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MY LITTLE PONY 6

THE CHRYSALIS EFFECT

62#

Premise V2 by: Josh Haber

Premise: June 1, 2015

THE CHRYSALIS EFFECT

Premise by Josh Haber

To everypony's surprise, the map calls Starlight to the very village she subjugated way back in S5, E1. Starlight expresses concern that she isn't ready to tackle a friendship problem on her own, especially there. Twilight offers to come along, but Starlight points out that the map only called her. Despite her reservations, Starlight decides she needs to stand on her own. Twilight convinces her to at least take Spike. On the outskirts of the village, Starlight chickens out. She can't imagine the villagers will believe anything she has to say, let alone allow her to solve whatever friendship problem they have. As much as Starlight wants to stand on her own, she decides she isn't ready and heads back to Ponyville for help. She arrives to find the Mane Six gathered in the Castle of Friendship, behaving oddly. She explains the situation, but to her surprise they tell her not to worry about it—the problem will probably sort itself out. Even Spike realizes this advice is out of character and while he and Starlight wonder what to do, Sunburst arrives from the Crystal Empire with Flurry Heart. He explains that Cadance and Shining Armor have also been behaving strangely—so much so, that he brought the baby with him to ask Twilight for help. The four of them decide to speak to Twilight when a pony pulls Spike aside. The pony reveals himself to be Thorax, the good Changeling, in disguise. He explains that Cadance and Shining Armor have been replaced by Changeling imposters. Dubious, Sunburst asks if Thorax thinks he is a Changeling imposter as well. Thorax, "Not exactly," and points at the baby (which Sunburst wears in a Bjorn-like foal carrier). Baby Flurry Heart instantly transforms into a Changeling and flies off. Shocked, Starlight peeks in at the M6 making a mess of the throne room, and wonders if this means that they have also been replaced. Off of Thorax's POV of them as Changelings: "Pretty much. Yeah."

Sunburst decides to return to the Crystal Empire and do whatever he can to keep the imposters from doing any damage while Starlight, Spike, and Thorax head to Canterlot for help. They promise to send aide to the Crystal Empire as quickly as they can. Unfortunately, in Canterlot, they quickly discover that Celestia and Luna have been swapped for imposters as well. As Starlight tries to figure out what to do, we CUT TO the Changeling Kingdom where Chrysalis reveals her plan to all of her kidnapes (i.e., Celestia, Luna, Cadance, Shining Armor, and the M6). She's going to completely drain them of their love and magical friendship. Their combined power will provide enough energy to feed her people for generations.

Meanwhile, Starlight, Thorax, and Spike discuss their options. Unsure who to trust, Starlight seeks out the only other friend she's made, Trixie. Spike goes to ask for help from the one being they are all certain no Changeling could ever impersonate—Discord. At Trixie's traveling wagon, Starlight explains the situation to this rag-tag collection of misfits: Spike, Thorax, Trixie, and Discord. Discord wonders if they shouldn't just make the best of it, "I mean, how different can the imposters be?" But after a brief and comedically disastrous attempt at making things work with the replacement Fluttershy, he agrees to help. Unfortunately, when Starlight asks him to simply snap his claws and fix everything, Discord balks. Starlight wanted to stand on her own and now she has her chance. Discord wouldn't dream of standing in the way of that—especially since she failed so miserably earlier. Spike apologizes—he had to tell Discord everything to get him to come along. Discord explains that he's really looking forward to seeing how Starlight

handles all of this responsibility, but reminds them all that if things get too bad he can just save everypony with a wave of his claw.

