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MY LITTLE PONY
Season 8

Molt Down
Ep 811

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TEASER**SC. 1 - EXT. EVERFREE FOREST - DAY**

SPIKE and RARITY make their way along a path through the forest. Spike holds a claw to the right side of his face.

1 RARITY
I certainly appreciate you showing me the way to the phoenix's nests, Spike.

2 SPIKE
Anything for you, Rarity. Besides, I've been meaning to visit Pee Wee.

Rarity looks at Spike, who turns slightly to keep the right side of his face away from her. Curious, Rarity stops and starts to casually circle him.

3 RARITY
He really was an excellent pet. I can't imagine why you set him free.

4 SPIKE
Phoenixes aren't meant to be domesticated. Even in the wild, they like to keep to themselves.

5 RARITY
Yes, well, they are beautiful...

Rarity continues to walk around Spike, who continues to turn with her, keeping his claw to his face.

6 RARITY (CONT'D)
A few of their feathers will add just the right splash of color to my latest... (re his continued turning) Spike! What are you doing?

7 SPIKE
(quickly)
Nothing.

She jukes around, trying to get a look at his face, but he continues to cover it.

8 RARITY
Is there something wrong with your face?

Spike <SIGHS>, giving in.

9 SPIKE
It's a stone scale. It isn't magical or anything like the call of the Dragon Lord. It's just red and itchy and embarrassing.

Spike takes his claw away revealing a cracked, swollen, red scale. Rarity is taken aback.

10 RARITY
Oh, dear. That does look... uncomfortable. But even I get the odd blemish from time to time, it's nothing to be embarrassed by.

Spike <SIGHS> and walks on. Rarity follows.

11 RARITY (CONT'D)
You could pay Zecora a visit. She makes a cream that works wonders.
(suddenly serious)
Just don't get the shampoo.

Spike stops and looks up. Rarity follows his gaze to see TWO PHOENIXES in a nest.

12 SPIKE
There's Pee Wee's parents but I don't see Pee Wee.

13 RARITY
Maybe he moved out. Everypony has to leave the nest at some point.

With a sudden SCREECH another phoenix soars into frame and lands on another nest. Spike rushes over while Rarity retrieves a few feathers from the ground.

14 SPIKE
Pee Wee!

Pee Wee flaps over and gives Spike a peck on the cheek, inadvertently touching Spike's stone scale.

15 SPIKE (CONT'D)
OUCH!

Startled, Pee Wee flies off. Rarity looks to Spike.

16 RARITY
Perhaps you should pay Zecora a visit sooner rather than later.

Spike shakes his head, touching the sensitive scale.

17 SPIKE
I don't want anypony else to see
this. Besides, I'm sure it'll clear
up after a good night's sleep.

SC. 2 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE - SPIKE'S ROOM - NEXT MORNING

Spike <SNORES> under the covers in the darkened room when
there's a <KNOCK> at the door.

18 TWILIGHT SPARKLE (O.S.)
Spike?

But the dragon just goes on <SNORING>. After a beat the door
opens a crack and TWILIGHT SPARKLE sticks her head in.

19 TWILIGHT SPARKLE (CONT'D)
Spike? I can't believe you're still
asleep.

20 SPIKE
<GROGGY GRUMBLY WHINE> Just five
more minutes...

Twilight walks over and opens the curtain, flooding the room
with the bright, noonday sun.

21 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
It's nearly noon and you promised
to help me with my lecture for
class today.

Spike pulls the covers away and sits up, facing away from
camera. He rubs his eyes.

22 SPIKE
(surprised)
Noon? Whoa. I slept like a rock.
(sudden energy)
Which reminds me, all that sleep
probably cleared up my stone scale!

Twilight looks at him, unnerved.

23 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Um... On second thought, you can go
back to sleep if you want...

Spike stares at her, confused, then rushes over to a mirror.
Spike looks at his reflection in horror as we REVEAL the
stone scales have spread all over his face!

END TEASER

MAIN TITLES**ACT ONE****SC. 3 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE - SPIKE'S ROOM - RESUME**

Spike leaps up and closes the curtains, then jumps back under the covers.

24 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Spike, what are you doing?

25 SPIKE
(from under the covers)
Hiding my hideous face!

Twilight walks over and sits on the bed.

26 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
I'm sure it feels terrible, but
it's just a break out. It's not the
end of the world.

Spike pulls the covers back, his face covered in swollen, red scales. He scratches at them.

