

To the teams at Hasbro and DHX Vancouver:

Academic ink continues to spill towards elucidating just what, exactly, a brony is, and why we enjoy watching certain television programs. Varied are the reasons given for the latter, from songs or animation to neo-sincerity, among other qualifiers you have doubtlessly heard enumerated. In truth, all of these combine to make My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic the cultural phenomenon it is. We continue to be amazed, not only by how entertaining we find the show to be, but at how close to home the lessons hit and how inspirational the characters are. Truly, there is as much magic in My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic as in the eponymous virtue.

Case in point, many of us have bonded together into this fandom of friends through our appreciation of the love you invested into the My Little Pony and Equestria Girls brands. Further still, some have formed tight-knit sub-fandoms of friends that direct our focus to individual aspects of your labors. This missive hails from just such a community, dedicated to Sunset Shimmer and located on Reddit. With the impending release Friendship Games, we would like to call back to Rainbow Rocks and the occasion of her redemption to take note. Thank you for creating Equestria Girls, the character of Sunset Shimmer, and bringing everything to life!

As you may well be aware, the fandom at large first learned of Sunset Shimmer through merchandise marketing. It left us little to go on, and triggered rampant speculation. Who was this new pony, with striking parallels to Twilight Sparkle? Just what was the "magical path to faraway adventures" of which she knew? Would she take the newly-crowned Twilight's place, filling a gap in the Mane Six, or rise from the shadows to attack them? Instead you exceeded all expectation. A parallel universe, where beloved characters fell out of friendship. The prodigal student, who traded her destiny for pottage and would take it back by force. A collision between the ascended and the outcast, with the fate of two worlds hanging in the balance.

Several familiar personalities appear at the new school. That they work, and work well, in a diametric setting testifies to the strength of their development. Yet the world of Canterlot High introduces a fresh new antagonist. Through two films we see her final fall, and rise from abasement to teaching the Princess of Friendship about it. We believe she stands on her own two feet, in line with the main characters (or in front of them, say unbiased sources). And as our sub-fandom group is inspired by Sunset Shimmer, we are thus fans of Equestria Girls and Rainbow Rocks as well. How do we love these? Let us count the ways.

*I really love what you've done with Sunset Shimmer in "Rainbow Rocks." At first, I was a bit skeptical, but by the end of the movie, the development in her character really caught my attention. Sunset Shimmer quickly became a favorite of mine. I just wanted to let you guys know that you're doing a*

wonderful job with the series. Keep bringing us awesome new content! We love you guys! <3

–ChickenSteve

*I started out my school life a lot like Sunset. I was constantly bullied by both other students and my teachers, so I decided that the only way to not get eaten alive was to work my way to the top of the food chain. However, in doing so I sacrificed a lot of the morals that I believe in just to make my own life a little easier. It took a combined effort of my family and real friends to show me what an idiot I was being, and I came out of it a much better person.*

*So, yeah. Thanks for reminding me that I'm not the only one who can screw up trying to be accepted.*

–The-Sublime-One

*I could never describe Sunset Shimmer in a paragraph, and I probably couldn't in a book of essays, either. That's why I love her; her combination of self-control and raw emotion, ruthless ambition and strongly-held principles, aloofness, protectiveness, and love of admiration, and all her other tangled, nuanced, complicated traits (this brilliant scholar and diligent schemer never noticed that ruling a high school wasn't the same as ruling the world!) – all these make her feel more lifelike than many real people I've known. She's certainly the most interesting fictional character I've come across in a very long time, and I'm really looking forward to Friendship Games; I hope we can see her growing into in the leadership position she's always wanted to have...*

*And of course it's not just technical things that make me like her. With her rough past, and the uncertain future that her repentance left her with, Sunset Shimmer reminds us all that change is possible, and that it's worth it. There's never a reason to give up hope, no matter how deep of a hole we've dug for ourselves.*

–ExOttoyuhr

*I'd just like to highlight how much I appreciated the direction and thematic elements behind Sunset Shimmer's character. Her transformation in Equestria Girls into a literal demoness was emblematic of her corruption and fall from grace, not to mention that of an Element of Harmony, something meant to be pure and good. Despite not thinking herself a monster, her misaligned objectives caused her to become exactly what she denied. Once she was given back her sanity, she comprehended what her rebellion had cost, and was broken to pieces by the realization.*

*In Rainbow Rocks, we see what the power of the forgiveness Sunset was given, if only by a few, was able to engender in her. This is what I love so much about her story. She walks a path followed by all of us in some measure, one of failure and dashed hopes, but also one where redemption is possible. In the past I've made the remark that I'm more like Sunset than Twilight, Celestia's "most faithful student". An unfortunate and at times misguided soul in need of a little grace is the sort who sees Sunset's eventual rise from the ashes and finds inspiration.*

*Of all My Little Pony protagonists, Sunset is the one I find most complicated and interesting. So, thanks again for making her not just a throwaway villain or a poorly thought-out addition, but rather the identifiable and complex character we all love.*

–MillennialDan

*I was skeptical, I was scared, but you came through. You've skipped the classical "rinse and repeat" storylines and have created a delightful piece which I was thrilled to experience. Sunset Shimmer is a wonderful addition to the EG universe. No longer have I had to drag through yet another "good guy, bad guy" presentation, Sunset was there to break the usual path of least resistance of storytelling. It reminded me of Hayao Miyazaki's works, where the line between good or bad, friend or foe is not clear, as is the case in our everyday world. Thank you for a wonderful character and even more wonderful moments we've all had with her!*

–RainbowDashShellBash

As you can see, we find much merit in all these aspects of your work. Once more, we thank you for bringing these characters and their world to life! After the one-two punch of Equestria Girls and Rainbow Rocks, we were quite enthused to learn that production of another film was under way. No doubt that Friendship Games will raise the bar once again, and it cannot arrive soon enough. See you at the games!

Sincerely,

ChickenSteve

FringePioneer

RainbowDashShellBash

and /r/sunsetshimmer

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