

My Little Pony: Equestria Girls

"Starswirl or Bust"

403-106, 403-107, 403-108, 403-109, 403-110, 403-111

Batch 3: 6x7 Minute Shorts - PREMISES

9/15/17

Written by Whitney Ralls

The Rainbooms have been on a slow but steady rise ever since their explosive debut (literally) at the CHS Battle of the Bands way back in *Rainbow Rocks*. Their spontaneous Rainbow-Laser-light-show at *Equestria World's* opening parade blew up on SpapGab (thanks to the Vignette Bump™), and more recently, curious music fans have been buzzin' to see the band that rocked so hard they sank a cruise ship. ...and so, it's not all that surprising the Rainbooms been invited to perform at the *Starswirl Music Festival* (or just "Starswirl," as in Sunset Shimmer breaking the news: "WE'RE GOING TO STARSWIRL!!!") The girls couldn't be more excited to share the stage with some of their favorite bands, but the whole thing is especially meaningful to Sunset. She's been filling the dual-role of singer/road manager and loving it, finally at ease in the group—her insecurities about their friendship pushed aside by all they've been through together.

The Rainbooms arrive at the flourishing community that is the festival campground, set up their campsite (and, ahem... Glamping RV), and off they go to take in everything the festival has to offer: art installations, body painting, a ferris wheel, and food trucks for every possible cuisine fusion (Pinkie Pie: "Sushi-flavored shaved ice?! TAKE MY MONEY!!!"). While the Mane 7 are basking in Starswirl's sensory-overloading awesomeness of the festival, Sunset runs into a girl about her age who runs right into her, crying up a storm. She recognizes her as K-Lo, (*née* Kiwi Lockheart) ... the lead singer of PostCrush! (Who's PostCrush? Only this super awesome K-POP girl band that the Mane 7 totes love—not just because they started as a group of friends playing music together for fun, just like the Rainbooms, but also because they blew up overnight with a string of bonkers-creative hits like "Neon Cactus" and "2 bad 2 be 4 got.") K-Lo explains she was kicked out of PostCrush because her former friends only care about success. Sunset, being the empathic person she is, decides to bring her into the fold of the Mane 7: "Why don't you hang out with us a little while? Lemme tell you—these girls know how to make you feel included." As promised, the gang welcomes her with open arms. Rainbow Dash especially cause can she just be real? That guitar solo in Neon Cactus changed her life.

But the more time they spend with her, the more Sunset begins to feel like this newcomer is kind of... replacing her? Starting during a low-key campsite set rehearsal, when K-Lo politely asks if she could sing Sunset's parts... and Sunset feels pressured to say sure... (in that way where she's clearly saying no, but K-Lo doesn't take the hint). Her friends don't seem to mind, and in fact they all go nuts for the little changes she makes, leaving Sunset feeling like, come on, stop being crazy... they don't like this new girl

better! But watching them geek out over her performance of Sunset's parts, she can't help wondering if she's wrong about her place in the group.

Worried, Sunset walks alone through the campsite and sings out her complicated feelings: she started the trip finally feeling so sure about her friendship, but now she doesn't even know if she's in the band. After all, they never officially *asked* her to join the band. She sort of just... picked up the microphone at the Battle of the Bands and started singing with them. But the fact that she doesn't know her status... doesn't that mean she's not close enough with them? If she even has to ask, surely she's not.

Who happens to overhear Sunset's lament, but... THE MEAN GIRLS FROM POSTCRUSH! They're blown away by her voice and range and heart... and they shyly ask her if she wants to sing a few of their tunes, cause they don't know if she knows this yet, but their lead singer, well... they don't want to talk about what happened, but suffice to say, they need a new one. Sunset sizes them up... so these are the girls who kicked out K-Lo? They don't seem so bad. After they beg and plead, Sunset offers to run it by her bandmates... realizing this will be the perfect test: if she's really in the band there's no way they'd be cool with her singing with another group! ...Which is why she's crushed when the other girls are super supportive, telling her to do it because it's such an amazing opportunity! Guess she wasn't in the band after all.