27 SPIKE
That's easy for you to say. Your
face isn't covered in itchy red
spots.

28 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
I used to get terrible break outs -
anytime I had a final exam with
Celestia...
(quickly under her breath)
...who's probably never had a
blemish her whole life.

29 SPIKE
Well, I'm not in magic school.

30 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
No, but these things can be stress-
related, and you did spend
yesterday with Rarity.

Spike gives a nervous laugh.

31 SPIKE
(defensive)
What could possibly be stressful
about that?

Twilight rolls her eyes. She walks back to the windows and opens the curtains.

32 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
You could try Zecora. She makes a cream that--

33 SPIKE
(finishing the thought)
--works wonders. I've heard.

Spike gets up and looks in the mirror again.

34 SPIKE (CONT'D)
But I'm not leaving the castle until my face is back to its adorable self.

35 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Fine...

With that, Twilight's horn GLOWS and a collection of index cards appears next to Spike.

36 TWILIGHT SPARKLE (CONT'D)
...but you're still going to help me practice my lecture.

Spike rolls his eyes in exasperated quiescence and picks up the cards. Twilight nods and paces across the room. We PAN WITH HER.

37 TWILIGHT SPARKLE (CONT'D)
<CLEARS THROAT> The element of generosity and its importance in relation to the other Elements of Harmony--

Suddenly, Twilight is interrupted by a loud <BELCH> and a BLAST OF FIRE from off screen. She turns and we PAN OVER to reveal...

SPIKE sits, cupping a pile of ash that used to be Twilight's index cards. She looks over, devastated.

38 TWILIGHT SPARKLE (CONT'D)
My lecture!

39 SPIKE
I don't know what happened. I just had a sudden case of--

Spike screws up his face as another BELCH escapes from his mouth accompanied by a MASSIVE COLUMN OF FLAME. Twilight has to BAMF out of the way, reappearing on Spike's other side.

40 SPIKE (CONT'D)
...indigestion. (re the index
cards) I'm so sorry!

41 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
(sincere)
That's okay, Spike. I'm sure I can
rewrite the lecture from my notes.
(quickly-self conscious) I have a
lot.

42 SPIKE
(eager)
I can help you...

Twilight looks to the massive scorch mark on the wall. Spike follows her gaze.

43 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Maybe you should leave the castle
after all and go somewhere less--
flammable.

SC. 4 - EXT. SCHOOL OF FRIENDSHIP - LATER

Wearing the wide-brimmed HAT, TRENCH COAT and SUNGLASSES outfit from 617, Spike avoids the STUDENTS going in and out of the school and heads toward the lake where he sits, gazing into the water, despondent.

He takes off his sunglasses and looks at his stone scale-riddled refection in the water.

44 SPIKE
(sighs)
Hey there, not handsome.

At the school entrance, Rarity exits and sees Spike sitting by the lake.

45 RARITY
(calling out)
Oh, Spike!

Spike quickly puts his sunglasses back on as Rarity rushes over. She stops and looks him up and down.

46 RARITY (CONT'D)
My, what a fetching ensemble you've put together. Very noir-esque. (with a wink) I believe Shadow Spade herself would approve.

Spike pulls the collar of his coat as high as possible and heads back toward the school. Rarity follows.

47 SPIKE
Uh... Thanks.

48 RARITY
But I wonder if you wouldn't mind taking it off--

Spike quickens his pace, nervous.

49 SPIKE
What? Oh, um, I <AVOIDANCE MUMBLING>...

Rarity cranes her neck closer, pulling at her ear.

50 RARITY
Sorry? You'll have to speak up, my ears are a bit clogged. It's just that I absolutely must have a model for my phoenix feather dress and nopony else is available.

Near-panicked, Spike looks around for a way out of the conversation. He looks to the school and gets an idea.

51 SPIKE
Oh, um... sorry, Rarity, but I am super busy all day giving tours of the school.

52 PINKIE PIE (O.S.)
Really?

Spike and Rarity look over as we WHIP PAN to reveal PINKIE PIE standing with a group of TOUR PONIES.

53 PINKIE PIE (CONT'D)
I thought I was giving tours today. Guess not. Free day!

With that, Pinkie BOUNCES off. The group of TOUR PONIES turn and look expectantly at Spike who tries to disappear inside his trench coat.

SC. 5 - EXT. SCHOOL OF FRIENDSHIP - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Spike begrudgingly leads the tour through the school grounds, moving as quickly as he can - trying and failing not to itch at the painful bumps on his face as he points around rapidly.

54 SPIKE
Class rooms are that way <OW>,
dorms are that way <UGH>,
Twilight's office is up there
<OUCH>, this is a fountain...

