

The Creature That Came to Ponyville

A My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic fanfiction by Friendly Uncle

Part 9: The End

The roar of the explosion was like a wounded dragon as blinding purple light shot into the sky. At ground level everything was a confusion of smoke and dust. As the rush of wind and cacophony of wild magic died down the sound of ponies coughing made itself known.

"*Koff koff* Fluttershy? You... *koff* you doin' okay?"

Fluttershy didn't reply at first, but Applejack could feel the smaller mare shivering underneath her and hear her quietly coughing and retching. Applejack gently stroked her back until she could talk again without hacking up a lung. The earth pony still had to strain to hear her companion, whose voice was even quieter than usual.

"I think I'm okay. *koff* What about Twilight and Rarity?"

"Ah dunno sugarcube. *koff* Can't see 'em from here. We'd better wait until the dust clears."

As soon as the words left her mouth the choking clouds suddenly seemed to thin. As if by magic a stiff breeze grew up and blew away the dust and smoke little by little. Soon it was only a very light haze, and both ponies could see the full extent of the damage. Fluttershy gasped.

Where the horned creature had been standing a minute ago there was now an enormous crater, easily as deep as a pony was long, and stretching out past the bounds of Fluttershy's yard and into the meadows beyond. A scattering of blackened stumps was all that remained of a small copse of trees that had once broken up the expanse of grasses, and a hillock that Fluttershy had enjoyed napping on was now nowhere to be seen. The wreckage of bushes and miscellaneous shrubbery were scattered along the far edge of the crater, along with a badly concussed chipmunk.

At the closer edge of the crater sat a very tired purple unicorn, her mane and tail mussed and tangled, and a vaguely blissful expression on her face. Next to her, Rarity was standing very still, mouth agape and eyes wide, her coat gray with dust and her mane blown backwards until it stood up straight off of her head. Panting, Twilight turned to look at Rarity, suppressed a giggle, and then turned back to the crater. A few hands away from the edge she could see the monster, its exoskeleton calcified to bone white by the blast. From out of nowhere, Pinkie Pie bounded over to the thing, blinked at it, and then blew hard. The creature's remains broke and crumbled into a small pile of dust.

"Hey!" said Twilight, still somewhat dazed, "we did it Rarity!"

"... oh, oh sweet silver moon, my coat..."

"And look!" Twilight laughed, gesturing with her hoof, "we missed Fluttershy's house!"

"Oh goddess my *mane*, what happened to my mane!?"

"I think it looks pretty good like that, actually."

"*Twilight Sparkle!*"

Twilight immediately snapped to attention, casting about frantically for the source of the new voice.

"Princess!? Oh my gosh is that you!? Where did you come from did you find out about the- Ack!"

Celestia swooped down out of the sky and pounced on her student, pulling the little unicorn close and hugging her with her forelegs.

"Oh thank all that's holy you're alright! Oh Twilight I was so worried!"

"P-princess!?"

"I'm amazed," said Celestia, gazing out over the great swathe of destruction Twilight had cut through the landscape. "You've never harnessed your magic with such force before! Oh, I'm so proud of you my faithful student!"

"Oh... thank you," said Twilight, blushing. "...um, can I get down now?"

Celestia realized she was still cradling Twilight against her chest and quickly set her back down onto her hooves.

"Of course! I'm sorry about- Oh, Twilight! You're hurt!"

"It's not bad," said Twilight, gritting her teeth as she straightened up onto her three good legs.

"We've got to find the others! There's no telling what those monsters did to them!"

"I think we're all here Twilight," said Rainbow Dash, floating down to land beside a silently sobbing Rarity, who was being comforted by Pinkie Pie. Applejack and Fluttershy ambled over a second later, both bleeding but alive.

"Then we have to make sure we've gotten all the monsters!" said Twilight, hobbling over to Fluttershy. "How many were there? Did we get them all?"

"I... I think there must have been three adults," said Fluttershy very quietly, looking at the ground. "Scuttles, the unicorn, and the one that.... the one that came out of Cloudkicker... probably had wings..."

"The Princess got that one," said Rainbow Dash, grinning, "You guys should have seen it, she was so awesome! She cut it in half! With *fire*!"

"I may have overreacted," said Celestia, a little embarrassed. She glanced over at the pile of ash that had previously been Twilight's opponent. "I take it that used to be the unicorn?"

