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MY LITTLE PONY II

"Lesson Zero"

Episode 203

Outline by
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TEASER

TWILIGHT SPARKLE and SPIKE are in Twilight's Loft. Spike checks things off a checklist as Twilight uses her magic to collect items from around the room. Quill. Check. Parchment. Check. Extra ink. Check. *Extra* extra ink. Check. Twilight eyes the items now neatly organized in front of her. She asks Spike if that is everything. Spike shows her the list, every box now checked. Satisfied, Twilight comments that they now have everything they need to create her checklist of things she needs to accomplish by the end of the day. "Item one," she begins, "create checklist of things I need to accomplish by the end of the day..." Spike just rolls his eyes as we END TEASER.

ACT I

Now in Ponyville Town Square, Spike, a new checklist in hand, assists Twilight in accomplishing her daily errands. They pick up sweets from the Sweet Shoppe, drop off a cape that needs to be hemmed, order a bushel of apples at the market... At each of these stops, we see further evidence of Twilight's attention to detail and desire for everything to be just so. She even turns down a free extra cupcake at the Sweet Shoppe because adding it to the box would push the other cupcakes closer together. Then the icing from one might rub off on another and then that cupcake would have too much icing and the other cupcake wouldn't have enough...

When their errands are complete, Spike and Twilight return to the loft where Twilight comments on how efficient they are. Spike may dismiss Twilight's list-making as excessive, but he can't argue that their lives run pretty darn smoothly as a result of her attention to detail. Spike agrees that things have been going pretty well. So well, he adds, that Twilight hasn't had to learn a single lesson about friendship all week. "We haven't sent Princess Celestia a letter this week?!" Twilight exclaims in a panic. Twilight paces nervously. Princess Celestia specifically told her that she must send a letter every week detailing her newly acquired knowledge regarding friendship. If she can't learn something new by sundown, Twilight will be tardy!

Twilight expresses her grave concerns about not carrying out her assignment. Should she fail to complete her weekly studies as instructed, Princess Celestia will think she's being irresponsible. Twilight is certain that Princess Celestia will assume she hasn't been taking any of her magical education seriously and will have no choice but send her back to Magic Kindergarten in Canterlot to start all over again. We see Twilight's nightmarish fantasy of being in a classroom, surrounded by tiny ponies that tease her for being held back.

Back in the loft, Spike assures Twilight that Princess Celestia isn't going to make her repeat all her studies just for turning in her homework a little late. But Twilight cannot be convinced. She must find a lesson to learn about friendship and she must find it now! She asks Spike if he has any problems that she could help him solve as a friend. Spike tells her he has an itch on his scales that he can't reach. Twilight gives him a good scratch. "Guess we can write that letter now!" Spike says enthusiastically. Twilight does

not agree. She needs to find a real friendship problem to solve so she can tell Celestia all about it. And she needs to do it right now!

ACT II

Back in Ponyville, Twilight is on a desperate search for the kind of trouble that will lead to a lesson in friendship. She's sure she has found it when she overhears RARITY throwing a major hissy-fit inside her shop. Twilight goes inside, eager to help her friend with what is surely a big problem. Alas, Twilight finds that Rarity has merely misplaced a roll of ribbon and is just being her usual overdramatic, drama queen self while looking for it. Twilight doesn't even get a chance to help in the search as moments after her arrival Rarity finds the lost ribbon. She immediately drops the hysterics as if she was never even upset to begin with and turns all of her attention to completing her latest pony couture masterpiece. Twilight tries to see if Rarity has any other issues that she might help her face as a friend. Much to Twilight's dismay, Rarity tells her that everything in her life is "Marvelous, darling. Just marvelous!"

Exiting the shop, Twilight reminds herself that all is not lost. She has plenty of other friends in Ponyville who are sure to have problems that only the power of friendship can resolve. She heads to Applejack's farm in search of Applejack but instead finds RAINBOW DASH. She's destroying one of Applejack's barns in a fit of rage! Obviously Applejack and Rainbow Dash are having major friendship problems. Twilight's problems are solved!

