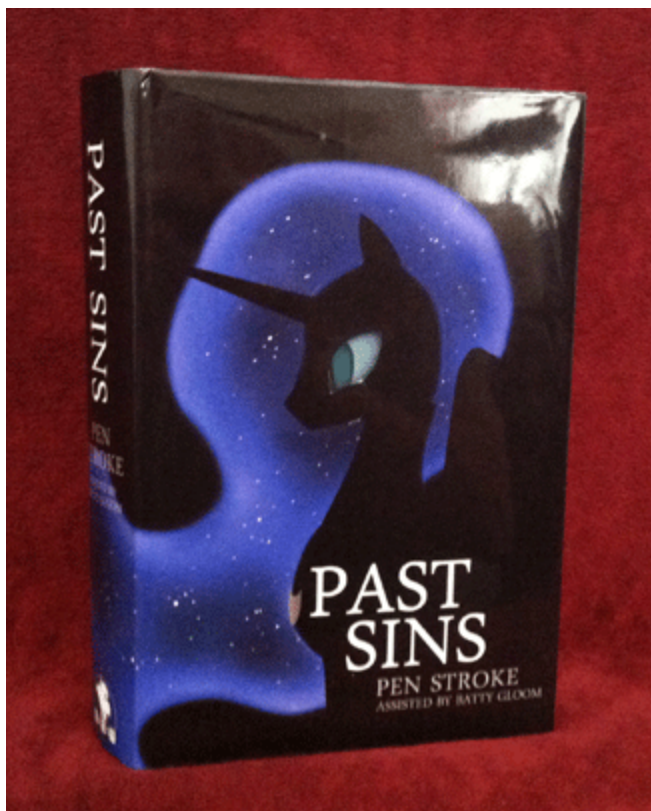


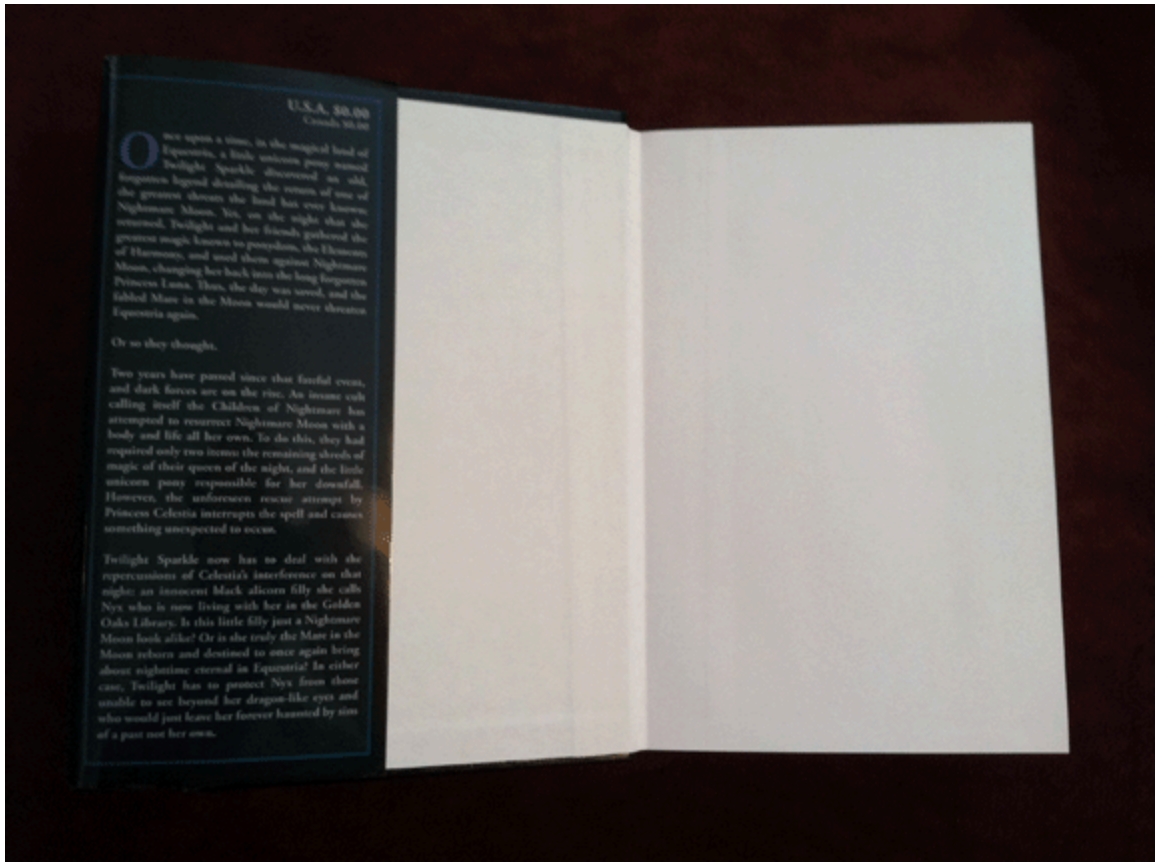
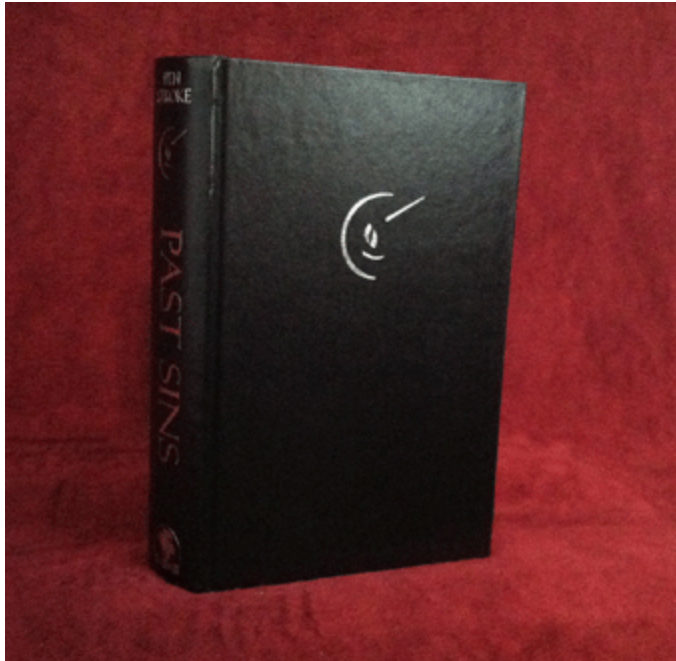
Greetings from Equestria Publications!