Spike hurries across the bridge over the stream running through the middle of the courtyard and the tour group has to hurry to keep up.

55 TOUR PONY
Could you slow down a bit? We've
come a long way to see the school
and I don't want to miss anything.

Spike whips around, caught, as he continues to itch.

56 SPIKE
Oh. Um... Yeah. <UUGG> Sorry.

The group stares at his vigorous scratching.

57 TOUR PONY
Is something wrong?

58 SPIKE
(defensive)
What? Why? No!

Spike tries to pretend his scratching hasn't reached a fever pitch -- even though it has. The tour group continues to stare.

59 TOUR PONY
Do all the dragons at this school
suffer from scale issues?

Spike tries to answer, but his voice is suddenly inaudible.

60 SPIKE
(unintelligible whisper)
I don't know.

61 TOUR PONY
What?

Spike tries again, but the sound doesn't come out -- like the worst case of laryngitis ever.

62 SPIKE
 (barely perceptible sound)
I don't know.

63 TOUR PONY
I'm sorry, did you say "fireworks
show"?

Suddenly Spike's volume shifts mid-sentence to an incredibly loud level.

64 SPIKE
I said I DON'T KNOW.

Spike turns and walks over toward the library, leaving the Tour Pony to stare, his ears ringing, as the rest of the group falls in behind.

SC. 6 - INT. SCHOOL OF FRIENDSHIP - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Spike stops and points at PONIES studying.

65 SPIKE
 (still talking LOUD)
THIS IS THE SCHOOL LIBRARY. IT'S
ONE OF THE MOST SERENE SPOTS ON
CAMPUS WHERE STUDENTS CAN SPEND
TIME IN QUIET REFLECTION OR STUDY.

The tour group just stares at him.

66 SPIKE (CONT'D)
WHAT?

Several STUDENTS (SMOLDER, YONA, SANDBAR) approach.

67 SMOLDER
 (to Spike)
Could you stop shouting? We're
trying to do our homework and it's
kind of distracting.

68 SPIKE
WAS I SHOUTING?

Everyone NODS emphatically as the other Tour Pony makes it back to the group, rubbing his ears.

69 TOUR PONY
And your constant itching and
scratching is making it really hard
to focus on the tour.

Spike manages to <CLEAR HIS THROAT> and tries to play it off.

70 SPIKE
I have no idea what you're tal--

Spike feels a giant BELCH coming on and tries to stifle it, but the force of the BLAST OF FIRE blows him back and off screen - right out of his clothes.

PAN OVER to reveal Spike with nothing to cover the CRACKED RED, AND SWOLLEN SCALES all over his body. Mortified, he runs off.

SC. 7 - INT. SCHOOL - BROOM CLOSET - DAY

Spike sits on the floor between a collection of brooms and a collection of mops. He looks around, dejected.

71 SPIKE
At least nopony can see my stone scales or get burnt by a burp in here.

He immediately BURPS a BLAST of fire that turns the brooms to ash. He <SIGHS> as the door opens and Smolder sticks her head in.

72 SMOLDER
If you're trying to hide, you need to do a better job. All I had to do was follow the smoke.

Spike tries to talk to her, but his voice has switched back to a whisper.

73 SPIKE
 (inaudible again)
Leave me alone.

74 SMOLDER
What?

Spike tries again... no luck.

75 SPIKE
 (like he's just mouthing)
Leave me alone.

76 SMOLDER
I can't-- Was that, "sleeves made of foam"?

Finally, Spike's answer shifts to FULL VOLUME again.

77 SPIKE
I said leAVE ME ALONE.

With that, Spike BURPS and burns up all the mops. He drops his head, miserable. Smolder <LAUGHS>.

78 SMOLDER
Wow. I have seen some pretty bad molts in my time, but yours takes the cake.

Spike looks up at her, curious.

79 SPIKE
Molts?

80 SMOLDER
Yeah. The molt? Super painful stone scales, fire burps, uncontrollable volume shifts? It's all part of growing up dragon. Congrats!

She gives him a pat on the back, but he shrinks back in pain.

81 SPIKE
<ARRRRRGHHH!>

Spike turns and we see two super painful looking patches of stone scales on his back.

82 SMOLDER
(awkward)
Oh. Sorry.

Off Spike's pained look, we...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SC. 8 - INT. SCHOOL - BROOM CLOSET - RESUME

Spike stares at Smolder, horrified.

83 SPIKE
No, no, no, no, no! The last time I grew up I turned into a giant, greedy monster!

Spike starts to pace in the tiny closet. Smolder nods.

