

The Pain of Poultry

It was inexorable, it was inevitable, it was inescapable, Rainbow Dash's parents were coming to town. A while ago, her father had broken his wing, and, having recovered, now very aware of his age and mortality, set himself on visiting his daughter. Her mother also wanted to visit, but for a different reason. When she was a young pony, Rainbow's mother had been quite popular around town, so popular, in fact, that, for her own safety, her name will not be stated at the moment. She remembered those times less than fondly, and if she knew herself, and how much of her had rubbed off on her daughter, she could only guess what Rainbow Dash was up to. She had always believed that interventions were more fun over a nice dinner anyway.

This dinner is what Rainbow Dash was now striving towards in the fairly ill-appointed kitchen of her sky-bound home. Her parents had promised to bring some sides and Pinkie Pie had been gracious enough to provide dessert, but the entree was Dash's responsibility entirely. She had debated over what to serve ever since the first letter from her parents, and had finally settled on a turkey. She hoped that she could accomplish this task with the vigour that she poured into her flying routines, but that idea derailed in her head into a flaming pile of twisted metaphors the moment she realized this simple fact: Turkeys have wings.

As she stared at the carcass of the bird, Rainbow wished she had eaten a smaller lunch, as well did she wish that she had chosen something like apple-burgers or carrotouille to serve to her hungry folks, for in the shiny wings of the fat poultry she saw reflected herself; she had developed a kind of empathic link with the bird. Her talkative butcher had said that this was the fastest turkey on the farm, he would glide off of the highest barns and treetops, speeding through the open air like a rocket, tumbling when he hit the ground. When Rainbow heard this she almost cried, and most likely injured the poor colt with how hard she threw her bits at him, she didn't even care that she didn't get her change. She knew she would have to cook the bird eventually, but whenever she approached it's cold, dead body she convulsed in disgust and fear, flying away into the clouds to try and escape it's emotional pull on her. She now had only one hour until the time her parents had said they would arrive, she knew that was not long enough to cook a turkey under conventional means, but she hoped that she and her friends were just unconventional enough to make it work.

Twilight sparkle gazed intently at the bird, uttering an occasional, "Hmm, interesting..."

"So you want me to use magic to cook this turkey in less than an hour?"

"Yeah, the time just sorta ran away from me, ya know?" Rainbow Dash said, trying her hardest to stay in the same room as the frigid corpse.

"I would think that you, of all ponies, would be able to catch up with time," Twilight said with a small laugh, but the the joke was entirely lost on the frazzled pegasus. "Uhh, anyway, let me see what I can whip up." The purple pony pulled out a book that appeared to be bound in salami, enscribed with the title, "The Cuisinomicon". She opened the large tome, turning over dusty pages and scanning the index. "Let's see here, Salt, Pinch of; no. Souffle, YOU RUINED MY; no... Aha! Speed, page 245.' Twilight Sparkle's horn lit up as she magically flitted through

the pages of the book. When she arrived however, to her dismay, the page was torn out of the book. "That's strange, that page was definitely here before I lent this to Pinkie Pie, I wonder what she needed to make so fast in that trailer in the Everfree forest... Well, I'm sorry Dash, but it looks like magic's a no-go."

"Whaddaya mean? There's gotta be some spell you know that'll help!" Rainbow Dash implored.

"Well, I guess I *could* try the one that turns apples into apple pie and iron into horseshoes, but that probably won't work with this."

"No! Come on! That sounds perfect, just try it *please*!"

"Oh, OK, but It'll probably wear me out, so if this doesn't work I can't give you any more help."

"That's fine, just cast the spell already!"

"Alright," Twilight Sparkle said, lowering her head to bring her horn level with the turkey. She squeezed her eyes shut tight and concentrated on the future state of the turkey, what would happen to it in a minute's time, an hour's time, a day's time? Her consciousness flowed through the eddies of time, reaching around tachyon storms and waves of probability, until it found what it was looking for; what the turkey would ultimately turn out to be, it was not pretty, her magical journey ended abruptly in a last-ditch effort to save Equestria before the scorched and blackened fowl could assert itself into reality, and she collapsed in a sweating heap on Rainbow's kitchen floor, a still very much uncooked bird on the counter in front of her.

"So, this is what it's supposed to look like in the end?" Rainbow asked hopefully.

"*What I have seen, nopony should ever see!*" Twilight rasped from the floor.

Rainbow's hopes descended along with Twilight's balloon as the traumatized unicorn returned to the ground. Rainbow gave an apologetic wave to spike, who took a break from the complex and tiring (without his magical friend's assistance) task of operating the balloon to use a certain one of his fingers for a certain gesture, directed to a certain blue pegasus.

Rainbow turned back into her home, and upon gazing at the clock, began to fly around in a state of panic. She flew into the kitchen, saw the bird, turned on a dime, saw the clock, and flew back into the kitchen to repeat the frantic process. She found a pencil and drew a watch on her wrist that said she had plenty of time to make the meal, and was just trying to lapse into a full-on nervous breakdown when she heard a knock on her door. A shrill yell escaped her lips, the sudden noise startling her. She attempted to regain her composure. She would not have won any contests for it. She touched down, and trotted to her door, swallowing a gulp the size of an apple. She opened the door, gritting her eyes open and her mouth into a semblance of a smile, only to find...

The butcher, a look on his face almost as panic-stricken as the one rainbow had worn a few seconds earlier stood on her doorstep.

"Uhh, hello Miss Dash, um, I'm really sorry about this, but, uhh, that turkey I sold you, hehe, you know how I told you he loved to fly around and tumble onto the ground, well, apparently he developed an infection after he scraped himself on some underbrush, and uhh, that meat is most likely, highly deadly!"

"OH THANK CELESTI- uhh I mean, oh that's horrible, I was going to serve to my parents!" Rainbow Dash said, barely stifling a yell of victory.

"Yeah, I'm real sorry," the butcher said. "I wanted to make it up to you, so I made one for you to eat. Please don't tell the inspectors about this, I've got a foal to feed!"

"Rainbow had stopped listening at, "eat" but not just in shock at her fortune, but at the two pegasi now descending on her home.

"HEY BABY, ow," her father yelled out, straining his sore wing. "Daddy's home."

Rainbow took the new turkey from the butcher, whispering a thank you as he left. Her parents flew directly into her living room and she went in after them, to find her mother, who, looking the blue pony directly in the eye said, "Hey honey, It's so good to see you, now I was browsing the Ponynet the other day looking for your Jr. Speedsters pictures and, would you care to tell me what an "Appledash" is?"

The look returned to her face.