

“He simply refused to stop complaining. So I turned his wife into a goat.”

Discord’s face remained serious and there was the briefest of pauses. The small crease of a smile on Chrysalis’s face opened to a full grin. She let out a hearty chuckle with Discord quickly joining in. Chrysalis’s eyes alighted on Nightmare Moon and she stretched a foreleg out to jab the quiet mare gently in the side, speaking through laughs. “Because... he was... you know... get it?”

“Yes, yes I get it.” Nightmare Moon shifted to the side to avoid the physical contact directed at her and rolled her eyes.

The laughter dying out, Discord cast a smirk at Nightmare Moon. “You’re more down than usual tonight, Miss Moon. Chipper up before you bring my bar down with that frown.”

Nightmare Moon twisted her mouth to the side and stared at the bar counter. “I’ve been thinking,” she said. “What are we doing here?”

“Oh, this again.” Chrysalis sighed and rested her cheek on her hoof.

A sharp glance was thrown in Chrysalis’s direction. Nightmare Moon continued. “It is a serious postulation. I transport myself to this realm every evening and what do I see? A different color floor in its ridiculous checkered pattern, the same patrons causing a ruckus, and that horrible facsimile of a sky.” She looked up at the stars, her eyes narrowing at their inaccuracy.

“Yet you still come here.” Discord waved a claw at her. “And you still eclipse my mockery of the night sky. Admit it, Miss Moon, you enjoy our company, despite your constantly rolling eyes. In fact, how about *you* tell us a story. It’s been quite some time since I’ve heard you speak of your exploits.”

Nightmare Moon sighed. “I suppose I could indulge in a little storytelling.” She tilted her glass sharply, taking a large swig of wine. “Have I ever told you about the time I managed to get an entire village to worship me?”

“I don’t think I’ve heard this one.” Discord leaned his elbow on the bar and reached down to take a glass from below the counter.

“It was exactly three months before my banishment. It was a cold, airy night. The constellation Mula stood out clearly in the sky. It’s always been considered an ill-omen when the stars of its eyes shine brightly, and I’m inclined to believe such superstitions, because it was at that time that I had the mayor’s daughter Melchuria cornered in an alleyway. She looked at me with resigned eyes. She knew there was no escape and that the mare haunting her every dream for the last month was about to snatch away her very soul...”

With a cocked eyebrow, Chrysalis watched as a light glinted behind Nightmare Moon’s eyes while they stared into space, her voice taking on an edge, growing sharper as her story continued. “She’s going to

just keep going and going isn't she?"

"Oh, when she gets like that? Most definitely. Though I am curious how long she can go on before she notices that we're not paying attention." Discord spun the glass in his hands and set it on the bar with ice filling what was previously empty space. There was a bout of yelling and the sound of crashing glass, inclining Discord to look at the table full of changelings behind him. "And just how are the minions, oh Queen?"

"The usual. 'My Queen, when are we going to have our revenge? Your Majesty, do we plan on tidying this place up? Your Evilness, I haven't eaten in three days, when are we getting food?' It's constant." Chrysalis crossed her forelegs. "I tire of their restlessness. Apparently 'in due time' is not a satisfactory response to them."

"Your servants complain far too much. You need some of mine. They are delightful."

"I'm not sure... 'delightful' would be the word I'd use, but I'd gladly take a break from the demands of my changelings." There was another sound of shattering glass and Chrysalis stared hard at her underlings from far across the room. "I need to have some words with my Second."

"And chaos minions are such low maintenance. No need to micro-manage them." Discord gestured to a herd of goats that floated by aimlessly.

"I imagine anything having to do with chaos is probably low maintenance."

"Chaos magic *is* the best sort of magic." With a wave of the tail, the floor turned to a lime green color.

"You telepathically summoned me, My Queen?" A changeling a good half-shoulder taller than his fellows approached the three villains.

