

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 9

The Last Problem
EP 926

Premise by: Josh Haber

Distribution:

Production:

Devon Cody
Jim Miller
Denny Lu
Mike Myhre
Zoe Borroz
Josh Haber
Jada McDermott

Discovery Family:

Linda Shima Tsuno
Beth Mohammed

Hasbro Studios:

Stephen Davis
Meghan McCarthy
Eliza Hart
Leslie Wishnevski
Finn Arnesen
Nina Scales
Tyla Bucher
Loretta Masters
Narae Song
Bill Cheungcp
Molly Shaffer
Emily Thompson
Kevin Farrell
Lauren Devereux
Michael Kelly

Hasbro Brand:

Grace Morgan
Julie Sanfilippo
Matt Riordan
Andrea Ehret
Samantha Lomow
Gretchen Forrest
Brian Chapman

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Logline: *In the series epilogue—years from now, Princess Twilight, ruler of Equestria, is expecting a visit from an old friend. Nostalgic, she looks back on the years she and the Mane Six spent together.*

We open on Canterlot, and although it's recognizable as Canterlot, it's not the city we know. As many Griffins, Yaks, and Hippogriffs fill the streets as ponies, and in the center of the town square is an Albert Memorial-style statue of the Mane Six, immortalized in stone. High above, an adult dragon, soars over Canterlot Castle's gates. As the dragon strides into the throne room, we sense something familiar about his purple scales. "Hello, Spike," comes a voice and he looks up to see Twilight Sparkle, but not the one we know. She's taller, more regal—a Celestia-style version of Twilight—her hair a flowing field of stars. Spike, the official envoy to the Dragonlands, tells Twilight he came as soon as he could. Twilight is glad. She's expecting Flurry Heart any moment, and she isn't sure what kind of problem the young alicorn is having, though Cadance certainly seemed to think it was serious. Twilight admits she's concerned about what the problem might be, and it has made her think of the days when she and her friends lived in Ponyville. She wonders if Flurry's problem is anything like the kind they used to face.

The screen goes wavy as we FLASHBACK to (good old regular) Twilight in the Castle of Friendship, days before she's meant to leave for Canterlot. She runs around the castle trying to make sure everything is packed and in order. Her friends arrive to help—they know how overwhelming it all must be. She's sure it must be overwhelming for them too, but when she's met with confused faces she realizes something obvious that hadn't occurred to her before. Her friends won't be moving to Canterlot with her. It's silly that she hadn't really thought about it, but of course it makes sense, and as she visits with each of them we see why. At Sweet Apple Acres, Applejack oversees the bushels of apples they'll be sending to Canterlot for Twilight's coronation. She explains that even though the Apple Family is growing, (with Big Mac and Sugar Belle married), AJ will still be in charge of the farm, but that doesn't mean she isn't ready to help Twilight whenever she needs it. In Pinkie's secret party planning room, it's clear that she'll always keep busy making all the ponies in her files happy, but she's started a whole new file on how to add her Pinkie touch to all the parties and galas in Canterlot, with a BIG subfolder for the coronation, of course. At the Sanctuary, Futtershy conducts a chorus of song birds, as they too prepare for Twilight to assume the throne. She has to take a break to care for a couple of sickies and explains that animals will always need her, but she knows Twilight will too. Rainbow Dash organizes the Wonderbolt airshow for Twilight's crowning, but takes a break to reassure her friend that she'll always be there for her as well. Later, in Canterlot, Rarity fits Twilight for the most amazing coronation gown that's ever existed. She assures Twilight that because of her shop, she'll be in Canterlot all the time and as busy as her fashion empire keeps her, she's ready to help rule. Finally, Twilight is crowned. It's everything we want it to be. Celestia and Luna tear up. Twilight shares with them her concern about living apart from her friends. They give her wise counsel about how she and her friends may be apart, but they'll always be together too. Twilight knows

they are right, and though she's absolutely ready to rule, she still isn't sure she's ready for all the changes that lie in store.