"Yes," said Rarity, "I'm fairly certain it won't be bothering us any more. So that just leaves..."

"*Scuttles*," moaned Fluttershy.

The creature lurched towards them, favoring one hind leg and letting its tail drag through the grass. Scuttles was bleeding in a dozen places and many of its teeth were missing. Most of the wood fragments had melted out of its face, but its cowl was still ruined and the eye sockets behind it were empty pools of acid. It kept walking.

Celestia took a step forward, but Fluttershy immediately moved in between her and Scuttles. The pudding-colored Pegasus wiped away her tears and faced the oncoming monster head on.

"No, thank you," she whispered, "but I have to do this. This is all my fault."

The Princess gave Fluttershy a sharp look, but backed away. Fluttershy stepped towards Scuttles, who continued to limp towards her. The creature made a soft keening noise in its throat as it approached, lips peeling back from its ruined mouth as it began to drool acid.

"Scuttles," said Fluttershy, "I just want to tell you... I'm very, very sorry."

Scuttles paused and tilted its head to one side.

"I don't know how you got here," she continued, "or why you're like this. It may just be the kind of animal you are. You're a predator, I can understand that. You have to follow your instincts."

Fluttershy swallowed and closed her eyes for a moment, shaking her head as if she didn't want to hear her own words.

"But I can't let you hurt any more ponies. I shouldn't have let you hurt any in the first place. I should have watched you more closely. I should have known! ...this is as much my fault as it is yours."

Twilight started to say something, but Applejack stopped her with a hoof on her shoulder. The

farm pony shook her head slowly, and Twilight sat back with a grimace.

"...and that's why I have to stop you now," Fluttershy finished, squaring her shoulders and flaring her wings. Scuttles remained still for a moment before it shook its head violently. The creature reared back and unleashed a high-pitched roar, flailing with its hooves before dropping back to the ground and then charging towards Fluttershy.

Celestia and her friends started forward, shouting words of warning, but Fluttershy remained stock still. She was staring at Scuttles as it rushed towards her.

And at the triangle of glowing red dots that were decorating the creature's neck.

A burst of blue-white light struck Scuttles in mid-leap. When the corpse hit the ground the head had been entirely blown off of its shoulders and the remains were convulsing and spewing blood. Fluttershy shuddered and lowered her head as Scuttles' landed directly in front of her, jaws opened wide in a snarling death rictus. Fresh tears flowed down her muzzle and dripped onto the creature's cowl.

"I'm so sorry," she whispered.

"Wha..." Twilight gaped, "why... how did you do that!?"

"She didn't," said Celestia in a voice full of quiet fury, "that did."

The other ponies turned to look where the Princess gestured with her horn, and saw a shimmer in the air, like the heat from a fire given horrible shape. As they watched there was a crackle of electricity and the shimmer faded to reveal an entirely new monster. Impossibly tall, perched on two powerful legs so that its hideous clawed arms could swing by its sides, it approached them at a casual lope, red light spraying from the smooth metal mask that hid its face. Thick ropes of hair hung down to bounce over its shoulders as it walked, and as it moved the bizarre mechanical appendage on its shoulder seemed to follow its gaze. The red lights swept over the assembled ponies one by one before settling between Celestia's eyes.

The Princess frowned and stepped fearlessly up to the beast, glaring directly into its own eyes. The monster glared back for a long moment, before slowly reaching up and pressing several buttons on its left gauntlet. The triangle of red dots disappeared from Celestia's face, and the weapon on its shoulder folded away.

"You don't belong here hunter," Celestia growled.

Entirely unruffled by the alicorn's tone, the hunter simply raised one arm to gesture at what was left of Scuttles. It made a series of clicks and hissing noises, and then shrugged. Celestia frowned and glanced at the creature before turning back to the hunter.

"You didn't bring it here?"

It made another series of noises, this time longer. It repeatedly motioned between itself and the creature, finally making an exploding gesture with its fingers. Celestia frowned, but she backed away to give the hunter some space.

"I'll return you, then. But I'll tell you the same thing I told the last ones: You are not welcome here. These ponies are under my protection, and they are *not* your prey. Take your trophy and go."

