

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 9

A Horse Shoe-In
EP 920

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MLP 920: A Horse Shoe-In

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Logline: When Starlight Glimmer receives official word that she is to be the Headmare of the School of Friendship, she worries the job is too much for her and elects to hire a vice-principle and Trixie assumes the job is hers—despite all evidence to the contrary.

TEASER**SC. 1 - INT. STARLIGHT GLIMMER'S OFFICE – DAY**

Twilight Sparkle pays Starlight Glimmer a visit with some not-so-surprising news. When she leaves to take over the throne in Canterlot, Twilight wants Starlight to take over as Headmare of the school! Starlight is excited, though not exactly shocked since she's run the school every time Twilight's had to leave. She tells Twilight she's been thinking about the job a lot and knows it's a big responsibility – maybe even more than one pony can handle. She asks Twilight if she can hire a vice principal to help her. She really wants to do a good job, and thinks dividing the labor is the answer.

Twilight tells her she can do whatever she wants; she trusts her, that's why she's giving her the school. Twilight has always relied on her friends to help her run the school – so she thinks relying on other ponies is great! But she also thinks Starlight is up to the task on her own and doesn't necessarily *need* a VP. As Starlight considers this, Twilight is called away and we WIDEN to reveal Trixie, who's been napping on Starlight's couch the entire time. Trixie thanks Starlight for being so thoughtful that she'd create a whole position for her. Starlight is confused. Trixie explains: Vice-Principle sounds ideal for someone as GREAT and POWERFUL as her. She's a great multi-tasker (she was able to nap AND eavesdrop at the same time), and she's obviously a powerful authority figure. Starlight tries to explain to Trixie that she plans to take running the school seriously and can't just give the job to anypony. Trixie agrees in an over-enthusiastic way, giving Starlight a wink. Good thing she's not just anypony, then, isn't it. OFF Starlight's look we...

END TEASER**MAIN TITLES****ACT ONE****SC. 2 - INT. HALLWAY – DAY**

On the way to meet with the ponies she's considering for VP, Starlight tries again to get through to Trixie by opening up about some of her fears. She's going to need to rely on her VP, so she really has to be sure to find the right pony for the job. Sure, she's taken charge of the school on her own in the past, but it's always been in an emergency situation. She's never been the pony in charge for more than a little while. Trixie tells her not to worry, she'll be right there by her side no matter what. In fact, she's really looking forward to it. They are best friends and best friends

never disappoint each other. Off Starlight, not sure Trixie is getting the message...

SC. 3 - INT. GREAT HALL – CONTINUOUS

Starlight addresses a group of ponies chatting amongst themselves in the great hall. She focuses on each of them, explaining why she thinks they have the potential to be a good fit for VP: Big Mac is a good listener (BM: “Yup”); Octavia has taught music before; Cheerilee has the most experience (though it’s been with slightly younger ponies); etc. Starlight turns to an expectant Trixie (eager to hear her credentials). Starlight fumbles a bit, finally explaining how great Trixie is at getting ponies’ attention. Trixie beams. Starlight goes on to explain what the selection process will entail. She’ll give them a series of tasks to complete, and whoever does the best will become VP! First task – the VP needs to be able to substitute for any teacher.

QUICK SHOTS OF STARLIGHT WATCHING THE CANDIDATES SUB FOR TEACHERS:

SC. 4 - INT. RARITY’S CLASSROOM – Rarity looks on impressed as Big Mac does a surprisingly good job teaching students how to sew – apparently he’s the one who mends the apple sacks and baskets on the farm.

SC. 5 - EXT. FLUTTERSHY’S CLASS – Despite being nervous—she’s never taught at a school this big before—Cheerilee does very well – essentially setting up a mini petting zoo while Fluttershy looks on approvingly.

SC. 6 - INT. APPLEJACK’S CLASSROOM – Octavia shows her students how to work jug-band instruments, and soon has a semi-functioning jug band going. Applejack is impressed but reminds Octavia that her lessons always relate to honesty. Octavia responds that there is nothing more honest than artistic expression.