"Yes, Carl, I—"

"Have any of you been paying attention?" Nightmare Moon's upper half lurched towards the two villains. She pounded a hoof on the counter. "That's the first time I've ever told that story and yet you two prattle on about... *something*. What was it? What was more interesting than my tale of victory?"

"Well if the story continued like it started... just about everything," said Chrysalis, scrunching up her nose.

"Now, now, Miss Moon, we simply got sidetracked is all." Discord held a claw over his glass and chocolate milk poured from its tip.

"Must you do that?" Nightmare Moon asked, grimacing at the spectacle.

“What is your problem? Is it too hard for you to simply enjoy a night at the bar like me?” Chrysalis stared down her muzzle.

“Listen, Queen of Love, I am quite tired of your condescending attitude!” Nightmare Moon hissed.

“I’ve told you how much I despise that nickname! I *feed* upon love. I have no stake in its propagation!”

“Yet you are still beneath it! Am I supposed to just ignore how you and your entire army were swept away by something so paltry?”

“Are you being bothered, My Queen?” Carl’s eyes looked fierce despite lacking pupils.

“Oh look, a minion trying to stand up for its mistress,” said Nightmare Moon, her mouth turning into a lop-sided smile. “How *modern*. Why don’t you remain silent while *true* evil has its quarrel?”

“That’s it! Pick your poison!” In a blink, the changeling turned into a mantichore. “I will take you down in any way you choose!”

“Carl!” Chrysalis hissed.

“This isn’t all of my arsenal, either! No, I’ve been places. *Places*, you know. *Seen* creatures!” The mantichore form shifted into a large crustacean with five, sharp mandibles.

“Carl!”

“How about the unknown? How about it?” Carl shifted into... nothing. Then, with a low, vibrating thrum, a ripple, like that of a drop of water hitting a pool, waved across the air, and a tentacle shot through it, followed by an ear-piercing wail.

“Carl!”

The tentacle retracted and a changeling once again stood in its place. “Yes, my Queen?”

“I am more than capable of handling this myself. I called you over here to tell you to keep a tighter reign on your inferiors. You remember what happened last time they were left to their own devices?”

“Yes, my Queen! We couldn’t go into that section of the cave for weeks, but, but I have to defend your honor first!”

“Yes, yes, your efforts are appreciated but would you take a look at your opponent.” Chrysalis flopped a hoof in Nightmare Moon’s direction, looking at her changeling with half-lidded eyes.

Nightmare Moon had taken off her helmet and was polishing it lightly with a cloth while leaning against

the bar. "Do tell me, Carl, are you done with your circus act?"

"Yes." Carl snorted and lowered his head, baring his teeth.

"Good. Watch. Closely." Nightmare Moon levitated her helmet back and with a burst of magic her body turned to a pitch black mist that floated towards Carl and enveloped him before he could move out of the way. With a low hiss, the mist start contorting and shifting into a sphere which rapidly starting shrinking until it disappeared entirely. With a flash of light, a black hole appeared in mid-air and Carl was shot out of it, his muzzle hitting the floor with a loud smack. Nightmare Moon, having suddenly retaken her pony form, walked back to her spot at the bar and started sipping from her glass some more.

"Carl, are you alright?" Chrysalis asked, peering down at her Second and poking him with her hoof.

"So... much... horror... terrible... save me... from... it" Carl slowly started curling into a fetal position and his shoulders started heaving as he buried his face in his hooves.

"Are you crying?" Chrysalis looked up at Nightmare Moon and shook her hoof. "You made my minion cry!"

"I do have to say, that was some impressive magic," said Discord, glancing at the shaking changeling and letting out a small laugh.

"Just some simple illusion spells," said Nightmare Moon before looking sidelong at Chrysalis. "You're changeling is fine, he's simply been mentally scarred... temporarily. He'll get over it."

"He was trying to defend me, however idiotically that attempt might have been!" Chrysalis stamped her hoof. "Why don't you try something like that on me and see how well it goes?"