84 SMOLDER
Greed induced bigness. That's totally different. The molt is completely normal. Every dragon goes through it. Pretty soon you'll leave and strike out on your own.

Spike stops pacing and looks at her.

85 SPIKE
Why would I do that?

86 SMOLDER
(sarcastic)
Have you been living with ponies your whole life?
(off his nod, realizing)
Oh. Well, in the Dragonlands, a molter's loved ones kicks them out at the first stone scale.

87 SPIKE
What!? Why?!

88 SMOLDER
(shrugs)
I think it's biological. We call it the "Molt Effect". I haven't even told you about the smell yet.

89 SPIKE
Smell?

Horrified Spike gives himself a SNIFF and makes a face.

90 SMOLDER
Yeah. I mean, I loved my brother and all, but one whiff and I was all, "See ya!" (with a <SNIFF>) Speaking of which...

She makes for the door, but Spike lunges at her, desperate.

91 SPIKE
Wait! Does the Molt Effect happen to ponies too? <GASP> Twilight already asked me to leave the castle today. If she kicks me out where am I going to live? I'm too young to grow up!

She looks at Spike panicking and feels bad.

92 SMOLDER
I'm sure you'll find a nice hoard
to guard or a village to terrorize -
though now that dragons and ponies
are friends, I guess that's off the
table.

93 SPIKE
So no creature is gonna want to be
around me?

94 BSMOLDER
Oh, I didn't say that. That molt
stench is a magnet for predators -
Tatzlwurms, Hydras, Rocs.

95 SPIKE
Dragons are scared of rocks?

96 SMOLDER
(shaking her head)
R-O-C-S. Rocs. Humongous birds of
prey that can snack on a molting
dragon like candy.

Spike looks terrified. When he speaks, his voice is back to
being inaudible.

97 SPIKE
(super quiet)
So, Twilight's kicking me out and the only
creatures who don't find me disgusting want to eat
me.

98 SMOLDER
Seriously, I heard none of that.

99 SPIKE
(super LOUD)
TWILIGHT'S KICKING ME OUT AND THE
ONLY CREATURES WHO DON'T FIND ME
DISGUSTING WANT TO EAT ME.

Smolder nods eagerly and returns Spike's volume in kind.

100 SMOLDER
(loud)
CONGRATS!

Suddenly the door opens and Pinkie sticks her head in.

101 PINKIE PIE
(also loud)
HEY! IS THIS THE SHOUTING CLOSET?
(MORE)

PINKIE PIE (CONT'D)
BECAUSE I'VE GOT A FREE DAY AND AM
TOTALLY UP FOR SOME SHOUTING!
(then) Also, where is that brussels
sprouts covered in cotton candy
smell coming from? Because it is
really... interesting.

Off Spike's miserable look...

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON SPIKE'S PLEADING FACE

102 SPIKE
I didn't know where else to go. I
can't take the chance that Twilight
will kick me out. You aren't
feeling any molt effects are you?

PULL WIDE TO REVEAL...

SC. 9 - INT. ZECORA'S HUT - DAY

ZECORA looks down at Spike, a CLOTHES PIN stuck on the end of
her muzzle to prevent her from smelling anything.

103 ZECORA
*When it comes to break outs, I've
seen all circumstances.
But as for the molt smell, let's
not take any chances.*

Zecora applies a salve to the section of stone scales on his
back - which has grown even larger.

104 SPIKE
Is there anything you can do to
cure me?

105 ZECORA
*The ailments you have aren't
something to cure.
The molt's a condition that dragons
endure.*

106 SPIKE
But if anypony sees, or smells, me
right now, they'll be so grossed
out they'll avoid me forever!

She finishes with the cream and starts to rummage through her
shelves.

107 ZECORA
*Perhaps we can lessen this strange
molt-effect,
The smell is the mostly likely
cause I suspect.*

Spike tries to answer her, but loses his voice again.

108 SPIKE
(unintelligible)
It's all so embarrassing.

Zecora turns back to him, confused.

109 ZECORA
*I know you are speaking but I can't
hear a thing.
Are you talking about teaching
asparagus to sing?*

110 SPIKE
(suddenly LOUD)
I said it's EMBARRASSING.

Zecora stares at Spike, slightly dazed by his volume. She grabs some cotton and stuffs it in her ears.

111 ZECORA
*If the goal is to not have your
friends all depart,
Perhaps your volume is where we
should start.*

Spike looks at her, concerned, then starts to feel a fire belch coming.