But when Twilight asks Rainbow Dash why she is so furious at Applejack, she learns that Rainbow Dash isn't angry at all. In fact, she hasn't been in this great a mood in ages. Turns out that Applejack asked her to tear down the old barn so that a new one could be built in its place. And she's having the time of her life doing it! Twilight ducks as an excited Rainbow Dash karate chops away at the roof, sending pieces of it flying everywhere. APPLEJACK, who has been taking cover behind a tree, emerges to cheer on her pal. "But you must be a little upset that she's making you do all the work, right?" Twilight asks Rainbow Dash in an effort to find some rift between the friends. "You mean have all the fun? No way!" Rainbow Dash answers before taking a high-flying leap at the barn and crashing through it hooves first. Twilight sighs, then quickly recovers. "There's still Fluttershy," she says with determination.

As Twilight makes her way through a field, she comments that she should have gone to Fluttershy in the beginning. After all, Fluttershy always has some fear she's trying to overcome. "As a good friend, I'm sure I'll be able to help her get over..." Twilight's voice trails off as her eyes go wide.

In the distance, the usually meek and timid Fluttershy is fighting a bear! And winning! A stunned Twilight looks on as Fluttershy pulls the hairy beast's legs up over its head, twists its arms like a pretzel, and stomps on its back until it goes limp. "Guess I'm not needed here," a still stunned Twilight says before departing. We stay on Fluttershy and the bear as Fluttershy leans down to talk to the enormous prone animal. "You're

carrying a lot of tension in your shoulders,” Fluttershy says sweetly. “You really should have come to me sooner,” she adds as she jumps up and down on the bear’s back, continuing its much-needed massage.

Back on the streets of Ponyville, Twilight runs into Spike. He can see that the prospect of not sending out a letter is really getting to her and again tries to assure her that she’s got nothing to worry about. But Twilight isn’t listening. Her eyes are on a posse of giggling Kindergarten ponies. She watches in horror as they stop to point and laugh at her. Spike sees the terrified expression on Twilight’s face. Unable to get her attention, he hops on her back, effectively snapping her out of her daze. We see that the little ponies are actually paying her no mind. Still, Twilight is visibly shaken by the thought of her terrible fate should she fail to do as she’s been told. So much so that when she spots Pinkie Pie across the town square she desperately calls out to her and breaks into a gallop to catch up with her. (With Spike now holding on for dear life.)

A seemingly alarmed Pinkie Pie spots the fast-approaching Twilight and takes off. Twilight continues to pursue Pinkie Pie, calling after her to stop. But Pinkie Pie seems desperate to stay as far away from Twilight as possible. “It’s like she’s avoiding me,” an exasperated Twilight says to Spike as she continues to pursue the ducking and dodging Pinkie Pie. “Wait. If she’s avoiding me...” Twilight ponders aloud. “She must have a huge problem with me!” she adds with increasing excitement. “This is great!” She picks up speed, sending poor Spike flying off her back. He hits the ground and watches with a concerned look on his face as Twilight continues chasing after her friend.

Twilight finally catches up to the elusive Pinkie Pie in the middle of the Town Square where Rainbow Dash, Applejack, Fluttershy and Rarity have gathered for an impromptu picnic. “Why are you so upset with me?” she asks Pinkie Pie. “And what can I do to fix it?” she continues, cheerfully. But Pinkie Pie isn’t upset with Twilight. In fact, she couldn’t be more pleased with her. After all, Pinkie Pie loves a good game of chase. “Now I’m it!” Pinkie Pie proclaims bouncing up and down excitedly. An exasperated Twilight explains that she doesn’t have time for games. Noting her panicked tone, the rest of Twilight’s friends gather around as she proceeds to vent about the terrible predicament in which she finds herself. The usually reserved Twilight is really losing it.

Twilight’s friends tell her she’s over-reacting and are dismissive of her concerns. “You’re getting’ yourself into a tizzy over nothin’,” Applejack tells her. “This is not nothing!” a completely freaked out Twilight shouts. She spins on her heels to depart. “What a drama queen,” Rarity says as Twilight storms off. The other ponies nod in agreement.

ACT III

Still “in a tizzy” and with the day almost done, Twilight decides that if she can’t find a friendship problem, she’ll make a friendship problem! She spots the Cutie Mark Crusaders playing and knows just what to do. A moment later we see her giving the girls a very plain and rather boring pony baby doll. “But only one of you can use it at a time,”

she says pointedly. Twilight looks on in frustration as the Crusaders, unimpressed with the boring toy but trying not to show it, offer it up to one another. “You should play with it first,” insists APPLE BLOOM. “No, after you,” says SCOOTALOO. “Please, I wouldn’t dream of going before you,” says SWEETIE BELLE.

