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MY LITTLE PONY
Season 8

Trumped Up University
Ep 816

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TRUMPED UP UNIVERSITY (lol, okay – totally open to other titles)

Premise by Chris "Doc" Wyatt & Kevin Burke

Logline: When Twilight discovers that Flim and Flam have started a competing School of Friendship, she and Rarity go undercover to discover the con-pony's angle.

As the new students search the school library for help with their latest assignment, they come across Cozy Glow in the Recent Advances Section. She finished the assignment, but is researching something else – she's discovered another friendship school, a university in fact! The rest of the gang are stunned. Cozy admits that she was shocked too, which is why she's trying to find out anything she can about it – but no luck. The others ask how she heard about it and she hands them a flyer. No pony can believe it – Twilight never mentioned another school. "That's because there isn't one." The students turn to see Twilight and Rarity looking over their shoulders. Rarity magics the flyer over and realization dawns as she reads with an eye roll—"The Flim and Flam University of Friendship... and Sales!"

The students pepper Twilight with questions, "How could she not know about FFU?" "Who Are Flim and Flam?" "Can they really teach them everything they need to know about friendship in half the time of competing friendship schools like the flyer says?" Twilight and Rarity calm the students down and explain that Flim and Flam are a couple of con-ponies who run a resort in Las Pegasus and that they are about the last two ponies in Equestria who should be teaching friendship. As the disappointed students return to their studies, Twilight and Rarity resolve to get to the bottom of what looks like another Flim and Flam scheme. In a big banquet hall in Las Pegasus they listen to a motivational speaker-style sales pitch/song in which Flim and Flam describe their new school – culminating in them receiving accreditation from Neighsay of the EEA! Even more, they discover that Neighsay based his decision on the participation of the wisest pony of all time, Starswirl the Bearded! Unable to bear such an affront to the very idea of teaching friendship, not to mention besmirching the name of Starswirl, Twilight confronts the two con-ponies, but Flim and Flam quickly turn the tables on her and with Neighsay's help, discredit her, claiming she's just trying to steal their students for her competing, non-accredited, friendship school!

Unable to investigate as themselves, Rarity quickly comes up with some disguises and she and Twilight go undercover (21 Jumps Street-style) to find proof that Flim and Flam are up to no good. But as they sit in on the unorthodox FFU classes (filled with unorthodox students), they come to find that the ponies who attend actually enjoy it. Rarity in particular excels (as her undercover character)—soon graduating to the more advanced Friendship and Sales classes. Determined to prove the brothers are using Starswirl's name to swindle ponies out their "tuition" bits, Twilight tries to find him, but always seems to just miss him. Convinced Starswirl isn't involved at all, she's stupefied when she finally comes face to face with her idol and confirms it. Starswirl, one of the Pillars of Equestria, is really teaching at Flim and Flam's school!

Devastated, but unable to reveal herself, Twilight quickly goes through all the possible explanations: he's a clone, he's mind-controlled, he's lost his marbles, etc., but when nothing pans out, Twilight has to accept the fact that her idol is working for a couple of con-ponies. Meanwhile, Rarity's success at the school isn't hampered by the fact that her salespony classes are growing more and more expensive. In fact, it seems that the better she does, the more the classes cost. Luckily, Twilight is able to snap her friend out the vicious cycle and the two of them resolve to head home, defeated. With nothing to lose, Rarity suggests that Twilight ask Starswirl for some kind of explanation. Finally, she confronts Starswirl – revealing herself – and her idol explains the situation. The ponies who come to FFU aren't exactly Twilight's School of Magic and Friendship material, but they deserve help too. Besides, he's learning about friendship himself—maybe someday he and his students will be ready for Twilight's School. Pleased, Twilight agrees that Starswirl's classes have a real place, but she and Rarity convince him to make Flim and Flam end the salespony aspect of their University. Undeterred, the brothers resolve to make up the difference in profit by selling University swag and souvenirs. Back home, Rarity and Twilight are shocked to see FFU hats and pennants have made it all the way to their own campus.