112 SPIKE
Oh, no...

Zecora immediately points Spike's head at the base of her cauldron as Spike BURPS a BLAST of flame and lights it. He <SIGHS> miserable.

Suddenly, Rarity's voice comes from outside the hut.

113 RARITY (O.S.)
(loud)
ZECORA? HELLO? ARE YOU THERE?

Spike looks to Zecora, pleading. He tries to whisper, but suddenly talks as LOUD as ever.

114 SPIKE
I CAN'T LET RARITY SEE ME LIKE
THIS. PLEASE DON'T LET HER KNOW I'M
HERE.

Off Zecora's uncertain look...

SC. 10 - EXT. ZECORA'S HUT - CONTINUOUS

Zecora opens the door and sticks her head out - the cotton still in her ears. Rarity looks at her, distraught. When Rarity speaks, she's nearly as loud as Spike.

115 RARITY
OH, DEAR. I'M TALKING EVEN LOUDER
THAN I THOUGHT, AREN'T I?

Zecora looks at her, confused, then remembers her ear plugs.

116 ZECORA
*I have volume concerns today by the
scores,
but it seems that I'm ready to help
you with yours.*

Rarity leans in, trying to hear, but just shakes her head, frustrated.

117 RARITY
I'M SORRY. I CAN'T SEEM TO HEAR
ANYTHING. I WAS HOPING YOU COULD
HELP.

Zecora glances back into her hut, where Spike climbs into a basket. He gives her a thumbs up and pulls the lid on top.

Off Zecora giving an uncertain look back to Rarity...

SC. 11 - INT. ZECORA'S HUT - CONTINUOUS

Zecora leads Rarity inside as she continues to shout-talk.

118 RARITY
I'VE NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENED. ONE
MINUTE I WAS SEWING PHOENIX
FEATHERS ONTO A DRESS AND THE NEXT
I COULDN'T HEAR MY OWN VOICE.

Zecora nods.

119 ZECORA
*The feathers of that bird can
affect pony's ears.
It's a magical ailment I've treated
for years.*

Unseen, Spike lifts the lid off of his hiding place and peers out at Rarity who shakes her head at Zecora.

120 RARITY
I ONLY KNOW YOU ARE TALKING BECAUSE
YOUR MOUTH IS MOVING.

Rarity <SIGHS> then makes a face and starts <COUGHING> as she looks around.

121 RARITY (CONT'D)
Goodness! I hope that incredibly
pungent odor belongs to some sort
of magical curative!

Zecora looks up at Spike who ducks back into the basket. Rarity looks over in the direction of Spike's hiding place, then up at all the shelves of ingredients.

122 RARITY (CONT'D)
I HOPE YOU'RE NOT BUSY, BUT I MUST
HAVE MY HEARING BACK. IT TURNS OUT
I TALK TO MYSELF WHILE I SEW AND
WITHOUT THAT CONVERSATION I SIMPLY
CAN'T THINK!

Zecora pulls a few things from her shelf and mixes them quickly into bottle. She gives it to Rarity along with a small piece of parchment.

123 ZECORA
*It's a simple cure and the
directions are clear,
just one or two drops in each of
your ears.*

Rarity takes the potion and the instructions.

124 RARITY
Oh, thank you! You are an ear
saver. OH! WHILE I'M HERE DO YOU
HAVE ANY BLEMISH CREAM? SPIKE IS
HAVING SOME SCALE ISSUES.

Spike LOUD-TALKS from inside the basket.

125 SPIKE (FROM THE BASKET)
YOU HAVE NO IDEA.

Rarity looks around, curious. She looks toward the basket.

126 RARITY
I think I heard something. YOUR
CURE IS WORKING ALREADY!

Zecora quickly steps between Rarity and the basket, leading her to another shelf.

127 ZECORA
*The cream that you want is just
over here,
It's a popular potion for all
creatures this year.*

She looks over her shoulder as Spike climbs out of the basket and scampers out the window of the hut.

Rarity starts to turn around, but Zecora hands her a jar of the cream with a smile.

128 RARITY
Oh, thank you Zecora (makes another
face) AND I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE
BUT I REALLY DO THINK YOUR HUT
COULD DO WITH AN AIRING OUT.

Off Zecora taking the clothes pin off her muzzle with a frown...

SC. 12 - EXT. ZECORA'S HUT - REAR - MOMENTS LATER

Zecora turns the corner around the side of her hut looking for Spike.

129 ZECORA
*Rarity's gone, there's no need to
hide, (<SNIFFS> and makes a face)
Though I wonder if we should
continue outside?*

She continues to look around and finally finds Spike, cowering under a root. Zecora bends down.