Nightmare Moon set her glass down with a decisive clink. She stood to her full height and stared straight into Chrysalis's eyes. "If I'm to be fighting a true adversary, then I do away with illusions. If you want to settle this, we settle this with physical combat."

"That's a challenge I'm fully willing to accept," said Chrysalis with a smirk. "Though, I should warn you, I can take forms far more powerful and terrifying than my Second."

"Hey, that's cheating!" yelled Nightmare Moon.

"Too late! The challenge is on!" Chrysalis flexed her wings outward and lowered her head, her fangs glinting. She was just about to charge when she found her vision obscured by a large, fluffy pink cloud.

"Miss Eclipse-a-lot. Your Holiness." Discord frowned at the two heads that peered over the barrier at him. "Though I love a little spontaneity, violence is not something I allow in this establishment. Far too messy. Why don't you two admit that you both have been defeated in utter embarrassment and do away

with these scraps of pride you cling to. I did away with mine a long time ago.”

Chrysalis and Nightmare Moon exchanged a look, a look of narrowed eyes and pursed lips. After a few moments silence, they turned away and their hooves shuffled.

“I suppose we *both* have been defeated by something ridiculous,” said Nightmare Moon, sighing. “Being forced from your host via *friendship* is hardly a worthy way to go.”

“That it is not. I would know. It happened to me two times too many.” Discord took a few sips of his glass.

“Well, as long as I’m not being ridiculed for my demise.” Chrysalis gave a curt nod.

Nightmare Moon returned the nod and telekinetically lifted her glass to her lips and returned to staring out into the bar with dull eyes.

Discord’s eyebrows knitted as he looked at Carl lying on the floor, showing no signs of getting up. He snapped his fingers. Nothing. He snapped his fingers again. “Where is that lazy griffon?”

“Here, here.” Gilda flew over the bartender’s shoulder and with an ungraceful thud, landed on the ground. “Whatcha need?”

“Well, first of all, I need you to do your job. Where have you been for the past few hours?” Discord crossed his arms.

“You know, here and there. Just because it’s a job doesn’t mean I can’t enjoy it.” Gilda looked at her claws with thinly veiled interest.

A zap of magic shot from Discord’s claw and hit Gilda, surrounding her. It pulled her closer to him, forcing her to pull her beak back to avoid hitting her employer in the face. He sniffed her. “Just as I suspected. You’ve been drinking on the job. I’m going to assume you’ve been drinking just about as much as you’ve been delivering to customers, am I right?”

“No! I’m good!” Gilda raised her claws in defense.

“My vote is on guilty,” said Chrysalis.

“I say kill her,” said Nightmare Moon, her horn starting to glow with a faint light.

“Hmm, a noble endeavor but I shall refrain for the moment.” Discord let Gilda free and pointed at the still catatonic changeling. “*Do* be sure to do your cleaning duty and take him back to his table.”

“Alright, alright.” Gilda frowned and grabbed Carl roughly, ignoring his startled cries, and flew off.

"I think my solution would have been more beneficial," stated Nightmare Moon, tilting her head and looking at Discord with one eye. "Did you not see the potential of setting an example to your other employees?"

"I only have *one* other employee, Miss Moon," said Discord, finishing the last of his glass. "That might be just somewhat excessive."

"This whole bar is excessive. It needs something to quiet it down. A good death would work wonders." Nightmare Moon's shoulders slumped and she sighed.

"Screwball, put my tiara down! Silver Spoon, *do* something!"

A broad smile came to Discord's face. He tapped a claw on the counter in front of Chrysalis. "I should correct myself, Queen. *Most* of my manifested chaos doesn't need to be micro-managed. It sounds like my apprentice is learning to pick her targets well. Unfortunately, things always get out of control with her. A *bad* sort of 'out of control.' Excuse me while I reign her in before she starts bugging *paying* customers." He floated over the bar to a far table.

Nightmare Moon started swirling the wine in her glass idly, pulling her eyes away from her surroundings to stare into the depths of her beverage.

