

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 7

Fame and Misfortune
Ep 714

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FAME AND MISFORTUNE

Outline by Mitch Larson

Friendship lesson: Fame can have its ups and downs, but focusing on the positive makes it all worth it!

TEASER

SC. 1 - INT. SUGARCUBE CORNER – DAY

Heartfelt music swells. We open on TWILIGHT SPARKLE already speechifying about friendship. It's disorienting. This usually happens at the end of an episode. "You're right, Starlight. I've learned a very valuable lesson today. When it comes to friendship, you can't judge a book by its cover."

"Or a horse by his mane," says MR. CAKE. He, Twilight, and STARLIGHT GLIMMER all start to laugh. We have no idea what's just happened, but it doesn't matter because a lesson has been learned and everything's A-OK.

SC. 2 - EXT. SUGARCUBE CORNER – MOMENTS LATER

Twilight and Starlight exit, both happy with how everything turned out. But the "book by its cover" thing reminds Twilight of something she hasn't thought of in forever. Back before they knew Starlight, the main six used to write down the stuff they learned in an old friendship journal. Starlight says she'd love to see that, now that she knows all of them so well. Twilight, hit by nostalgia, says she'd like to see it again, too.

SC. 3 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE, LIBRARY – LATER

The library is pristine. Every book in its place, every spine perfectly aligned. Except one. The friendship journal is ratty and dirty, well-worn and well-used. Twilight magics it off the shelf, and PLOP! The book falls right out of its cover. "Uh, Twilight? Is it okay to judge this book by its cover?"

END TEASER

ACT ONE

SC. 4 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE – DAY

Twilight, PINKIE PIE, RAINBOW DASH, FLUTTERSHY, RARITY, and APPLEJACK all enter, confused as to what they're doing there. They piece together that Starlight has invited them all, but nopony knows why. Finally she enters, and she's got quite the surprise. THUNK! She drops the disgusting, battered book on the floor. "Is that our old friendship journal?" says Applejack. "It's lookin' a little...overripe."

Starlight says she thinks the journal is an incredible piece of their history, but that it doesn't have much life left. Applejack's writings are smudged with sweat. Fluttershy's are so small they're nearly impossible to read ("I wanted to leave space for all of you.") Rainbow Dash's pencil kept tearing through the pages... And so, inspired by the journal, Starlight stayed up all night thinking of a way to preserve it.

The ponies watch as she fires up her horn. Her magic hits the book. It starts to wobble and flop on the floor like popping popcorn, until finally SHOOOP! Another journal pops right out of it and lands on the floor. Twilight magics it into the air and flips through the pages. It's a perfect transcription of the journal! But it's also brand new! No problems with a disintegrating cover, no problems with Rarity's overly-ornate calligraphy...it is pristine and completely readable. All those lessons are right there in black and white!

Starlight proceeds to make a copy for each of them, and they are all touched by the gesture. They start to feel nostalgic over the things they learned in the past...

SC. 5 - EXT. STREETS OF PONYVILLE – DAY

The next day, Twilight and Starlight stroll through town. Twilight thanks Starlight again for taking the time to learn that spell. They sure have learned a lot since those old days...

SPLAT! A tomato explodes in Twilight's face. Broccoli narrowly misses Starlight! They're pinned down in a vegetable battle right there on the streets of Ponyville! Reveal TOOLA ROOLA and COCONUT CREAM are in the midst of a friendship-destroying fight. Twilight manages to get them to stop and figure out their issues. In the process, she recognizes the very lesson she's trying to teach them is one she just re-read in the journal! Idea! She asks Starlight to make a few more copies of the journal...

SC. 6 - INT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE – DAY

CHEERILEE is only too happy to add some copies of the friendship journal to the school library. She says it will help her students immensely to be able to read about all that Twilight and her friends have gone through and learned.