Back in the future, grown up Spike remembers one of those changes in particular. Celestia-style Twilight laughs as we FLASHBACK again, though not quite as far this time. It's Canterlot, a few years after Twilight's ascended to the throne. Spike (still young) walks in to wake Twilight up and help her get ready for the day, but is shocked to find the Princess has changed over night. She gets out of bed and we see she's leveled up and transformed into her Celestia-style form. Freaking out, Twilight immediately BAMFS around Equestria to talk to her friends, but they're all super busy doing the things they'd always set out to do. At Sweet Apple Acres, Applejack runs around like a mare on fire trying to handle everything at the farm. Big Mac and Sugar Belle try to help, but their new-born foal takes up all of their time and they are both exhausted. Pinkie is throwing a TBD anniversary for Cranky and Matilda and is determined to outdo their wedding. She actually asks Twilight if she can use some of her new powered up magic to help. Rarity is traveling between all of her shops—she's just opened one in Yakyakistan—and is trying to coordinate a simultaneous launch of her new line in all of them at once. Rainbow Dash has taken over for Spitfire at the Wonderbolts Academy and it's finals week. Fluttershy's sanctuary has expanded exponentially with the help of their newest employee, Discord, who uses his powers to ensure they always have enough space for every animal. Of course all of Twilight's friends are ready to spring into action, if their friend needs them or if there's an emergency, but Twilight realizes her leveling up situation doesn't exactly qualify—she doesn't need them all to drop everything. Back in Canterlot, Twilight gets a message from an old friend and we see Sunset Shimmer step through her mirror. She's come to give Twilight an update on the world of Equestria High and is impressed with Twilight's change. Life in her world has changed as well, she's now the Principle of Canterlot High. It was hard at first, she's so busy and her student are too, but once she set up a student council, they all lent a hand (“that's what we call hooves”). Inspired, Twilight has an idea. She calls her friends together at the Castle of Friendship. She knows they are all busy and of course ready to answer the call when needed, but they also need to stay in touch. She proposes that every moon they convene a Council of Friendship to be held at Friendship Castle. Everypony agrees. Change comes pretty fast and they need to stay connected.

Back in the future, Spike and Twilight muse over setting up the Friendship Council. Obviously it was a good idea and helped them stay in each other's lives, but it was so long ago and there's been so much change. Spike wonders if all of it has been good. Just then an older Smolder comes in and fire-breathes a message (she's the new royal messenger). Twilight smiles—speaking of change—the message is her regular update from Starlight Glimmer on the School of Friendship—a place that has been the catalyst for change throughout Equestria. As Twilight talks we see the School: aged versions (Starswirl-style) of Starlight and Sunburst lead all manner of creatures (some we have never seen before) through the school. Twilight talks about how the school helped lead Equestria into a future where friendship is shared with all creatures. We see the grown up versions of the CMCs (already designed!) teaching classes. Twilight goes on to explain that not all change happens on such a grand scale. We see images of Sweet Apple Acres.

A Granny Smith-aged Big Mac and Sugar Belle sit in rockers on the porch while their two children run the farm—even a place like that where it seems like nothing ever changes isn't immune. Back with Twilight and Spike in Canterlot, the doors to the throne room open as an older Gallus, now Captain of the Royal Guard, enters to announce that Princess Flurry Heart has arrived. Twilight tells Spike Flurry is the perfect example. She wasn't going to stay a baby forever. She's a full grown princess. With full-grown princess problems, apparently, Spike points out. As Flurry enters, Twilight hopes she can help her with whatever the situation may be. Flurry admits she's been doing her part to learn how to be the best princess she can be, since she'll have to take over for her mom and rule the Crystal Empire some day. She even has a student of her own, and that's who she's come to talk to Twilight about. She doesn't know what to do with her. Her student is brilliant, but a bit bookish. In fact, she'd rather spend time with books than ponies. Flurry isn't sure if she has any friends. Twilight shares a smile with Spike—she knows what to do. Leading Flurry and her young charge through the castle, Twilight explains that a long time ago, she knew another bookish young pony who hadn't learned the value of making friends yet. Flurry leans down, "She's talking about herself." As they make their way into a large room, Twilight goes on to explain that she did make friends and it's fortunate because she's meeting with them in Canterlot today. We reveal Twilight's Friendship Council—the rest of the Mane Six, older but not as old as the other ponies we've seen (Rarity's mane is streaked with gray, etc.). Twilight goes on to say that she and her friends shared everything over the years, from perilous adventures to the Elements of Harmony (whose power helped them rule Equestria much longer than anyone expected). Twilight turns to Spike. Yes things have changed over the years. Nothing stays the same, but change isn't necessarily bad. Things might be different but the power of friendship always remains. Flurry asks what she should do about her student and Twilight responds that she doesn't know for sure. But she does know where she learned her first lessons about friendship. She suggests Flurry's young student head to Ponyville and do the same.