Well, the day has arrived! After so many delays, snafus, hiccups, and roadblocks (thank you Paypal for that last one) the Past Sins Printing Project is finally, finally done!

All books arrived and were accounted for. Quality control has been implemented. All books have been shipped to all signers!

We could go on for hours about how this entire project was a labor of love. How none of this would have been possible without the support of the Brony community at large. But really, it would be best to let the book speak for itself.







Pen Strode is a Wyoming native who is currently studying for a Computer Science Masters Degree in Los Angeles, California. He and Barry Glasser had been writing buddies for several years prior to Pen discovering My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic—which was recommended to him by some of his classmates from a programming class project. Pen gave it a shot but did not consider himself a true bronny until fate allowed him to run into Barry again on Equestria Daily. Now, thanks to Barry, Pen Strode is neck-deep in the bronny fandom and loving every second of it.

[www.equestriandaily.com/pen-strode](http://www.equestriandaily.com/pen-strode)  
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Also available online at [www.EquestriaDaily.com](http://www.EquestriaDaily.com)  
Presented by the Federal Bureau of Investigation  
October 10, 2012

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ALSO BY PEN STROKE

*Five Six Solo Stories*  
*Twelve*  
*Nightmare or Nye*  
*Winter Ball*

*Other works*

*Better Living Through Science and Ponies*  
*Crawling Darkness*  
*Changing Octaves*  
*A Drop of Moonshine*  
*A Mug of Hard Cider*  
*Hawking Nightmare*  
*Little Sugar Shop of Horrors*  
*Bureaucracy is Magic*  
*Flattenedby Wishes*  
*Into the Depths*  
*A Zebra in the Sud*  
*Wise Beyond Her Years*

# Past Sins

*What else can you be  
when the world can only see  
a monster?*

A Novel By: Pen Stroke  
Assisted By: Barry Cloon

## PRELUDE



## RESURRECTION

Amidst dim candlelight, a single unicorn sat with his head bent down, eyes shut. He sat alone at the edge of a still pond, his reflection dancing in the water. The pond was nestled deep within the Everfree Forest, where the darkened trees with their gnarled branches surrounded all sides like silent sentinels.

While most of Equestria had just shifted into spring, the Everfree was still gripped by clinging bits of winter. Snow covered the ground, and there was a lingering chill in the air. The unicorn's hot breath left puffs of steam to cool and rise for a few seconds before disappearing into the night.