Seeing that her plan to divide the friends isn’t working, Twilight decides that she needs to make the toy irresistible to the girls. With a tip of her horn, she uses her magic to enchant the object. Despite the fact that the doll is as plain and boring as ever, the Crusaders are suddenly drawn to it as if it was the most amazing thing they’ve ever seen. They start to argue over who should get to use it first. Pleased, Twilight steps in to break up the fight. “Girls, I think there’s an important lesson to be learned here about...” Twilight begins. But before she can continue a pair of the Crusaders CLASSMATES, brush her aside. Having fallen under the doll’s spell, they really want to get their hooves on it. “That doll should be mine!” DIAMOND TIARA exclaims. “No, it should be mine!” shouts SILVER SPOON, snatching it away from Scootaloo.

The girls’ manic desperation to possess the doll starts to make Twilight a little nervous. “Okay, now, no need to fight,” Twilight says as she tries to step in once again. Just then, BIG MACINTOSH approaches. “It’s so cute!” he exclaims. “I want it!” he continues. “No! I saw it first!” shouts the MAYOR, galloping over to claim the doll. Within seconds, a half-dozen more ponies (including GRANNY SMITH and the CAKES) have gathered to fight over the limp rag doll. Twilight tries to break up the fight, but is pushed aside as even more ponies try to get their hooves on the toy.

A few minutes later, Applejack, Rarity, Rainbow Dash, Pinkie Pie and Fluttershy arrive on the scene. Having heard a great commotion, they’ve come to investigate. They are shocked to find Twilight trying desperately to stop what has turned into a total melee of ponies vying to play with the little doll. Twilight quickly shields her friends from seeing the doll and falling under its spell, then tells them what she’s done. If only she could get a clear shot at the toy, she could un-enchant it. Alas, with all the bickering ponies gathered around it, she just can’t aim her magic directly at it. As the sun begins to set on a Ponyville in total pandemonium, Twilight breaks down in tears. “What have I done?” she cries. “If I don’t find a way to fix this, Princess Celestia won’t send me back to Magic Kindergarten. She’ll send me back to Magic Pre-School!”

Suddenly, a bright white light washes over the arguing ponies. As quickly as they were drawn to the enchanted toy, they lose total interest. Twilight looks up into the sky to see the source of the bright white light. It is coming from PRINCESS CELESTIA! “Meet me in the library,” she orders Twilight. A solemn Twilight heads for the library to learn her fate, leaving her friends in a state of panic. “This is disastrous! Just disastrous!” Rarity wails as she flings herself about dramatically.

Inside the library, Twilight apologizes to Celestia for causing such a huge problem in Ponyville. “I was so desperate to solve a small problem, that I caused a much bigger one,” she says shamefully. Before Celestia has a chance to respond, Applejack, Rainbow

Dash, Pinkie Pie, Rarity and Fluttershy burst into the room. They tell Celestia that it is partially their fault that things got so out of hand. They saw that their friend was really upset but didn't take her feelings seriously. Twilight comments that it seems that they've all learned pretty valuable lessons. "Not that it matters," she adds. "Because it's the end of the day and I never sent a letter," she says, starting to cry. "I'm going back to Magic Kindergarten in Canterlot," she blubbers.

Princess Celestia gently addresses the crestfallen pony and informs her that she has no intent of sending her back to Kindergarten. She never expected Twilight to keep to such a regimented schedule. In fact, seeing as how the other ponies have learned their own important lesson about friendship, she thinks it would be wonderful if they were to compose a letter this week. Princess Celestia suggests that Twilight's friends continue to write her whenever they gain knowledge they believe is worth sharing. The girls are thrilled to be granted such an important responsibility.

Twilight asks Celestia how she knew that she was in trouble. The Princess informs her that it was Twilight's good friend Spike who had made her aware that the pony was letting her fears get the best of her and might need some help. Celestia commends Spike for taking Twilight's feelings seriously. Spike begins to gloat in front of Twilight's other friends. He turns to see Princess Celestia raising an admonishing eyebrow before flying off. "Spike, take a letter," Applejack says. The dragon quickly grabs quill and paper.

We DISSOLVE from pony to pony as each one contributes to a letter to Princess Celestia. Twilight shares her lesson about not turning a small problem into a big problem. The other ponies detail the knowledge they've gained about always taking a friend's feelings seriously. "Signed, Your loyal subjects," they recite in unison as we FADE OUT.

THE END