The PostCrush girls teach Sunset their routines but they are tired and uninspired. They can't perform as well as they used to and they don't know why... even this new song they've been working on, it's like suddenly they couldn't do it anymore: "I guess K-Lo was right—she was the only reason we were successful and without her, we're garbage." Sunset is confused, then comes to realize that there's something fishy about K-Lo's sob story... she wasn't getting kicked out! When Sunset goes to talk it over with her friends, she overhears them and it sounds like... she's been replaced by K-Lo... permanently! Since her friends don't seem to miss her at all, there's no point in telling them K-Lo's a phony.

She goes back to PostCrush and helps build their performance confidence in the same way the Mane 7 normally cheer each other on. Meanwhile, The Rainbooms are suddenly gaining popularity, fast. Rainbow signs autographs at lightning speed. Even Fluttershy is learning to like the attention. They miss hanging with Sunset, but have to admit it's been fun getting all the attention of having K-Lo in the group. Besides, she has an uncanny ability to hit all the right notes and perform in all different styles, all thanks to this BEJEWELLED MICROPHONE THAT DEFINITELY HASN'T BEEN ENHANCED BY EQUESTRIAN MAGIC (Ahem, more on that later).

As the festival goes on... other artists begin having terrible sets-- guitars out of tune, messing up their dance routines, missing cues. Sunset can't shake the feeling that something's up. When she finds out THE DAZZLINGS are performing, she's sure that they're the ones behind whatever nefarious shenanigans are going on, but it turns out

their newfound amazing singing ability is better than magic... it's lip-synched. Just when Sunset thinks she's hit a dead-end, the Dazzlings mention that lip-synching isn't as easy at it looks, or at least it hasn't been ever since they rehearsed with K-Lo the other day! It's like they've been creatively foggy ever since.

Now pretty sure K-Lo has something to do with everyone's talent draining, Sunset swallows her pride and goes to warn/ask her friends if they've been feeling off or noticed anything out of the ordinary. They get defensive of their newfound popularity, and Sunset realizes K-Lo is planting the seed in the girls' heads that she's jealous! Before she can push it further, they're mobbed by fans—it's almost time to take the stage! K-Lo takes out her bejeweled microphone and gives them an a cappella preview of a new song and Sunset realizes—it sounds just like the song the PostCrush girls had been working on before their creativity and talent were drained!

Sunset spies on the Rainbooms as they get ready to go on stage. While the girls aren't looking, K-Lo saps their creative energy using her microphone! Rainbow Dash and the others start to feel a little off. "Probably just nerves, right?" K-Lo takes command of the band, informing them that they will be her backing band— K-Lo and the Rainbooms. It only makes sense since they wouldn't be anything without her. She's gotten in their heads and they agree reluctantly. As the Rainbooms take the stage, Sunset confronts K-Lo but she blows her off – after this show, she'll have all the creative energy she needs. Not just of the bands, but of the entire audience. She'll finally achieve the superstardom she deserves.

Desperate, Sunset rendezvous with the PostCrush girls – she tells them what she saw and they're shocked. After K-Lo brought home her microphone their band really started taking off. And K-Lo started to change. It must be Equestrian magic! But how can they fight it? Sunset listens as they reminisce about the fun they used to have playing music with K-Lo, just like she and The Rainbooms. It dawns on Sunset – if the Rainbooms find power in their friendship, maybe PostCrush can too.

K-Lo and the Rainbooms perform. As the rowdy crowd cheers, K-Lo holds the microphone out to them to "sing along," thereby draining their energy. The crowd becomes sluggish as K-Lo becomes more powerful, turning into a monster. The Mane 6, weakened, turn to each other. Sunset was right, there is a magical force disrupting the festival: their band! They stop playing as K-Lo "goes solo," wreaking havoc. Sunset makes her way through the crowd to the Rainbooms. She opens up about how she felt out of place in the group. But rather than talking about it, she tried to get a reaction out of them and it made things worse. She nods to K-Lo: "Really worse." Rainbow Dash and the others apologize for getting caught up in the whirlwind of fame and not listening to her. Time to get the band back together- the whole band, with their official lead singer! They pony up and overpower K-Lo, who is distraught when her microphone shatters. She admits that she lost sight of what was important- the fun of making music with her friends. The magic and the success went to her head. Sunset tells her that the crowd

wants an encore, and the PostCrush girls emerge in epic tableau on stage, with Sunset in formation. Sunset steps aside to allow K-Lo to take her rightful place with her old friends. They perform an awesome song (with support from the Rainbooms)!

...And the production-friendly crowd goes wild.

THE END!