For a long while, the unicorn had sat in utter silence on the edge of the pond with only a few nearby candles for company. The light from the tiny, flickering flames fell upon his coat and mane, which had been dyed from its natural color to a pitch black. Even his cutie mark had been covered by the dyes, his flank appearing utterly blank.

"She came to me, if you would believe it," Nightmare Moon murmured. "I would have thought you'd taught her better than to go running to the very people that would want to capture her, but that's what she did. She wanted to tell me some sob story about how sorry she was for what happened. It was truly pathetic."

Celestia ruffled her wings as she focused more intently on Nightmare Moon. "You let her live, even though, as long as she is alive, the Elements of Harmony are a threat to you."

"I will tell you what I told Spell Nexus. I will deal with Twilight Sparkle in my own way and in my own time," Nightmare Moon stopped, her wings beginning to glow. "Besides, you have more important things to be worried about, Celestia."

Nightmare Moon's magic surged, and in the air beside her a magical blade took shape. It was forged of what looked like black coral that shimmered and flashed like calm water beneath the night sky. While diamonds were very powerful, they were not truly immortal. Their strength came from the amount of magic they held, and the best tool to contain that magic was a weapon of pure, compressed mystic energy, much like the sword Nightmare Moon now wielded.

"An odd level of decorum, Nightmare Moon," Celestia commented. She formed her own magical sword, a pristine white blade, which she held in a defensive position while she and Nightmare Moon continued to circle one another. "When the changeling queen attacked Canterlot, she and I used our most powerful spells. Why would you desire to cast swords instead of attacking me head on?"

Nightmare Moon laughed and twirled her sword once in the air. "Because I know of the defensive spells that still linger on this castle, Celestia. Some of your veteran guards were very informative. With so to-die-for spells as you and this 'changeling queen' did, the castle would light up like a beacon and draw Luna back."

"But, and I know one other thing," Nightmare Moon lifted the

blade to her nose, admiring its glow before flicking her gaze back to Celestia. "A little right, Nexus told me about immortal artifacts like you and I. Magic is our strength, but it is our weakness as well. When normal swords hold no threat, a blade forged of magic can wound, can injure, and can kill with greater ease than any random blast of magic."

"And so that's your intent," Celestia whispered. The pair still circled one another, each waiting for the other to make the first move. "You came here to kill me?"

"Did you expect any less?"

"No... I suppose not, but what do you intend to do with Twilight? What are your plans for her friends, the others who wield the Elements of Harmony?" Celestia asked.

"While they pose no danger as long as I have Twilight," Nightmare Moon noted confidently, "they will get their just reward. I've ordered my guard to capture them unharmed, so that I will be able to decide their fate."

Celestia arched an eyebrow and allowed her sword to lower just an inch. "Unharmed? Why would you care about their well-being? Why are in your mission being them in harmed and harmed?"

Nightmare Moon sneered in contempt. "I will see to it that Spell Nexus, or anyone else, take the vengeance I deserve for what those ponies did to me. While you would not know it, being sure of another pony like a cheap concubine by the Elements of Harmony is an excruciating experience, and they will endure double the pain they caused me that day."

"Then what do you intend to do with them?" Celestia questioned.

"Whatever I see fit," sneered Nightmare Moon. "Their fate is in my hands and mercy, neither you nor Nexus, has any right to question my decisions. I am above reproach."

"For you speak as if Nexus has been questioning your actions."

Nightmare Moon laughed, though she made sure to keep her sword

you could talk and look after yourself. Also, technically speaking, you're still a baby dragon, and that kind of makes me your mother too."

"Pff. Whatever, I still say I'd make a better uncle!" Spike stood before bringing his claws to his face. "Especially if you let me have that awesome mustache back. No uncle is complete without a mustache."

"Sorry, Spike, no mustache. Now you should get some sleep."

"Yeah yeah, I heard you the first time, Mom!" Spike scoffed before he lay back down and threw the blanket back over himself. He was asleep almost instantly, and Twilight couldn't help but giggle quietly as she crept out of the bedroom and headed downstairs.

"Chester, can I have a word with you?"

"Huh-huh."

"Uh-uh is right, Master," Twilight firmly asserted.



