

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 7
Marks and Recreation
Ep 722

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MARKS AND RECREATION

Outline by May Chan

Friendship Lesson: The CMC's learn that their way of doing things isn't the only way, and Rumble learns that you shouldn't let your fear of something get in the way of reaching your full potential.

TEASER**Sc. 1 - INT. CUTIE MARK CRUSADERS HQ - AFTERNOON**

After wrapping up another afternoon of helping little foals figure out what their cutie mark purpose is, the SCOOTALOO, APPLE BLOOM, and SWEETIE BELLE are exhausted. They love what they do, but it's not always one hundred percent satisfying because they can't help everyone. Today for instance, they only had time to counsel two blank flanks because it takes so long to help each pony individually. There's got to be a more efficient way. The Crusaders realize that a lot of these blank flanks could use the support and inspiration from other blank flanks. Hey, here's an idea! They'll start a Cutie Mark Club where like-minded BF's can meet after school to try fun activities together while inspiring, motivating and supporting one another. The Crusaders can't wait to start telling blank flanks to join their club!

END TEASER**ACT ONE****Sc. 2 - INT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE - MORNING**

It's the start of the school day. The Crusaders invite blank flanks to join their new club. They pass out fliers. They have balloons stamped with their cutie marks. They proudly raise a CMC flag. Blank flanks flock to our trio excited to learn more about this club.

Nearby, a little foal named RUMBLE watches. He rushes by the Crusaders hoping they won't see him, but-- "Hey! Come join our club!" Scootaloo jumps in front of Rumble to hand him a flier. Rumble looks at it: A Cutie Mark club? The Crusaders are inviting all blank flanks to join. Rumble mutters, "more like recruiting." The Crusaders go on to explain that the Cutie Mark Club is where ALL blank flanks can try different activities after school until they find their true purpose -- the thing that they are best at and meant to do for their entire life. Rumble says he'll think about it... but when they're not looking, he throws their flier in the trash can.

Sc. 3 - EXT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE - AFTERNOON

School is over. The CMC have gathered the Cutie Mark Club members (about a half dozen foals) nearby for their first official club meeting. "Now everypony, this is YOUR club. So you decide what you want to do with it. What activity do you want to try first?" Everypony shouts out different answers. They finally decide on playing a game of Horseshoe Toss. It's a fun activity that tests all sorts of skill sets: aim, speed, agility, etc. Just then, Rumble walks out of the school. Once again, he quickly tries to bypass the CMC but they see him. "Come on, Rumble. We're about to play Horseshoe Toss!"

Before Rumble can protest, the CMC's hustle him over to the hay mat. Turns out, he has a decent stance. Apple Bloom encouragingly says maybe Rumble will get his cutie mark in having a bullseye aim. Rumble overhears this and misses. Rumble shrugs, oh well, looks like he's a really crummy Horseshoe Tossing. The CMCs feel bad for him but say he's gotta just keep trying! They know how frustrating it is to not get your cutie mark. There's nothing to be ashamed of. "We're going to help you get your cutie mark!" Rumble tries to protest, but...

Sc. 4 - EXT. PONYVILLE - VARIOUS - MONTAGE

The CMCs and the Cutie Mark Club try different activities. Everything from sewing to archery to jig dancing to sailing to writing haikus. No matter what activity Rumble tries, he fails at. Archery: his arrows fly everywhere. Jig dancing: he trips over his own feet. Sailing: his boat tips over. Writing haikus: his pencils break. Apple Bloom notices and thinks it's impossible for anypony to be this bad at *everything* he tries. "Is it just me or is he trying to be bad?" The other two shrug it off. It doesn't make sense that anypony would *want* to be bad at something.

Sc. 5 - INT. CUTIE MARK CRUSADERS HQ - LATER

The Crusaders regroup to discuss their first meeting. That was pretty successful. A young filly named Kettle Corn got her cutie mark in writing haikus! And a few other foals showed real promise in other areas. Plus it's wonderful to hear them all encouraging each other, like when Featherweight wasn't that skilled at dancing the jig, Pipsqueak suggested maybe ballet is more his speed! And Pipsqueak didn't have the strength to shoot an arrow, but his friends pointed out he did have pretty good aim. Then Apple Bloom asks, "Yeah but what about Rumble?" The poor guy wasn't really great at anything and she'll be honest, she didn't think he had the best attitude. Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo say they'll just have to try harder at tomorrow's club meeting with him. CUT TO:

Sc. 6 - EXT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE PLAYGROUND - DAY

The Cutie Mark Club meets again but Rumble is noticeably absent. The Crusaders assume he's a no-show because he feels bad about not being good at anything. Just then, Rumble walks by. Again, he tries to rush by before they can see him, but-- "Hey, Rumble!" The CMC's try to get him to join the activity of the day, jam making, but Rumble says he's busy. He's meeting his brother Thunderlane for a Wonderbolt's practice. "You should go, little bro!" REVEAL Thunderlane, who was there to pick him up. He jovially greets everypony and hi-hooves some awestruck foals. Thunderlane tells Rumble practice isn't for an hour anyway. He lovingly pats Rumble on the head and says he should have some fun. Rumble seems hesitant but he can't say no to the brother he clearly adores. Scootaloo says she's going to practice too, to support Rainbow Dash. They can head over together - with jam! C'mon! Scootaloo drags Rumble away.