The hunter nodded, then reached behind its belt to grasp a large metal cylinder hanging there. With a flick of its wrist, the cylinder expanded into a pole as tall as the hunter, tipped at each end by a menacing blade. As the ponies watched, it took a step towards Scuttles, and quickly speared the dead creature's head, raising it up like a morsel on a fork.

"Oh!" Fluttershy started forward, and then stopped herself as the hunter turned its inscrutable gaze towards her.

"Please don't do that," she cried softly, "I... I wanted to at least bury him..."

The hunter seemed to stare at her for a long moment, head cocked to one side. Fluttershy looked up at it hopefully, but the hunter shouldered its trophy with apparent nonchalance, turning away from her. It paused only briefly to look back. The eye openings in its mask glimmered, and from its helmet came the sound of Fluttershy's own voice, deeper and distorted as if from a faulty recording.

"I'm... sorry."

Fluttershy blinked in confusion, and then let her head droop again, nodding. Then there was a tearing noise, and Twilight and Rarity both cried out in surprise as they felt their horns resonating with intense magical energy. Celestia removed her own horn from the magical rent that she had formed in the very air itself, leaving behind a swirling vortex of raw energy. The hunter turned to her, the flashing light of her spell reflected in the dull metallic surface of its mask.

"Go quickly," she said, "I can't maintain this for long."

The hunter simply strode forward, not showing a moment of hesitation as it stepped into and through the portal. With a sweep of her horn and a flare of golden light, Celestia closed the tear behind it. "I wish I could figure out how they keep getting here," she muttered.

"Celestia! There you are! Is everypony unhurt!?"

The Princess looked up in surprise. Soaring towards her and the others was Princess Luna herself and an entire squadron of the Royal Guard. The armored pegasi quickly formed a perimeter around the area as the princess of the night rushed to her sister and the other ponies.

"Luna," said Celestia, pausing to briefly nuzzle her sister, "good to see you up and about. You found Spike's letter, I take it?"

The princess of the night nodded. "We came as quickly as wing would carry us. Where is the foul beast?"

"Not gonna be hurtin' anypony else," said Applejack, prodding what was left of Scuttles with one hoof. Luna recoiled at the sight, wings stiff with surprise.

"Unholy manure," said one of the guards, staring at the corpse in horror, "where did *that* come from?"

"Everfree Forest," said Twilight, wincing as Celestia bent her head to apply a healing spell to her shoulder, "we found an egg there, and the whole place felt like some kind of magic effect. Twisted, but powerful."

"Like a tear?" asked Celestia, gesturing to the spot where she'd sent the hunter half a moment ago.

"Exactly like that," said Twilight.

"Oh dear," Luna sat down with a bump, her eyes wide with distress. "This is all my fault."

"What!?" said Rainbow Dash.

"When I returned to Equestria this past summer festival," said Luna quietly, "the power which freed me from the moon damaged the sphere in which it lay, the barrier between planes of reality. That crack has allowed this monster through to our world."

"That wasn't your fault Luna," said Celestia firmly, "you weren't in your right mind. You couldn't have known."

Luna sighed. "Nevertheless."

"No," said Fluttershy firmly, squirming out of Rarity and Pinkie Pie's grip to flutter over to the two princesses, "this was my fault. I *raised* it. I should have known."

"Fluttershy," sighed Celestia, "I'm afraid I don't understand, what exactly were you supposed to

know?"

"Uh, your majesties?" said another guard, "I think you'd better come take a look at this."

Celestia and Luna turned to follow their guards, Twilight and her friends following behind. The small force of armored pegasi that had surrounded Fluttershy's shed moved aside to allow them through. Luna gasped. Celestia's mouth slowly fell open in shock as her gaze swept over the charred remains of the egg sac and the line of cocoons stuck to the back of the small building, and their terrible contents.

"Those things did this?" the princess of the sun asked.

"They're parasitic," said Twilight, "they use other organisms to produce eggs, and then to incubate their young."

"It's not a pleasant process," said Rarity, spitting again at the memory.

"Wait a moment," said Luna suddenly, "you said there were three specimens, but there are three bodies here, and you wrote that one had already hatched from another pony, did you not? Should there not be one more?"

"Inside," said Fluttershy, walking up to the shed's door. When the handle wouldn't turn Celestia came up beside her and pried the door open with a burst of magic from her horn. The princess gestured to the others to wait as she followed Fluttershy inside.