130 ZECORA (CONT'D)
*I can't treat your symptoms down
there on the ground.
It's safe to come out, there's no
ponies around.*

Spike shoots her a terrified look.

131 SPIKE
 (whispers)
I'm not hiding from ponies. I'm
hiding from that!

Spike points over her head at a GIANT ROC flapping in the air just above the trees.

Off both of their terror-stricken expressions we...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SC. 13 - EXT. ZECORA'S HUT - RESUME

Zecora's and Spike stare up at the giant bird, paralysed with fear.

With a terrifying <SCREECH>, the Roc dives and swipes with one of its talons, digging a deep channel in the earth with its claws - inches away from Spike's hiding place.

As the bird soars back into the sky, Spike looks up at Zecora.

132 SPIKE
Did I forget to mention the molt
smell attracts predators?

The Roc reaches the top of its arc - actually blocking out the sun - and dives again.

133 ZECORA
*That's something that would have
been quite nice to know,
But it's not worth discussing,
right now we should go!*

Spike scampers out of his hiding place and he and Zecora head for the hut, but the diving Roc cuts them off, forcing them to run for the trees - the Roc gliding over the forest in pursuit.

SC. 14 - EXT. CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

Unfortunately, Zecora and Spike quickly find themselves at the edge of a clearing, just as the Roc swoops down from the sky.

134 SPIKE
It's only after me! I'll lead it
away while you get help!

Without waiting for a response, Spike runs off.

135 SPIKE (CONT'D)
This way birdy, bird! Molting
dragon over here!

Spike heads for a thick grove of trees and scampers up the
biggest one.

The Roc pulls out of its dive and lets out another deafening
<SCREECH>. It hovers over the grove, the WIND from its
enormous, flapping wings blow the smaller trees down and
nearly sends Spike flying from his perch.

Zecora looks on in horror and gallops over shouting.

136 ZECORA
*You can't hide in a tree, you have
to come down,
We stand a much better chance on
the ground!*

The Roc reaches down with one of its massive talons and makes
a grab for Spike, but it's talons are so huge it grabs the
tree next to his - ripping it out of the ground by the roots.
Spike stares in shock.

137 SPIKE
Okay, maybe this wasn't a good
plan!

Zecora rushes over and tries to help Spike down just as the
Roc makes another grab and SCOOPS HER UP by mistake.

138 SPIKE (CONT'D)
ZECORA!

The Roc takes off into the sky again as Spike manages to
climb down. He shouts after the bird.

139 SPIKE (CONT'D)
Bring her back!

Suddenly, the stone scales on Spike's body PULSE, growing
even redder than they've been so far.

140 SPIKE (CONT'D)
<ARRGGHHH>!

Spike starts itching furiously at himself as he casts a worried look up at...

THE ROC - turning in the sky, Zecora struggling in one of its claws. The bird spots Spike, and prepares to dive again.

Spike turns and rushes back through the trees and runs smack into-- RARITY, still shout-talking.

141 RARITY
Oh! Spike, what are you doing here!?

Spike looks at her, panicked and itching.

142 SPIKE
Rarity, you have to get out of here, there's a giant Roc trying to eat me. It's got Zecora!

Rarity looks at him - still unable to hear.

143 RARITY
YES. I WAS JUST AT ZECORA'S, BUT I'M HEADING BACK. I CAN'T READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS. DOES THIS SAY TWO DROPS ONCE A DAY, OR ONE DROP TWICE A DAY?

She gives Spike the parchment that came with her ear drops and catches a whiff of him.

144 RARITY (CONT'D)
(with a SNIFF)
Oh, dear. Spike, you smell like you were at Zecora's too. She really needs to mix up an air freshener.

Spike continues to scratch frantically and looks to Rarity, pleading.

145 SPIKE
Rarity, there's no time, we have to get help!

Rarity holds a hoof to her ear and shakes her head.

146 RARITY
MY EARS ARE COMPLETELY CLOGGED!
(then noticing his itching) WHY SPIKE, YOUR STONE SCALES LOOK WORSE! HERE, I PICKED UP JUST THE THING.

She starts rummaging through her bag for the cream when the tree next to them is ripped out of the ground. Spike looks up terrified to see the Roc flapping in the air above them, Zecora in one claw and the tree in the other.

147 SPIKE
Rarity! Come on! Run!

He takes off toward cover, but glances back to see Rarity is still looking through her bag - oblivious due to her inability to hear.