Sc. 7 - INT. SUGAR CUBE CORNER'S KITCHEN - DAY

The Cutie Mark Club and the CMCs are in there making jam. It's nice of Pinkie Pie to let us use her kitchen for the day. The CMC watch each filly and foal make their jam. They stop at Rumble's -- it smells pretty good. When the CMC move on to the next pony, Rumble purposely puts dirt in his jam. "What are you doing?" Rumble looks up. Sweetie Belle has caught him sabotaging his own jam. Apple Bloom was right. He is trying to be bad at stuff!! They pull him aside to ask him why he would do that? Rumble blurts out he doesn't want his cutie mark! Off the CMC's shocked faces, we...

END ACT ONE**ACT TWO****Sc. 8 - INT. SUGAR CUBE CORNER KITCHEN - SAME**

The Crusaders can't believe their ears - they've never met anypony who didn't want their cutie mark. They were so desperate to get theirs that this idea is completely foreign to them. Why would anypony NOT want their cutie mark? That's crazy and weird! Rumble is defensive. He's not crazy or weird. There's no shame in being a Blank Flank! In fact, it's crazy and weird to want a cutie mark! There are some gasps and murmurs from other Cutie Mark Club members, who obviously are overhearing their exchange. The CMC's say that perhaps their club would be better off without Rumble's negativity. Rumble: "So you're kicking me out? FINE. I never wanted to be in your silly club anyway!" He storms off.

Sc. 9 - EXT. PONYVILLE SCHOOL HOUSE - THE NEXT DAY

At the next Cutie Mark Club meeting, the CMC's say that yesterday's "incident" wasn't ideal, but all they can do is move on. They've got a full slate of activities today, and some ponies are sure to get closer to getting their cutie marks! CUT TO:

The CM Club trying joke-telling, bean counting, and making balloon animals. Some foals are good at certain activities; some aren't. But when the CMC's are distracted helping other foals, Rumble approaches the blank flanks who are down on themselves for not being good at something and tells them they shouldn't feel bad. Blank flanks should not feel ashamed or pressured into getting cutie marks! When the CMC's notice, they confront Rumble, who says he's starting a club of his own: the "Blank Flank Forever" Club! It's a club for like-minded blank flanks to enjoy being blank flanks and appreciate their blank-flankness. And all the Cutie Mark club members are welcome to join. The CMC's get indignant. Why would anypony want to be a blank flank forever? Everypony wants their cutie mark! They try to get Rumble to leave, saying that anypony who doesn't feel that way doesn't have to be in their club. Then, to their surprise, half their Cutie Mark club members leave with Rumble. The CMC's are blown away. Has everypony gone crazy??

Sc. 10 - INT. CUTIE MARK CRUSADER HQ - LATER

The CMC's can't fathom what's gotten into everypony. Not wanting a cutie mark is like not wanting breathe air. It just doesn't make any sense. What could Rumble be telling them that makes other foals follow his example? They decide to go to one of Rumble's club meetings.

Sc. 11 - EXT. PONYVILLE PARK - THE NEXT DAY

The CMC's disguise themselves and sneak into a BFF club meeting. Rumble tells everypony the CMC's have it all wrong. Blank flanks should be celebrated for being open books. The world is our oyster. They can be anything! "They tell you cutie marks make you special, but it puts you in a box. It puts a label on you and forces you to do one thing for the rest of your life." The Crusaders are incensed: Cutie marks don't do that!

Eventually the CMC's can't hold it in anymore and they reveal themselves, shouting back at Rumble that just because you get a cutie mark in something doesn't mean you can't do anything else. Apple Bloom: "Just because I'm a CMC doesn't mean I don't help out on the farm." The foals who are listening nod and start to wander to the CMC's side. But Rumble argues: "But don't you spend most of your time being a CMC? Isn't that what you're known for?" The CMC's can't argue with that and the foals start to wander back to Rumble's side. But the CMC's say they absolutely love being CMC's. They're glad they're known for it! Getting their cutie marks just meant they found their calling! The foals continue to wander back and forth like a tennis match. Rumble: "But what happens if you get your cutie mark in something you don't like?" The wandering foals look concerned. Can that happen? Rumble: "Only one way to be sure it doesn't. Blank Flank Forever!! Blank Flank Forever!!" The CMC's are surprised when every single foal joins him. What just happened? Rumble continues: "And anypony who doesn't feel that way doesn't have to be in our club." The CMC's leave, bewildered.

Sc. 12 - INT. CUTIE MARK CRUSADERS HQ - LATER

The Crusaders sit around dejected. Not only did they lose their club, but now blank flanks aren't even coming to ask for their advice! They haven't helped a pony in days! Suddenly, they hear voices outside. They look out and see Rumble and his BFF Club. There are more of them now. "Come on out, Cutie Mark Crusaders! We just want to talk!"