The shed was a rather confined space for the alicorn, but she folded her wings and lowered her head to fit inside, watching closely as Fluttershy slowly approached something on the floor. The last creature was lying curled up on the wood, a soft hissing noise escaping it as it wrapped its tail more tightly around itself. As the two ponies watched, the exoskeleton on its back began to crack and split, revealing a darker carapace underneath.

"It's beginning to molt," said Fluttershy, unable to keep the note of awe from creeping into her voice as she watched. "When it's finished it will be fully grown. And then it will start all over again."

Celestia slowly reached over with one hoof and caught the tear that rolled down Fluttershy's cheek. The pegasus looked up at her in surprise, and then turned away, staring down at the swelling creature at her hooves.

"Fluttershy," said Celestia very carefully, "did you know that your pet was killing ponies?"

"It attacked me at first," said Fluttershy quietly, "I had to use The Stare. But it became so gentle and playful afterwards, I just... I assumed it wouldn't attack anypony else. It was stupid of me. I

should have realized it would start hunting.”

“Did you *know*?” Celestia insisted.

“... no,” Fluttershy mumbled, “but I should have. I should have stopped it before it came to this.”

Fluttershy settled down on the floor beside the creature, still fascinated despite herself. The thing had already sloughed off most of its skin, and it had begun to grow, the spongy flesh underneath expanding and darkening further to a deep, blue-tinted black.

“We should kill it now,” Fluttershy sobbed, “and then I will accept whatever punishment you see fit to give me.”

Celestia sighed, a hint of a tear forming in her own eye, “Fluttershy, I don’t think...”

“It’s my fault.”

The princess frowned at her for a long moment. Then she closed her eyes and nodded, and a dull, throbbing glow enveloped her horn. The magic swirled up the length of it and gathered into a single mote of pure energy at the tip, and then dropped slowly to the creature on the floor. The golden glow sank into its head, and the creature spasmed, its growth slowly coming to a halt as it lay there, twitching. The exoskeleton began to visibly harden, turning a glossy bluish black.

Then the creature slowly turned to look up at Fluttershy and made an inquisitive hissing noise.

“What...” the pegasus began, but Celestia cut her off with an arm around her shoulders and a stern word. Celestia’s “I am a princess and I am in charge” tone didn’t have the volume of Luna’s Royal Canterlot voice, but it still made Fluttershy shut up and sit down.

“Fluttershy,” said Celestia imperiously, “You are found guilty of harboring a dangerous entity within Equestria’s borders. As princess and liege of this land, I hereby administer your sentence.”

There was a scuffling noise outside that might have been Fluttershy’s friends getting ready to shout in protest and then being shushed by Luna.

“And your sentence is thus: that you try again.”

Fluttershy stared down at the creature for a moment before her head suddenly whipped up to stare at Celestia in open-mouthed shock. She made a noise that might have been intended as an interrogative but came out as more of a high-pitched squeak. Celestia simply smiled at her.

"You were correct in your assessment that these beings were driven entirely by instinct. As slaves of their own genetic programming they could do nothing but propagate their own species. Therefore I have taken those instincts away."

She nodded at the creature, which was now rising on unsteady legs looking around curiously. It was about Sweetie Belle's size now, though its hooves were almost too big for its body and its tail was as long as the rest of it. The strange, phallic head swivelled back and forth as it took in its surroundings.

"What little of the magic of friendship I have to wield is enough to give this creature a will and purpose of its own," Celestia explained, "it will now grow and learn much as any pony would, without the murderous instincts of its parent. But it will need somepony to guide and raise it, to show it how to live peacefully with other creatures. This task I place upon you, Fluttershy. Do you accept?"

"Yes," Fluttershy sobbed, nuzzling the young creature's head. Squeeing softly, it returned the gesture, nestling itself against the pegasus' soft cheek. Outside, Rainbow Dash and Pinkie Pie started arguing about whether it was the cutest thing they'd ever seen or the creepiest.

"Good," said Celestia, "...now let's get out of here. My guards need to... clean up."

"They can burn the shed down," said Fluttershy, "I don't think I want it anymore."

"That might be a good idea."