SC. 7 - INT. TWILIGHT’S CLASSROOM – LATER

In Twilight’s class on the History of Equestria, Trixie has trouble keeping her student’s attention. In fact, she has trouble paying attention herself. When a student points out that while history can definitely be important, it’s hard to stay awake for it, Trixie whole heartedly agrees. Soon all the students are trading stories about missing sleep to study and Trixie empathizes with them all. Reasoning that a well-rested mind performs best, Trixie encourages her students to nap during class – an afternoon nap has always left her feeling recharged and ready to take on whatever’s next. A short while later, Starlight sticks her head in, distressed to find the entire class asleep. But before she can demand an explanation, Trixie shushes her, proudly pointing out how well her students are recharging.

SC. 8 - INT. STARLIGHT’S OFFICE – A LITTLE LATER

Starlight pins images of her candidates to a board as she consults her notes on their performance thus far. Big Mac did a surprisingly good job in Rarity’s class. Octavia performed well too, though perhaps relies too much on her affinity with music. Cheerilee’s petting zoo worked out well, despite feeling a tad young for the students at Twilight’s school, etc. Finally, Starlight

contemplates a picture of Trixie and frowns. She knows Trixie will always have her back, but it feels as though instead of lightening her workload, Trixie the VP would just put more work on her plate. Just as she pulls Trixie's picture from the board and prepares to toss it, Trixie bursts in, excited. She explains that at first she didn't understand what Starlight was trying to accomplish with her involved hiring process, but she finally gets it. She knows some ponies might think she's all talk with nothing to back it up, but she also knows that Starlight believes in her. That's what helped her realize that Starlight's tasks weren't to make Trixie prove herself to Starlight – she's obviously done that a million times over – it was to prove herself to the other ponies and more importantly to herself! She thanks Starlight for making the evaluation process as genuine as she could (under the circumstances, of course), because it really has helped her improve. Of course she knew Starlight had confidence in her (that goes without saying), but now she has confidence in herself. She really does think she can be the Vice-Principal Starlight needs. She doesn't know what Starlight has planned for the rest of the process, but she knows she's ready to give it her all. Off Starlight hesitantly pinning Trixie's picture back onto the board we...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SC. 9 - INT. GREAT HALL – A LITTLE LATER

Starlight explains to the candidates what their next task will be – PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES! Starlight also shows them her Vice Principal Pony Ladder. It has four rungs on it, and after each task, the ponies will get ranked on how well they did. After each task, the pony who does the worst will unfortunately be eliminated. Trixie: "Wow! That really makes this process seem fair!" Off Starlight's annoyed expression...

SC. 10 - INT. CLASSROOM – LATER

QUICK SCENES AS THE CANDIDATES ADDRESS PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

Octavia with Ocellus and Thorax: Octavia understands there was concern about Ocellus making friends because she's so shy, but Octavia insists the changeling is doing fine, she's made a ton of friends at school! Octavia also confesses it was her own shyness that lead her to music...

Cheerilee with Prince Rutherford and Yona: A flustered Cheerilee tries to give Yona a glowing review, but can't seem to find the words. Obviously Yona knows her alphabet and she's very good at sharing... "Oh, dear, I'm sorry. I am used to dealing with ponies a bit younger than the ones at this school." Yona and Rutherford exchange confused looks.

Grandpa Gruff with Trixie: Trixie dives into what's meant to be a glowing review. She jokes that she knows a little something about being a trouble maker – not to say Gallus is a trouble maker. Unfortunately Grandpa Gruff doesn't seem very interested. In fact he wonders why he has to come to these things at all. He always gets saddled with this stuff because his name is Grandpa Gruff even though he isn't anygriff's grandfather. Trixie takes umbrage to his lack of involvement. Even if there's no relation, it would still help Gallus to feel supported by somepony

from home. Their argument escalates until finally Starlight has to intervene, pulling Trixie aside. “Of course you can defend your students, but maybe do it without getting into shouting matches with their guardians.” Before Trixie can apologize, Starlight is called over to...

