

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 7
Shadow Play – Parts 1 & 2
Ep 725 & 726
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MLP 725/726 SHADOW PLAY – Parts 1& 2

Beat Sheet by Josh Haber

PART I**TEASER**

- The MANE SIX and STARLIGHT are at the castle discussing all the legends that have come up recently. It's weird how the ponies in each one ended up disappearing. Twilight agrees it's strange. She just told Sunburst (in 724) how she's always wondered about the mysterious circumstances surrounding Starswirl the Bearded's disappearance. She wonders if they are all connected. Of course it was so long ago, they'll probably never know. Just then SUNBURST bursts in, having traveled all night to tell Twilight he knows what happened to SS!!!

ACT ONE

- Sunburst tells them how he's been studying Starswirl's journal from the moment he got home. Something compelled him to do it and even though translating from Olde Ponish was slow going, he discovered not only that these Pillars of old Equestria were actual ponies, but that they all knew each other and Starswirl! He relates the following (in some kind of visually interesting, storybook way).
- Long ago, six legendary ponies were brought together by another pony (who later became the Pony of Shadows). He was trying to form a group that would stand for and protect everything that is good in Equestria, but the others balked at his leadership (basically they dismissed him because he wasn't as powerful as they were, but we'll withhold that part till the end). Spurned, the seventh pony turned to dark magic and was transformed to shadow. He returned and a great battle was fought, after which they all vanished.
- They all want to know more, but Sunburst tells them that's all he's got, although they might be able to learn more at the sight of the battle – in the darkest part of Everfree Forest.
- Sunburst (via Starswirl's journal) leads them through the spooky forest to the site of the battle (like a Stonehenge-type structure), where they discover more details on the fight – specifically how it ended, with both the Pillars and the Pony of Shadows trapped in some kind of Limbo.
- Later, after they all return home, the others find Twilight, who's been researching the whole thing non-stop. She tells them she's hasn't been able to stop thinking about it and might just have discovered a spell to bring Starswirl and the other Pillars back from Limbo!

ACT TWO

- TS describes the spell. To pull the Pillars out of Limbo she needs something personal from each of them – an artifact. They go over the legends again and realize that each of the Mane Six are a kind of parallel to each of the Pillars (maybe even tee up that Starlight is like the POS, but also totally not because she's reformed). Along with this realization, each of them have a sense that they know what their Pillar's artifact might be. They each go to retrieve their respective artifact while Twilight and Sunburst work on the spell.
- AJ heads out to find Rockhoof's shovel which ends up in a side show museum dedicated to the "Folk Lore Legends of Equestria." Maybe even a Flim and Flam have a cameo. They don't want to give it to her, but it glows when AJ steps near it and they're all, "Yeah. Take it."

- RY is drawn to a village where an Old Horticulturist jealously guards Mistman's original flower. She refuses to give it up, even though there's an obvious magical connection to RY. Finally RY solves a simple problem and the Horticulturist gives the flower to her as a thank you.
- Dash travels to the Dragonlands, drawn to the location of Flash Prance's shield. She finds it relatively easily, but as she tries to take it – she's beset by a group of dragons who accuse her of stealing their favorite thing.

ACT THREE

- Before the dragons can roast Dash alive, Spike shows up with Ember and the situation is quickly resolved. The plan from the beginning was for Spike to alert Ember to Dash's quest, but without wings, Spike is slightly slower than Dash.
- Quick montage of Daring Do helping PP retrieve Somnambula's blindfold from the pyramid and Cattail giving FS Meadowbrook's mask.
- The Mane Six collect all the artifacts at the site of the battle. Starlight voices concern over the plan. Things have been pretty okay with these Pillars in Limbo. Maybe they're there for a reason. But Twilight wants to cast the spell. No way is she going to miss out on the chance to bring back the most famous wizard in Equestria (who also happens to be her idol).
- It works. Twilight pulls the Pillars back from Limbo. They are all disoriented. Starswirl asks where they are and Twilight explains that she's brought them back to Equestria. SS, "You did what?!" Twilight is all, "No need to thank me." Starswirl explains that thanking her is the last thing he'd do since she's rendered their sacrifice pointless. Twilight doesn't understand until Starswirl lays it out, "We knew what we were doing when we went to Limbo and you can't release us without also releasing him..." Before Starswirl even finishes talking the rift to Limbo opens again. Darkness spills out and coalesces into the form of THE PONY OF SHADOWS!!!

PART II

TEASER

- Re-cap part one.