Celestia and Fluttershy emerged from the shed. Celestia stretched her wings out briefly before settling them once again at her sides and giving everypony a reassuring smile. Fluttershy followed her nervously, having sat the small creature on her back. It had curled up between her wings and was looking around as she walked. Angel let out a tiny squeak of alarm as he rushed to Fluttershy's side.

"It's okay Angel," said Fluttershy, petting the bunny gently on the head, "and I mean it this time."

"I will deal with the tasks here," Luna said to Celestia, gesturing to the guards who were already performing the grisly job of cleaning up the bodies, "their families will be informed, and I believe it might be appropriate for us to settle the cost of their funeral arrangements."

"I agree," said Celestia, "I'll take Twilight and her friends to get some medical attention, and send the local authorities to assist."

"I suppose we should tell the Mayor what's been going on," said Rarity.

"Oh gosh!" Twilight's eyes widened, "I completely forgot about Zecora and the others! They're

still out in the forest!”

“Your Majesty!” said a breathless guard as he fluttered over to Celestia, “a group of ponies just came out of the woods demanding to know where your student is!”

“... oh, problem solved,” said Twilight, chuckling nervously, “uh, I’ll go talk to them.”

“I can’t understand anything the zebra says, but there’s a big red stallion saying it’s a matter of life and death! He’s got captain Bucephalus by the collar of his armor and he’s threatening to put his head through a tree!”

“Ooh,” said Luna, “can we not wait until he has done so? I would love to see that!”

Twilight started running.

-

The sun was well past the horizon when the door to Sweet Apple Acres slowly creaked open. Big Macintosh entered first, carefully supporting his sister. A heavily bandaged Applejack leaned against him as she stumbled along, nearly asleep on her hooves. Shortly behind them came Rarity, most of the dust washed out of her coat and her mane combed into a respectable flip, if not her usual elegant curls. Twilight Sparkle brought up the rear, her shoulder bandaged and eyelids drooping.

“Land’s sakes,” said Granny Smith, staring blearily at them from where she’d been sitting and waiting at the dining room table, “what have y’all been up to?”

“I’ll tell y’all about it in a minute Granny,” said Macintosh, “soon as I get Applejack to bed. She’s had a hard day.”

Granny nodded and gave her granddaughter a matronly kiss on the cheek before she was lead away, muttering something about teeth. The old earth pony turned to her two unicorn guests. Twilight was looking around agitatedly, but Rarity simply smiled at her.

“Hello Mrs. Smith, Applejack said Spike and my little sister were staying here. Are they...?”

“Plum tuckered out,” said Granny with a warm smile, “yer sister’s in Apple Bloom’s room and ah put the dragon up on the couch. The two of ye are welcome to stay the night if ye like, ah reckon they’ll both be pleased as punch to see ye in the mornin’.”

“Thanks for the offer,” said Twilight, “but Spike and I need to get back to the library, we’ve got a guest staying over.”

“Fine and dandy. Ah’ll fetch the little feller.”

Twilight was inclined to do it herself, but the elderly pony didn’t give her time to object as she slid off her seat and onto her hooves before creaking off down the hallway, muttering about her hips. Twilight turned the Rarity, who had once again fallen to fussing with her mane.

“Are you and Sweetie Belle coming along?”

“Oh, no dear,” said Rarity, letting the errant curl fall over her eye, “Sweetie’s in no state to be stumbling around in the dark. I’ll check to be sure she’s sleeping alright and probably take Spike’s place on the couch. You’ve got the Princesses bunking with you, I suppose?”

“Just Celestia,” said Twilight, looking away to hide her slight blush, “Luna’s going back to Canterlot to head off the rumor mill. An official announcement that there was a brief incursion in Ponyville that’s been entirely handled will calm public outcry a lot more than just denying it even happened.”

“I do hope they won’t publish the exact details,” said Rarity, “poor Fluttershy…”

“Oh, no, they’re not going to name anypony,” said Twilight, shaking her head, “aside from stating that the bearers of the Elements of Harmony were instrumental in stopping the monsters, and that an ongoing research project will help to ensure that the incident is never repeated.”

“I can’t believe Celestia is actually letting her keep that thing,” said Rarity with a shudder.

“Celestia assured us that it’s harmless,” said Twilight, a touch defensively, “besides, who’s going to watch it more closely than Fluttershy? After everything that happened?”