SC. 7 - EXT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE – MOMENTS LATER

Twilight steps outside feeling satisfied. All those hard-learned lessons, all the love and friendship she and her friends have built, it'll all be put to good use by—

SNIPS and SNAILS come outside mid-fight, arguing about whose lessons they're going to read first. APPLE BLOOM, SWEETIE BELLE, and SCOOTALOO emerge next, peacocking about being famous authors with their own friendships lessons published in the journal. Starlight smiles uneasily: "Don't worry, Twilight, the important stuff will come through once they actually *read* it." Twilight chuckles uneasily: "Yeah, heh-heh. I sure hope so..."

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SC. 8 - EXT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE – MORNING

Twilight heads outside to run some errands and AAHH! There's a small group of LOCALS outside waiting for her. Each has a copy of the journal for her to sign.

Starlight steps outside and explains that she decided to make a few extras so adults could enjoy the friendship lessons as well. With books and pens thrust in her face, Twilight struggles to sign them. “Good idea,” she says. “So, everypony, what did you think of the lessons?” None of them have read a page. But they’re super excited for their autographed memorabilia!

SC. 9 - EXT. CAFÉ – DAY

Twilight can’t shake the uneasy feeling that nopony seems to be “getting it” when it comes to the journal. Then she overhears two BRUNCH PONIES at the café. One says it’s nice to read more about the adventures of the main six. The other agrees...except that Rarity doesn’t belong in the book. How conceited! Sure, she did a fine job setting up the Ponyville Days Celebration, but does she really believe that it was all because of her? “I might start shopping elsewhere now that I know the *real* Rarity.” Twilight is troubled...

SC. 10 - EXT. SUGARCUBE CORNER – LATER

Twilight is passing by when PINKIE PIE flies out of the bakery and tackle-hugs her to the ground. “Twilight, isn’t it amazing? I’ve been seeing ponies everywhere with our journal!” A GROUP of ponies with copies of the friendship journal point to Pinkie. “There’s Pinkie Pie! / She’s so funny! / Make us laugh!” Twilight and Pinkie try to have a conversation but the nearby ponies just keep laughing at everything PP says, even when it’s just “bye!” Pinkie and Twilight part ways, but they both seem a little unnerved...

SC. 11 - EXT. TWILIGHT’S CASTLE – DAY INTO NIGHT INTO DAY

The sun plops down, moon springs up. Moon plops down, sun springs up.

SC. 12 - EXT. STREETS OF PONYVILLE – DAY

Twilight sees Rainbow Dash reclining on a low cloud. She’s surrounded by pegasi in “Rainbow Dash” T-shirts. One of her fans reads aloud from the journal. Twilight is happy they like it, but one of the pegasi says they only read the Dash parts. “I can’t help it if mine are the best, Twilight. We can’t all be the next Daring-Do.” Twilight is perturbed. As popular as the friendship journal is everypony seems to be missing the friendship part.

SC. 13 - EXT. PONYVILLE MARKETPLACE – LATER

Twilight walks and thinks, puzzling through her friendship journal problem. Screams and loud noises ahead! She races over to find Fluttershy surrounded by TOWNSPONIES and looking terrified. They’re accosting her about her entries in the journal. Why did she have to learn the same lesson over and over? Twilight jumps in to help, but to no avail. “Come on, Twilight, you learned all sorts of different stuff. Why is Fluttershy even in the book if she can’t learn one thing right? Even *I’ve* learned more than she has!” Twilight tries to tell the crowd they’re being unfair, but Fluttershy has already run off. Twilight’s dismay growing ever stronger.

SC. 14 - EXT. TWILIGHT’S CASTLE – DAY INTO NIGHT INTO DAY

Day. Night. Day.

SC. 15 - EXT. STREETS OF PONYVILLE – DAY

Twilight heads to town. Hopefully journalmania has started to subside. Suddenly she's caught in a flurry of ribbons and measuring tapes and fabric. Rarity, who seems to be experiencing a frightening shift from Katherine Hepburn to Joan Crawford, insists on creating something for Twilight right there and then. "Rarity, what's wrong with you?" Rarity's lip trembles. Her exterior cracks. She drags Twilight back to...