ACT ONE

- Resume as Twilight realizes her mistake. The Pony of Shadows laughs his evil laugh and tells them all that they will pay for turning against him and keeping him imprisoned all these years. With that he vanishes. Starswirl turns to Twilight, "What were you thinking?" He and the other Pillars explain that they have to find a way to get the POS back into Limbo. Twilight and the rest of the Mane Six offer to help.
- Twilight confides in Starlight. She wanted to meet and impress Starswirl, but it looks like she just let him down. It seems Starlight was right, but Starlight isn't so sure. The Pillars strategy to trap themselves in Limbo for all time with the POS doesn't sound like the best plan. There has to be a better way. Twilight latches on to this. That's it. She will figure out a better way to defeat the POS and gain Starswirl's respect.
- Twilight confronts Starswirl and the other Pillars. She thinks she has a plan that can trap the POS without the need for the Pillars, or anypony else, to sacrifice themselves. Starswirl realizes

Twilight's plan could work. He apologizes for his tone earlier. He knows she was trying to save him and the others and now, if he and Twilight work together – there's a chance she can.

- Twilight is over the moon to be working with her idol and while she, Starswirl, Sunburst, and Starlight work on the new spell – the other Pillars and the Mane Six all try to figure out where the POS might have gone – which proves difficult since any info the Pillars have on places in Equestria is dated to say the least. Finally the Friendship Map goes off – calling all of their cutie marks to a single location. Starswirl and the rest rush in. Starswirl points to the spot on the map, “That's where he is!”

ACT TWO

- Starswirl explains that there can be no doubt as to the location of the POS – besides, he recognizes the spot on the map – The Castle of The Two Sisters! (Maybe? It'd be a cool full-circle kind of thing and I think Starswirl might have built the castle, though I'm not sure). Starswirl gives Twilight a real pat on the back. Now they know where the POS is and with Twilight's help they'll finally be able to defeat him for good. The other Pillars agree.
- Starlight takes Twilight aside and points out that when they are called by the map, it's to solve a friendship problem. “What if the POS was me? Would you still banish him?” When she told Twilight there was a better way, this isn't what she meant. She thinks they're going about it wrong. They need to understand the POS's story – that way they can change it, or write him a new one. Banishing him goes against everything Twilight has taught her – even if Starswirl and the rest of the Pillars think it's an awesome plan. Starlight believes her own story is proof that Twilight already knows the real solution.
- Torn, Twilight continues to work with Starswirl and the Pillars, enjoying the support and validation she's getting from them. Besides, they are the most legendary, powerful ponies of all time – if all of them think the plan is the right one – it MUST be the right one. Still Twilight knows Starlight has a point and doesn't want to let her student down.
- Twilight confronts Starswirl with her conundrum. Everything she knows about magic and friendship point to Starlight being right. Maybe sending the POS back to Limbo isn't the right thing. Starswirl admires Twilight's commitment to her student and her ideals, but he's been studying magic A LOT longer than she has. He truly wishes there was another way to defeat the POS, but he tells Twilight to trust him – this is the only way and he needs her help to accomplish it. Convinced, and pleased that her idol needs her, Twilight agrees to follow through with the plan and they all head out to get it done.

ACT THREE

- They arrive at the Castle of the Two Sisters and we see signs that the POS has taken over. The entrance has been blocked (and/or otherwise magically guarded against entry) and the group has to deal with a variety of magical obstacles to get inside. We see each of the Pillars, along with their Mane Six counterpart in action as they defeat the obstacles one by one and get inside.
- Inside the Pillars face off against the POS. There's a quick magical back and forth, but ultimately with TS's help, the POS is subdued. During the exchange that follows, the POS eludes to how the Pillars spurned him back in the day. This revelation re-enforces what Starlight said to Twilight and Starlight wastes no time in pointing it out to her mentor. Twilight realizes Starlight was right all along. This IS a friendship problem. When it comes time for Twilight to do her part of the

banishment spell, she refuses. Shocked, the Pillars watch as the Twilight does what they never thought to do – find out why the POS went down the road of darkness to begin with. Turns out he just wanted to be a part of the group, but was made to feel less than by them. Twilight explains that she can help the POS come back from the darkness if she'll let her. Starlight supports Twilight claim with the story of her own redemption. The POS agrees to let them try and together, Twilight and Starlight cast a spell that reverses the Shadow Magic and restores the POS to his regular pony self. Contrite, the POS thanks them, explaining that he plans to travel through Equestria making up for all the evil he caused.

- In a wrap up scene, the Pillars and Starswirl confess that they were wrong, and have been wrong for a very long time. They thank Twilight for fixing the mistake they made so long ago and Starswirl in particular explains how impressed by Twilight he is. He couldn't ask for a better protégé and Starlight couldn't ask for a better teacher – or a better friend.
- We end with a song about friendship being the most powerful magic there is. During the song we see each of the Pillars return to the community from which they came. They live in Equestria now and we'll no doubt be seeing them again.

END