Big Mac with General Sea Spray: The hippogriff is beside himself in frustration: “Just tell me – is Silverstream doing well at school or not?” Big Mac, “Eeyup.” Sea Spray explains that he was hoping for a little more detail. Doesn’t Big Mac want to give him any answers besides ‘Eeyup’ and ‘Nope’? Big Mac thinks for a moment. Then answers with an emphatic, “Nope.” At the end of his rope, Sea Spray walks out. Off Big Mac’s defeated sigh...

SC. 11 - INT. HALLWAY – OUTSIDE OF STARLIGHT’S OFFICE – A LITTLE LATER

Trixie walks up to check Starlight’s ladder and is surprised to find that she isn’t first, or second, but third! A little ways off Starlight consoles Big Mac. As great a listener as he is, her VP will have to be a great communicator as well and it just doesn’t seem like he would be comfortable in that position. Big Mac agrees. “Nope,” he sure wouldn’t.

Starlight walks up to the others and explains they have one task left – organizing a field trip! As the others rush off to plan, Trixie approaches Starlight. She knows her conference didn’t go as well as it could have, but if she’s last again, she could actually be cut! Starlight gives Trixie a serious look. Then I guess your field trip better be amazing. Off Trixie’s shock...

QUICK SHOTS OF THE REMAINING CANDIDATES’ FIELD TRIPS:

SC. 12 - EXT. PONYVILLE – Starlight watches as Cheerilee talks to a handful of students near the Ponyville School House explaining that she knows they’ll be excited for what she has in store. The students all look out confused as we reveal... C: “Alright students! Get ready for our field trip to the... PLAYGROUND!! Don’t forget to pick a buddy.” The students share befuddled looks. Smolder turns to Sandbar: “How young does she think we are?” Off Starlight, uncertain...

SC. 13 - INT. PONYVILLE TOWN HALL – Octavia leans forward and checks out her row of students who look out at a performance of the Ponyville Symphony. Next to her, Gallus puts down his pair of opera glasses and whispers, “You know, this Beethoofen (pronounced BAYT-HOOF-EN) isn’t so bad!” Octavia smiles. From the back of the room, Starlight looks on, pleased.

SC. 14 - INT. CLASSROOM – LATER

A handful of students sit in an empty classroom. Trixie <HUFFS AND PUFFS>, pushing a large covered cage into the center of the room. She can’t wait to show the students the surprise she has for them! Yona is confused... Aren’t they supposed to go *outside* of the school field trip?? Trixie says yes, that is the *obvious* choice, so she thought she would do something a little more amazing and bring the field trip to THEM! The students look around at each other excited as Trixie dramatically FLINGS the cloth off the top of the cage to reveal... A MANTICORE! And not just any manticore, the friendly one, Monty, she’s used in her acts! Trixie proudly presents THE MONTY MANTICORE EXPERIENCE!

Trixie explains that she has a whole plan to go over the creature's anatomy, maybe even his dental hygiene. For a moment, it seems as though things will go well. The students are pleased and Monty seems totally calm. But as soon as the manticore looks around and realizes where he is, he starts to COMPLETELY FREAK OUT, <ROARING> and trying to pry the bars apart. As Yona and the other students run out of the room, Trixie tries to quiet down the manticore, but soon he's pulled apart the iron bars of his cage, and goes running down the halls.

A second later, Starlight BAMFS inside and demands to know what's happening. Trixie explains her plan and that normally Monty is well-behaved, but in a moment of unfortunate timing he seems to have lost his mind. Starlight: "OF COURSE HE DID!! Even the most well-behaved manticores are claustrophobic!!" Trixie, "Oh, well, that explains it." Off Starlight's grimace...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SC. 15 - INT. HALLWAY – RESUME

Starlight to Trixie: "WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT THIS LATER!" Trixie looks ashamed, Starlight goes chasing after the manticore: "Don't go that way, Monty!! The basements are that way!! They're even smaller and they don't have any windows!!!" A <ROAR> from the manticore. Trixie goes chasing after Starlight, eager to help but a look from Starlight stops her. Trixie: "Maybe I'll just see you in your office after this is taken care of."

SC. 16 - INT. STARLIGHT'S OFFICE – A LITTLE LATER

Starlight, now looking much worse for the wear (mane sticking out in places, soot all over her) tries to SHAKE the worst of the dust off. It flies up for a moment, and then re-settles down on her body. Trixie knocks and enters.