“I… suppose so…”

“Twilight! Rarity!” Spike was clearly tired, but didn’t let that get in the way of running up to and fiercely hugging his two favorite mares one after the other. “Are you okay? Is everything alright!? Twilight, you’re hurt!”

“We’re both fine Spikey-Wikey,” said Rarity, giving the baby dragon a comforting pat on the scales.

“Yeah,” said Twilight, working her shoulder gently, “I’m really only wearing the bandage to keep the herbs on and prevent scarring, the Princess already took care of the worst of it.”

“The Princess? So she came? She got my letter?”

“Yes Spike,” said Twilight, giving him a warm smile and a pat of her own, “she got there just in

the nick of time, thanks to my number one assistant.”

Spike’s “d’aaww” of embarrassment melted into a loud lawn, sparks of green fire escaping his lips. Twilight chuckled and gingerly levitated him up onto her back, her horn sparking lightly in protest from the strain after all the magic she’d done that day.

“Now let’s get you home so we can both have a well-deserved rest. Goodnight Rarity, goodnight Granny Smith.”

“Goodnight darling.”

“Sleep well dearies.”

They headed out the door. Big Macintosh returned a moment later, pausing to get himself a mug of cider from the refrigerator.

“Can I get you anything Miss Rarity?”

“Oh, no thank you Mac, I’ll just check up on Sweetie Belle and probably try to get some sleep myself. Goodnight.”

She shashayed out of the dining room, not allowing herself to slump into weariness until she thought she was out of sight. Granny Smith simply chuckled as she settled herself back down at the table with Big Mac.

“Now, why don’t you tell an old lady what all the fuss is about.”

The big draft pony sighed. “Well Granny, it’s like this. You remember what happened to Applejack’s friend, Dollars to Donuts...?”

-

Applejack came to with a jerk, her eyes travelling swiftly around her surroundings, her breath coming in short gasps. It was her own room, recognizable even in the dark. No unknowns, no lurking horrors, no teeth in the shadows...

Applejack was not the sort of pony to let her imagination get the better of her, but when the memories of her day came crashing down around her she was on her hooves in a second, her quilt fallen forgotten on the ground. She thought she could hear voices downstairs. Without pausing to think about it or even noticing the sizzles of pain from her injuries she trotted to her door and opened it, the light in the hallway like a breath of fresh air. She only barely noticed Rarity in time to not run the other pony down.

“Aw heck!”

“My goodness!”

The two ponies stumbled away from each other, wide eyed. Applejack was about to comment further when Rarity was abruptly in her face, the unicorn’s carefully manicured hooves roaming gently over her head.

“Oh darling you gave me quite a fright there! Are you feeling alright? You really should be in bed dear, you’ve been through so much today!”

Applejack managed to pick her jaw off the floor and gave Rarity an incredulous look.

“Ah’ve been through so much today? *You* got kidnapped by a slimy monster and cocooned to the side of a wood shed! The darn thing almost laid babies in yer throat!”

“Yes,” said Rarity with a melodramatic sigh, “and I was doing a wonderful job of repressing that particular jaunt into nonconsensual interspecies breeding until you brought it back up again. But I didn’t have to fight the thing afterwards and I didn’t just barge out of a room looking like I’d seen a ghost. So really darling, whatever is the matter?”

Applejack paused, her gaze switching quickly between Rarity’s slightly affronted expression and the floor, her tongue feeling like a dead weight in her mouth. What was the matter? There was a churned up sick feeling in her stomach, neither fear nor anger, and it made her want to fight somepony. But there wasn’t anything left to fight now, was there?

“Ah... ah dunno...” she tried, “Ah just feel like... ah just want...”

Rarity caressed her cheek gently, her gentle blue eyes all concern and worry. It felt oddly comforting.

“Ah don’t wanna be alone right now,” she managed at last, dropping her gaze to the floor.

Rarity let her hoof drop to the floor and pressed herself briefly against Applejack’s chest, wrapping her neck around the other pony in a quick hug before brushing past her and into Applejack’s room.

“I understand darling. And it just so happens I need a place to sleep tonight. Would you mind...?”

“Of course not, ah’d be much obliged.”

Rarity levitated the quilt back up onto the bed, and the two ponies slipped underneath it. The

unicorn immediately scooted over next to Applejack where she started delicately stroking her mane. The earth pony nickered softly and settled against her friend, allowing herself to enjoy the gentle ministrations.