Starlight doesn't have time to argue. They need to load up the wagon and set off for the Changeling Kingdom immediately if they want to save their friends. Discord admits that he doesn't have the patience to wait for them to travel all that way, so he snaps his claws and POOF! they're there—wagon and all. He apologizes for butting in and urges Starlight to take it from there—promising not to interfere again unless, you know, things get really dire. Unfortunately, none of the rest of the “team” share Discord's level of self-confidence. Trixie doesn't see how her stage magic will be of any use in saving their friends from an evil Queen. Spike feels similarly challenged. Thorax doesn't think he has much to offer, aside from his skill at spotting Changelings, which isn't so helpful inside the Changeling Kingdom where he's basically an outcast. Discord is excited. He just can't wait to see how Starlight combines all of their seemingly inadequate skill sets to devise and execute a successful rescue plan.

Later, Trixie sets up her wagon just outside the Changeling Kingdom and starts to perform. Discord acts as her barker and succeeds in drawing a substantial crowd of Changelings. Discord joins the audience as Trixie puts on the show of her life. Meanwhile, Starlight, Spike, and Thorax sneak inside the Kingdom. Spike compliments Starlight on her plan so far—Trixie's show is the perfect distraction. At the gates to Chrysalis' palace/hive, Thorax enacts the next part of Starlight's plan. He pretends to have captured Starlight and Spike and convinces the Changeling guards to take them to where the others are all being held. When they find their friends, Starlight quickly subdues the guards, trapping them in same cell/cocoons in which the others are being held. Unfortunately, as she, Spike, and Thorax attempt to free their friends, Chrysalis appears with a gang of Changeling Guards. As they bring in Trixie and Discord (gleefully trotting along behind), the Changeling Queen scolds Starlight for even entertaining the notion of defeating her—something not even Celestia, Luna, Cadance, and Twilight could do. She explains that Starlight will pay the price for her over-confidence by joining her friends as the Changeling Queen drains every last drop of love from them to feed her people. Spike tells Discord that now would be a pretty good time to wave his claws and fix everything. Discord isn't sure, he definitely doesn't want to rob Starlight of any friendship lesson she might be learning. When they all insist that he save them, he finally gives in and snaps his claws—but nothing happens. He tries again, but still there's nothing. As Chrysalis cackles with glee, she explains that since Discord now has love in his heart, it—and his powers—can be taken away. The good news is her people will become that much stronger. Discord admits he had been feeling weak, but thought it was the altitude.

Thorax pleads with his former Queen to spare his friends, but Chrysalis is particularly enraged with him. For betraying his own kind, she decides to make an example out of Thorax by making him the first to be entirely drained of love. Starlight tries to explain to Chrysalis that sharing friendship can create an endless source of love, but the Queen refuses to believe it. Changelings feed on love. Giving it away would destroy them. Believing Starlight's words, Thorax takes it upon himself to prove his Queen wrong. Releasing all the love he has, Thorax gives it to Chrysalis and is transformed into a new, beautiful creature (think: butterfly version of a Changeling).

Chrysalis tries to drain the new Thorax, but whatever love she takes is immediately replaced. Starlight explains that Thorax has been transformed into a being of pure love and Chrysalis finally realizes how wrong she's been. In a musical number she turns to her people and apologizes for leading them down the wrong path for so long and at the song's climax she gives all the love she has to her subjects and is, herself, transformed into a Changeling/Butterfly creature. Soon the entire Changeling Kingdom follows suit and is transformed into a beautiful place of light and love. Freed, Twilight, the others congratulate Starlight for her role in saving them. Twilight guesses that it must feel pretty good to have been able to stand on her own and isn't sure she has any more lessons for her pupil. Starlight insists she knows of at least one more thing she has to accomplish.

Back in Starlight's village, she stands before its citizens. She explains how she recently learned from the example of a great Queen to own up to her mistakes and apologize when you're wrong. She tells the town she's sorry for the way she treated them. Even though she thought she was doing the right thing, she knows now how wrong she was and asks them all for their forgiveness. The villagers quickly agree and hope they can all move forward. Starlight starts to ask what the friendship problem is when her cutie mark shimmers indicating the friendship problem has already been resolved. Twilight points out that the problem must have been Starlight's own reluctance to ask for forgiveness. She congratulates her pupil and looks forward to taking on new friendship adventures together.