slowly into the kitchen to see a young mare who was sitting at the table. She stood up as they entered and set her helmet down in front of her. As the two ponies stood in front of her, she cleared her throat.

"Hello there," she said. "My name is Eiro, I'm a Lieutenant with the Equestrian Royal Guard, and I'm here about your parents."

There was a moment of silence before she spoke again.

"I'm afraid there's been an accident..."