Trixie asks how Starlight is doing – Starlight says "FINE" through gritted teeth. Trixie responds that her mane looks wonderful, all things considered. Starlight tells Trixie they need to have a serious talk. Trixie cuts her off – she tells Starlight that as much as she REALLY appreciates her creating the VP position for her, she's decided she doesn't want to be the VP after all. Trixie: "Wow, it feels great to get that off my chest!" Trixie flops down on Starlight's couch. T: "That manticore thing was crazy, right?!?" Starlight is furious. She didn't create the VP position for Trixie, and she was never going to give her the job! Time after time she proved she was unqualified. Starlight says she wasn't going to consider her in the first place – she just felt bad saying no because they are friends. Trixie is shocked! How dare Starlight say that! She would make a GREAT VP. Starlight: "In what universe??" Trixie: "Well I guess we're not the kind of friends I thought we were!" Trixie storms out.

On her way out, Trixie brushes past Twilight heading in. Curious, Twilight explains that she's come by to check on Starlight's progress with picking a VP, but it doesn't seem to be going well. Still angry with Trixie, Starlight counters that it's going splendidly, in fact. She's settled on a candidate and she's very pleased with her choice. Octavia performed the best and Starlight thinks

her desire to share her passion for music with the students will only be an asset. Twilight agrees that all makes sense, but she wants to know what happened with Trixie. Starlight explains the situation and how she wishes she'd been more up front from the start. After laying out the problems that Trixie's participation caused and how she was forced to solve them (including the rampaging manticore), Twilight is impressed. It seems the thing Starlight's hiring process highlighted most was her own abilities: from devising a systematic selection process, to communicating with student's, parents, and guardians, to solving whatever emergencies might the crop up. Twilight goes on to say that she's sure Octavia is a wonderful choice, but why was it that Starlight needed a Vice-Principle again? Off Starlight realizing...

SC. 17 - INT. GREAT HALL – LATER

Starlight talks with both Cheerilee and Octavia explaining that while they both demonstrated wonderful qualities, she's come to realize that real reason she wanted a VP was that she wasn't confident in her ability to take care of the school on her own. But after going through the process of evaluating Vice-Principles, she actually feels much more certain that she'll be able to handle whatever gets thrown at her. Cheerilee admits hearing that is a big relief. She feels more at home at the Ponyville School House than a large school full of older students. Octavia also explains that this info is a weight off. As much as she enjoyed sharing her love of music with younger ponies, the VP job seemed like it would be really stressful. Maybe she could start a music appreciate society for the school? Starlight agrees that would be wonderful and thanks both ponies for their understanding.

SC. 18 - INT. TRIXIE'S CARAVAN – A LITTLE LATER

Starlight knocks loudly on the door to the wagon, but Trixie pretends she can't hear. "Go away! I mean, I don't even know if there's anypony's out there, but go away anyway." Starlight explains through the door that she's come to apologize – she didn't mean to make Trixie think she was giving her the job. She should have been honest from the beginning. She still really wants to be friends, and thinks that Trixie has a lot of great qualities, even if they aren't the exact right qualities to be VP. Also if it's any consolation, she explains that she's decided to run the school herself. Trixie opens the door. "You mean, if you can't have me as your VP, nopony gets the job?" Starlight smiles. "Something like that." Trixie: "Tell me more about these great qualities?" Starlight says that the students really liked Trixie. She really knew how to relate to them and she also really had their backs, like when she stood up to Grandpa Gruff. In fact, Starlight's realized that although Trixie's qualities weren't right for Vice-Principle, there's another position she's actually perfect for – Starlight's former position as school counselor. Starlight points out they'll still get to work together – they do make a great team. Trixie accepts the job and hugs Starlight. She also confesses to and apologies for assuming that Starlight would give her the VP gig just because they were friends. Starlight tells her that all is forgiven. Trixie: "Great! Now I have a lot of ideas about how to redo that drab counselor's office!" Off Starlight shaking her head...

FADE OUT.

END