Sc. 13 - EXT. CUTIE MARK CRUSADERS HQ - CONTINUOUS

The Crusaders come out to greet Rumble and the BFF. Have they come to their senses and want their cutie marks? But that's not why the BFF are here. They're here to officially shut down the Cutie Mark Crusaders and let them know that the Blank Flanks of Ponyville officially don't need them anymore. The Crusaders notice that even Kettle Corn is with Rumble. She has covered up her cutie mark with paint. So have a couple of other ponies. They have regained their Blank Flank status because they prefer to be an open-ended question as opposed to one answer. Without a cutie mark, you're free to do anything you like! No pony expects anything from you! The BFF's cheer! Yay! No More Cutie Marks! No More Cutie Marks!! Off the CMC's looking at the crowd in horror we...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

Sc. 14 - INT. CUTIE MARK CRUSADERS HQ - LATER

Inside, the girls all wonder how the heck Rumble was able to brainwash all these ponies into thinking cutie marks are bad! Apple Bloom knows they can't change Rumble's mind, but maybe if they could just get rid of Rumble, they could win all the blank flanks back over to the Cutie Mark side. Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo aren't so sure. The problem is bigger than just Rumble now. They're worried that nopony else believes them anymore either! So how can they convince everypony that Cutie marks are the absolute best? Gasp! Sweetie Belle gets an idea. The BFF's might not believe them, but maybe they'll believe somepony else.

Sc. 15 - EXT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE - PLAYGROUND - MORNING

The Crusaders find the BFF's and say they know their friends don't believe them anymore but they brought someone special that maybe they will listen to. With that they introduce a special speaker: Starlight Glimmer. A murmur of excitement runs through the playground. "That's Starlight Glimmer! She saved the Princess from Queen Chrysalis! She's a hero!" The CMC's share an excited glance - it's working! The foals come over to Starlight as she tells them her story. At first, she thought that cutie marks separated ponies. But then she realized that they make you unique. But as Starlight speaks, Rumble gets up and trots to the door. He doesn't have to listen to this blank flank shaming. He'll go sit in the classroom and do extra credit homework before he listens to this. After all, he's proud to not have a cutie mark. And nothing she or the CMC's are gonna say is going to change that! Apple Bloom tells Rumble to go away -- no one wants to hear from you! Besides, he's being rude to their guest! Rumble marches out in defiance, and unfortunately he is followed by his BFF members.

Well, that didn't work. The Crusaders think this is all Rumble's fault. But Starlight helps the CMCs realize they've been going at this all wrong. "What? No Rumble started all this. He never even tried any of the activities. He purposely gave up before--" Starlight: "Exactly, before he could fail." Rumble is afraid he won't be good at anything. His brother is Thunderlane of the Thunderbolts. Kind of big hooves to fill. For the first time, the Crusaders understand that maybe it's not crazy or weird for someone to not want a cutie mark. And Starlight is also not shy about pointing out that the girls maybe didn't handle the situation the best way. The CMC's are ashamed. She's right. They didn't.

DISSOLVE TO:

Sc. 16 - EXT. PONYVILLE SCHOOLHOUSE- PLAYGROUND - LATER

Rumble and the Blank Flankers are just sitting in the playground after school, literally not doing a thing. No one's playing freeze tag or taking turns on the swings. Turns out, they were all so worried about getting a cutie mark for doing something, they decided the safest course of action was for all of them to do nothing. So they sat. Bored. Better not risk it.

Just then, the CMC's approach. The Crusaders ask everypony if maybe they could sing opera, toss horse shoes, or upcycle lightbulbs... just for fun and as friends. "And why would we want to do that?" asks Rumble. The CMC's say because they were wrong and they're sorry. When Rumble had an opinion on cutie marks that was so wildly different than their own, they just couldn't even hear it, let alone make any effort to understand where Rumble was coming from. Getting your cutie mark is a huge part of growing up. And it does define a major part of who you are. And that is scary. But it doesn't have to be all you are. And besides, no pony has ever gotten a cutie mark they don't like because well, you can't truly excel at something you don't enjoy. True, ponies have misinterpreted what their cutie marks have meant in the past but that's what the CMC's are here for! To help all ponies find happiness and fulfilment in their own unique talents! But at the end of the day, you can't let the fact that you're afraid stop you from reaching your full potential!

The CMC's encourage everypony to go back to doing something, *anything*, assuring them that this time there's no pressure to get their cutie marks. If some ponies get their marks, great. If not, that's okay too! Rumble thinks about this for a beat. Sitting around doing nothing is pretty boring. Then Rumble picks up a horse shoe with his hoof. He stands on the straw mat like he did earlier and tosses the horse shoe. It

flies across the playground and lands on the spike -- direct hit. He looks at his haunch -- no cutie mark. Maybe he'll try something else? Crusaders: Or you could just keep having fun. And that's what the ponies do.

THE END.