SC. 16 - NT. CAROUSEL BOUTIQUE – LATER

...where she disintegrates. She hasn't had a single customer in days! She opens the curtain. Ponies across the street look at her and whisper and judge. "I don't know what I've done, but nopony wants me to make anything. I need to design, Twilight! *I need to design!*" Twilight knows what the problem is. It's that damn journal again—

Suddenly, APPLEJACK bursts in! Her eyes are red and her mane is a mess. She needs a hundred horse blankets from Rarity, ASAP! When Twilight asks what's wrong, she says, "I'm popular, Twilight! And I don't like it one bit!"

SC. 17 - EXT. SWEET APPLE ACRES – LATER

The farm is filled with ponies. After reading the journal, a group of fans took Applejack's lessons about openness and family to heart. Her fans call themselves the Sugarcubes, and they've moved into the farm and made themselves right at home! "After all that stuff I wrote in the journal, I can't get rid of 'em! Do you know how many times I wrote that everypony is family?" She wishes they never would have written that journal. Twilight sympathizes. "I'm starting to feel the same way..."

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SC. 18 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE – MORNING

Twilight paces. So does Starlight. She really thought she was doing a good thing making all those copies of the journal. Twilight says it was a good thing. Her friends just need to be reminded of that. No matter how badly the townponies are reacting, it's up to each of the main six to stay positive. DISSOLVE TO:

But they're a hot mess. Applejack is totally fried from all the cookin' and cleanin' and familyin'. Rarity is overcompensating for the town's shunning by making over anypony in range. Rainbow Dash believes her own press, and has reverted to the most self-centered version of herself. Pinkie Pie has started to come unhinged, everypony just wants her to be funny. "I mean, I'm hilarious but there's more to me than that!" Fluttershy isn't even there. She hasn't left her cottage since the incident in the marketplace.

Twilight urges them to stay positive despite such unexpected criticism. "Everypony's just reading the journal wrong. Or not reading it at all." They've got to show the townponies that they're not just abstractions in a book; they're real ponies with real feelings. Her friends start to agree when there's a knock at the door. TOWNSPONIES enter with a flood of questions for the girls: "It doesn't feel believable that you all would be friends." Then, to Twilight: "Yeah, your character would have been more interesting if she'd stayed in Canterlot!" Twilight is gobsmacked: "My *character*?"

Factions of ponies supporting various members of the main six start to argue. Twilight gets more and more heated until she shouts them all down and launches into a...

SONG. The lyrics are all about how the main six are not perfect. They each have flaws, and those flaws are the things that allowed them to learn the lessons in the journal and become friends. But when the song ends, the fighting is worse than ever.

Twilight is devastated. She slinks away from the crowd, head hung low. Toola Roola and Coconut Cream notice, and feel awful. They tell Starlight they need her help...

SC. 19 - INT. TWILIGHT'S CASTLE – LATER

Twilight is inconsolable. Maybe the experiences she and her friends had together, the wisdom they acquired about friendship...maybe none of it actually mattered at all...

Toola Roola and Coconut Cream come inside. They tell Twilight that their friendship would have broken the other day if not for the journal. Starlight enters and says there are a few others who feel the same way. The Crusaders enter and tell Twilight that they wouldn't be where they are today if not for Twilight, her friends, and their lessons. "You're our heroes. You've shown us it's okay to mess up, as long as you keep trying."

Slowly, more and more ponies start to enter. Cheerilee and the Cakes and Big Mac and Granny Smith. Each with a word about how important the lessons in the journal are. Now Celestia and Luna enter with their own story about how the lessons changed them. And that's not all. The townspies who have been acting so badly start to filter in, each escorting a member of the main six. "We got so caught up in the pages of the book that we forgot there were real ponies with real thoughts and feelings on the other end!" It is truly a wonderful life inside the castle. But instead of singing "Auld Lang Syne," the ponies strike up an impromptu chorus of the "flaws" song from earlier. It is lovely and wonderful and heartwarming...

The M6 all smile at each other. This is what it's about.

Later, when Twilight is left alone with Toola Roola and Coconut Cream, she thanks them again for taking the lessons in the journal to heart. They shift uncomfortably. "What is it?" They say they were embarrassed to ask, but could they maybe get her autograph? FADE OUT! THE END.