

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 8
Horse Play
Ep 807
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Premise: October 11th, 2016

HORSE PLAY (FKA “HOBBY HORSE”)

Premise by Kaita Mpambara

Logline: Princess Celestia’s fillyhood dream of being in a play is realized when Twilight Sparkle casts her in a production, only to discover Celestia’s talents lie elsewhere.

Twilight Sparkle and Spike are going over their plans with Princess Celestia for Equestria’s celebration of the 1000 year anniversary of the first time Celestia raised the sun. Beyond dawn-themed foods and music, Twilight Sparkle has something special in mind – a play she’s written to reenact that fateful day. Her Ponyville friends will put on the production... If Celestia doesn’t mind. Not only doesn’t Celestia mind, it makes her a little wistful. When she was a filly, she never got to be in any theatre productions, because she was so busy with magic lessons. The ponies in the theatre troupe always seemed like such close, special friends. She wishes she’d gotten a chance to experience that. Eager to help, Twilight tells the Princess that she can... Because they’d love it if Celestia would play herself in their production. “We WOULD?!” Spike gapes.

Princess Celestia is flattered, but reluctant – she’s never acted before, and she isn’t sure she’d do a good job. But Twilight promises her friends will be around her to help her succeed. Besides, Twilight wants Celestia to fulfill her dream; she’s always so generous to everypony else. If the Princess wants to be part of the theatre group for once, she should.

Twilight’s friends are excited that Celestia will be in their production. Until they make a horrible discovery: Princess Celestia CAN’T ACT! Director Spike doesn’t know what to do; Celestia can’t even play herself! Twilight can’t write her out, and she can’t cancel the play - invitations have already been sent out across the kingdom. Celestia will be humiliated, and it’ll be all Twilight’s fault. Applejack suggests that Twilight just be honest with the Princess – give her a chance to back out and then cast somepony else. But Twilight promised Celestia this experience, and she doesn’t want to hurt her feelings. No – they’ll have to do the impossible: Teach Celestia how to act.

Not surprisingly, this plan proves to be a disaster. Nothing works – improv lessons with Pinkie, method acting with Rarity, stage movement exercises with Rainbow Dash... And Fluttershy, who only agreed to be Celestia’s understudy because she knew she wouldn’t be used, is terrified she might have to perform. Meanwhile, Starlight helps run things backstage so that the team can focus on Celestia. But things are falling apart there, too. Trixie’s special effects are over the top and destroy the giant sun prop needed for the show. When Twilight discovers this, it’s the last straw. She complains that everything in the show has gone wrong, from the backstage drama to a terrible lead actress. Unfortunately, Princess Celestia overhears this.

Twilight tries to apologize, but Celestia is deeply hurt. Not because Twilight insulted her acting, but because well... Celestia thought that for just one day she’d have a chance to do something alongside her friends and share the theatre bond. But if they don’t trust her enough to be honest with her... maybe their friendship isn’t as strong as Celestia thought.

To make matters worse, ponies are starting to file into their seats! Twilight tells a shocked Spike to stall the audience, and she runs after Celestia. Catching up, Twilight tells the Princess that she was right: “I should have told the truth. But I knew you’d dreamed of being in a play... And I didn’t want to let you down, not after all you’ve done for me,” Twilight admits. Celestia smiles – there is SOMETHING she’d like to do in the play, if Twilight doesn’t mind. Twilight says she’s pretty sure there won’t even BE a play now. But Celestia says the one thing she knows about theatre is that the show must go on!

Celestia returns and tells the cast and crew to take their places. She gives a terrified Fluttershy confidence (“anything you do will be better than my acting!”), smooths Trixie’s ruffled feathers, tells Spike he’s done a great directing job. But what about the big sun set piece? “Leave that to me,” Celestia says – and sure enough, she raises the real sun at the moment it’s needed in the play. Best special effect ever! When the play (which was a smash success, despite a few minor snafus) is over, the Mane Six feel bad that Celestia never got a chance to be in the show. But Celestia is thrilled – being part of the theatre troupe doesn’t mean you have to be onstage. She just wanted to share the bond of creativity with her friends... And that’s exactly what she got to do.