“Ah dunno what ah’d do without you Rare,” she murmured.

“Thanks to you and the rest of our friends we’ll never have to find out,” said Rarity with a tired smile.

-

In Celestia’s bedroom Luna had just finished repairing the hoofmarks in the flooring when she felt a vague tickling along the length of her horn. The Princess of the Moon looked up as a glimmer of magic appeared before her, an outline of her sister slowly growing more substantial as the spell produced a three dimensional illusion of Celestia casually reclining on somepony’s bed. It even included an illusory Twilight Sparkle huddled up against Celestia’s side, one of the Princess’ hooves draped comfortably over her sleeping form.

“Hello sister,” said Luna, settling down on Celestia’s cushion.

Hello, Celestia replied, How are things back in Canterlot?

“I believe the media will not be overly interested in the event,” said Luna, “Ponyville is rather close to Everfree after all, reports of monsters are not uncommon. I... did not provide them with an exact body count.”

That might be for the best, said Celestia with a sigh, hopefully this was the worst of it.

“You and I both know that might not be the case,” said Luna, “the openings in the sphere could have let other monsters through.”

Yes, there may be others. But I am more confident than ever that our champions are up to the task.

Celestia caressed Twilight tenderly, and the little unicorn smiled happily in her sleep. Luna smiled as well, despite her misgivings.

“Time will tell, sister.”

Celestia’s spell slowly faded, as well as Luna’s smile. With a flash of magic she levitated a long scroll over to herself from a nearby bookcase, carefully unrolling it to the last few paragraphs. With a slowly growing weight of worry in her heart, Luna once again read the conclusion of Twilight Sparkle’s report.

Though of course there is only so much that one pony can do to properly catalogue the night sky, particularly without a year to properly observe the stars in all of their seasonal positions, I am confident in reporting that the majority of the constellations appear to be where they should be. I am, however, rather surprised to note that there is one anomaly. I have noted one constellation that does not appear on any other charts that I have found, leading me to believe that it might be a recent addition to the night sky.

It is superficially quite similar to Sagittarius, though smaller, and it seems to lack the distinctive bow. What truly puzzles me, however, is that judging by the positioning of the closest stars and the effect that gravity would have on their groupings, this constellation should have been present all along. It is almost as if the constellation has been covered up by something. Given the vast size of a constellation however I cannot imagine an object large enough to obscure it. Therefore I must conclude that these stars are relatively young and such a distance away from Earth that their light has only just reached us, allowing them to become visible to ponies with telescopes.

“Covered up by something,” Luna murmured, “something big enough... or powerful enough... to obscure stars.”

There was something there, something tickling at the back of her memory...

“Unlikely. Twilight is probably right. Just a trick of light.”

She rolled the scroll back up and put it away.

“No more monsters. At least for now.”

-The End

[<-Part 8](#)
[Back to the Archive](#)

Oh god, it's over, it's finally over.

I never intended for this thing to last so long or take so long to write. What is wrong with me?

For everyone who kept reading this, I hope very much that you enjoyed it and thank you so much for sticking with the story despite the excessive length of time it took to write it, and know that I am very sorry for stringing you along.

There will inevitably be questions, and you can ask me any you like on my [tumblr](#) and I will do

my level best to answer. That being said, to get some confusion out of the way to begin with:

Don't think too hard about the predator. There's some implied backstory there between him and Celestia, and it's just a very silly idea I have that predators are the types of guys who would explore the entire galaxy looking for new and interesting creatures to murder for sport. Some of them landed on Equestria at one point. It did not end well for anyone involved.

I'm probably not going to do a direct out and out sequel to this... there might be some bits and pieces of continuity that float into my other fanfics, because they're all written with the same headcanon, but Aliens vs Ponies as a concept is something I feel I've explored well enough. A kindly gent by the name of Knives4cash is writing [his own sequel](#) as we speak and while it's a bit darker than my own take on the universe it looks like it'll be fairly interesting. Look to him for all of your further alien pony needs.

That being said, if all goes well, you can expect to see Scuttles Jr. make a return appearance in "The Elements of Harmony Vs. Dragontron." In the immediate future, it's time for some Twilestia.

Love and tolerate Bronies. Peace out.