148 RARITY
Now where did I put that cream?

Spike rushes back to grab her just as the Roc tosses the tree and lands on its free claw. Spike stares up at the huge bird, towering over Rarity. Still unaware, she finally finds the cream.

149 RARITY (CONT'D)
AH, HERE IT I IIIIIEEEEEEEEAAAAAAHHHH!

In mid-sentence the giant bird scoops Rarity up into the same claw in which it holds Zecora. Shocked, Rarity looks at her.

150 ZECORA
*I wish you'd escaped either claw of
this bird,
but the both of us trapped in the
same one's absurd!*

151 RARITY
WHAT!?

Spike looks up at the Roc, still on the ground, and leaps onto the claw holding his friends. He wraps his arms around a talon and yanks on it desperately.

152 SPIKE
Let my ponies go!

The Roc tilts its head and lifts the claw, SNAPPING at Spike with its giant beak.

153 SPIKE (CONT'D)
<WHOOA>!

Spike manages to dodge the snapping beak and belches a BLAST of flame that drives the bird back and causes Spike to fall from its claw as the Roc soars into the sky once more.

Spike lands on the ground with a <THUD>. He stands with a <MOAN> and immediately starts scratching his back against a tree.

154 SPIKE (CONT'D)
<PAINED ITCHING SOUNDS>

Suddenly, Twilight emerges from the brush. She looks at him rubbing his back against the tree bark.

155 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Spike? What are you doing?

Spike rolls his eyes.

156 SPIKE
If my stone scales didn't itch so much and we weren't in immediate danger, this would be really embarrassing.

157 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Danger?

Spike points skyward at the Roc circling above as it starts another dive. Twilight jumps behind the tree that Spike is using as a scratching post.

158 TWILIGHT SPARKLE (CONT'D)
Spike! I was just headed to Zecora's to get some cream for your scales. I had no idea you were...

159 SPIKE
About to be eaten by a giant predator attracted to my molt smell?

160 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Molt smell?

Before Spike can explain, they're both forced to leap out of the way as the Roc soars by, chopping the tree down with one claw while Zecora and Rarity yell in the other.

161 RARITY
(Doppler effect as she soars by)
Twiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiggggghhhhtttt!

Twilight turns to Spike who immediately starts scratching again.

162 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Was that Rarity?

163 SPIKE
(nods)
And Zecora. I tried to save them,
but it's all I can do to stop
scratching long enough to dive out
of the way when that bird attacks!

Twilight looks up at the Roc and immediately takes to the sky after it.

IN THE AIR - Twilight flies circles around the massive bird of prey, blasting it with BEAMS of magical energy that barely miss...

RARITY AND ZECORA - Who both cling to the Roc's talons for dear life.

164 RARITY
THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN
IN THE CLUTCHES OF A HORRIBLE GIANT
CREATURE, BUT IT DOESN'T GET ANY
EASIER!

Twilight swoops around the creature and tries a frontal attack, but the giant bird bats at her with its wing, sending her spiralling through the air. While...

ON THE GROUND - Spike stares into the sky, concerned as he itches at the red bumps all over his body.

Suddenly, his scales shift from pulsing red to dark brown. Relief washes over Spike's face as he stops scratching.

165 SPIKE
<SIGH> Finally! I didn't think that
itching would ever stop.

Spike looks down and sees that the brown scales turning gray. Spike watches as the gray scales spread across the lower half of his body, his legs stiffening as they go.

166 SPIKE (CONT'D)
What's happening?! I can't mo--

Before he can even finish, the gray scales spread to his upper body and face -- all of which freeze in place -- trapping Spike in his own body, his scales seeming to turn to stone.

After a beat, the Spike statue wobbles, then cracks begin to form.

LIGHT breaks through the cracks as they spread across his body until a BURST OF FIRE blasts the gray scales away to reveal...

SPIKE - standing over the remains of his scale chrysalis, his new scales glowing and clear, with TWO LARGE DRAGON WINGS spreading out from his back!

167 SPIKE (CONT'D)
What just happened?

He shakes his head, trying to recover and smacks himself with one of his new wings. He stares at it in disbelief.

168 SPIKE (CONT'D)
Did I just sprout wings? (with sudden realization) I JUST SPROUTED WINGS!

Before he can even appreciate it, Spike looks up to see Twilight swooping around the Roc.

ON TWILIGHT - blasting magic everywhere as she tries to free Rarity and Zecora, who shouts at her.

169 ZECORA
*You magic's not causing this bird
any fuss,
But I feel there's a chance that
you might just hit us!*

BACK WITH SPIKE - who looks from the situation in the sky to his wings and comes to a decision.