## CAREFUL MANEUVERING

Dear Reverend Brother Nicos — High Prophet of The True Queen

I hope this letter finds you well, Brother Nicos, for I have both good and bad news that needs to be brought to your attention. First, in regard to your orders, our search of the Everfree Forest is still ongoing. We have yet to find any real traces of our queen, and, severely, even the lingering portions of her aura as the ancient castles have dissipated.

But, the past evening, I became aware of a filly that has been living in town that bears, if I may say, a striking resemblance to our queen. The filly in question, Nix, is currently in the care of Twilight Sparkle. Yes, the same Twilight Sparkle we are all so familiar with. I first saw her at an elementary school play, and I saw her a second time that evening when she shared a meal with Twilight Sparkle, the princess, and a number of other local towns and fillys.

After speaking with my daughter, who shared a class with the filly for a



Nyx Concept 1 - Valeron



Nyx Concept 2 - Valeron



Nyx Concept 3 - Valeron



Nyx Concept 4 - Valeron





Beach Fun - Adison



Grown Up Nightmare Nexus - Tracie



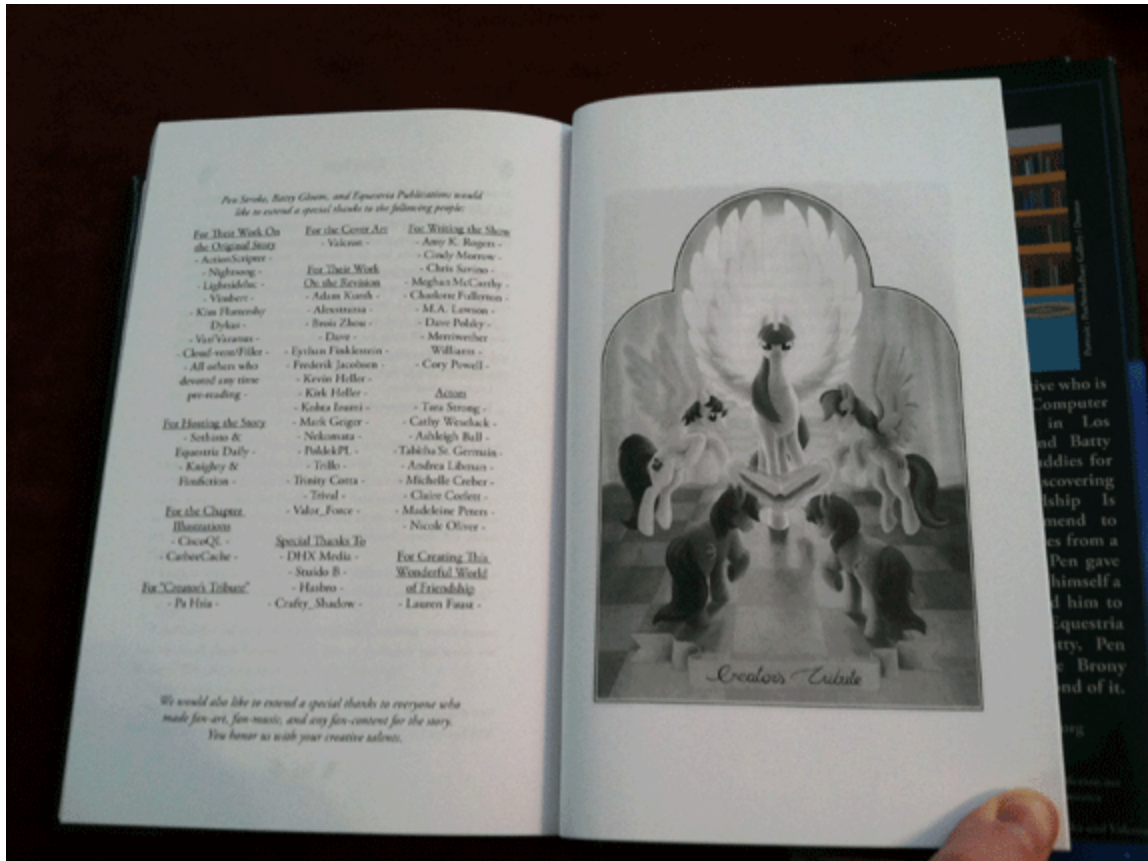
For the Night Eternal,  
For Equestria's True Queen

Revered Brother Spell Nexus - LAm3200



Don't Stop - Departures - Hayden0109





We hereby give our utmost thanks to every single person who signed up for their own Hardcover copy. Without any of them, none of this would have been possible. Thank you.

This is Equestria Publications signing off.