170 SPIKE
I've got to help them!

Determined he flaps his wings as hard as he can, and shoots into the sky - much faster than he's prepared for.

171 SPIKE (CONT'D)
<WHOOOAAAA>!

Spike zooms into the fray, tumbling end over end as he struggles to acclimate to his new ability. Twilight stares in shock.

172 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Spike?! How did you get wings?!

173 SPIKE
I don't know! But they're pretty awesoWHOOOAAHHHHH!!

Both Spike and Twilight have to scatter as the Roc takes a swipe at them with its free claw.

The two of them tumble through the air, then recover as Twilight assesses the situation. She turns to Spike.

174 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Do you think you can fly up and
distract him while I work on
freeing Zecora and Rarity?

Spike nods and flies up in front of the Roc's face.

175 SPIKE
Hey, giant chicken! If you like
dragons so much come and get me!

Spike soars around and around the Roc's head as the bird twists and contorts, trying to follow the buzzing little dragon.

After a beat, the Roc loses track of him, quickly looking around trying to spot him.

CLOSE - on the Roc's eyes as Spike lowers into frame just above them and upside down (think the "inverted" moment from Top Gun).

176 SPIKE (CONT'D)
Greetings.

Spike gives a little salute and the Roc lunges for him with its beak. Spike peels off and flips around in front of the bird's face and belches a giant BLAST OF FLAME right at it.

As the Roc rears back from the heat, Twilight hits its talon with a BLAST of magic that forces open the claws and frees Zecora and Rarity - who immediately plunge toward the ground.

177 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
SPIKE!

Spike sees them falling and immediately dives, following Twilight as they chase after and catch their friends, inches from the ground.

Rarity and Zecora wobble to their hooves as Spike and Twilight set them on the ground. The whole group looks up as the giant Roc <SCREECHES> in frustration and flies off.

The others turn to Spike in amazement.

178 ZECORA
*I know that the molt produced
surprising things,
but I'm glad that the last was a
new pair of wings!*

Rarity goes to Spike - no idea what Zecora just said - and gives him a big hug, nearly shouting in his ear.

179 RARITY
YES, AND ALSO I'M GLAD YOU GOT
WINGS.

180 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Spike! This is amazing. I didn't
know you'd ever get wings. I'm so
happy for you. Does it have
something to do with this "molt"
you were talking about?

181 SPIKE
<SIGHS> It's what's been going on
with me. The break out, the fire
burps. The molt is when dragons get
older and start to change. I wish I
could stop it, but I can't. I
should go.

182 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Go? What are you talking about?

183 SPIKE
In the Dragonlands, families make
melters leave home. It's called the
Molt Effect.

184 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Well, this isn't the Dragonlands
and Molt Effect or no, I don't want
you going anywhere.

185 SPIKE
But I'm growing up. What if
something even worse happens?

186 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Spike, you're supposed to grow up,
but you'll always be you. And
whatever happens, we'll get through
it together.

Pleased, Spike flaps his wings, takes off into the air, and does an excited loop, before landing on Twilight's back.

187 SPIKE
Woohoo! Let's go home!

188 TWILIGHT SPARKLE
Um... Spike. I don't need to carry
you, do I? You have wings.

189 SPIKE
Well, they are new and I don't
wanna over do it.

Off Twilight rolling her eyes...

SC. 15 - INT. RARITY'S BOUTIQUE - DAY

CLOSE on Rarity as she takes pins from a cushion tied to her hoof and pins up a large piece of fabric. She talks a little louder than normal, but not as bad as before.

190 RARITY
I can't believe you thought any of
us would send you away because of
some silly "Molt Effect".

She finishes pinning and looks at her work.

191 RARITY (CONT'D)
Even if the symptoms were slightly
unsettling - and let's face it, the
odor wasn't pleasant - nopony would
stop caring for you just because
you're getting older.

She adjusts one of the pins.

192 RARITY (CONT'D)
Everypony goes through changes, but
sometimes change can be wonderful--
Like being able to model for any
dress length. (looks, then) A bit
higher, I think.

PULL WIDE to reveal that Spike is modeling Rarity's phoenix dress. He flaps his wings and hovers an inch higher so she can pin up the hem.

193 SPIKE
I'm glad to help, Rarity, but don't
you think there's wonderful things
about flying that don't involve
dresses?

Rarity, pulls at her ears - still not hearing properly.

194 RARITY
YES. THERE'S NOTHING MORE WONDERFUL
THAN DRESSES.

She smiles at Spike, who rolls his eyes and <SIGHS> as we...

FADE OUT

END.