Chrysalis watched Discord's retreating figure and looked at hooves. She laughed softly. "Your *Holiness*." She turned to Nightmare Moon, opened her mouth, closed it, and turned back.

"Out with it," said Nightmare Moon, sipping from her glass. "My anger has subsided. For now."

"What do you think Discord thinks of me?" asked Chrysalis.

"Thinks of you?" Nightmare Moon faced Chrysalis fully. "What do you mean?"

"Do you think he is... fond of me?"

Nightmare Moon blinked. "You're kidding me aren't you?"

"I'm serious. After spending so much time with him, he's started to... rub off on me. That toothy smile, all that chaos... It's hard for a changeling to resist."

"I think it's very easy to resist. All the other changelings seem to be resisting just fine."

Chrysalis frowned. "You don't think it will work?"

"I... I have no idea." Nightmare Moon stared at her glass once more. She slouched again and quickly

downed the rest of the glass's contents. "Go for it."

"That isn't exactly reassuring."

"I mean it. Go for it. He seems to enjoy your company. Take it the next step if you desire."

Discord floated back to the bar with Screwball in tow. "I'm sure you had your reasons," he said over his shoulder.

"My reasons were that I desire to see the reaction of a pony when it's presented with a conundrum that their inbuilt fight or flight instincts don't immediately understand how to address." Screwball glanced back at the table she just came from. "Part of the setup of such an experiment required generic irritation."

"Ah, chaos through science. I approve. Just try to restrain yourself. Every time you bother those two, it's not long before someone important gets involved in your 'experiments,'" said Discord.

"Fine." Screwball spun in circles and lolled her tongue out. "Look how fast I can spin!" She shot into the distance.

"Truly your chaos is something to behold," said Nightmare Moon, watching the retreating pegasus with a raised eyebrow.

"Why thank you, Miss Moon. I can hardly remember the last time I got a compliment about my chaos that wasn't under forcible circumstances." Discord chuckled.

"That is such a shame," said Chrysalis, batting her eyelashes. "You'd think the toppling of order would receive some appreciation every now and then."

"Oh, my stars," said Nightmare Moon under her breath.

"So, Discord, I want to ask you something." Chrysalis flicked back her hair. "A certain question that's been on my mind for awhile now."

"And what might that be?" Discord rested his chin on top of his claws and looked at Chrysalis with a raised eyebrow.

"Well, I wanted to know if you—"

"Sorry I'm late!" Prince Blueblood trotted up to the bar, interrupting the three villains, Trixie not far behind him.

"Trixie, on the other hoof, is never late."

Discord frowned at Blueblood and looked up at a clock that was suspended in midair. Its hands did a full revolution by the time he looked away. "It's about time. Where have you been? There are patrons who require spirits."

"I've been... preoccupied." Blueblood stuck his head underneath the counter, fishing out an apron. He looked out over the other-worldly bar. "Who exactly needs alcohol?"

"The usual highly demanding group." Discord jabbed a claw at what passed as a corner in his realm.

Blueblood squinted in the claw's direction and let out an exasperated groan. "Not the inter-dimensional lot again. Has Gilda not been covering me during my absence?"

Discord laughed. "Gilda?" He tapped lightly on Blueblood's head. "Remember who we are discussing, dear Prince."

Blueblood grumbled. "They'll probably say I messed up their order in a dimension I can't even perceive. Just like last time." He slowly made his way to his customers.

As Blueblood turned around, Discord tilted his head and smirked. He quickly snapped out his claws and picked a strand of hair off the stallion's back, hiding it underneath the counter. "So, Great Trixie, you're showing up here later than usual. What insidious incident cause the hold up?"

"Trixie had some... things to sort out. Her nights are growing even longer of late." Trixie sighed and leaned over the counter. "Trixie will be having her usual."

"Mmm, yes." Discord pulled a mug out from under the counter.

"So what is the topic of the night?" asked Trixie, looking over at her two fellow mares.

"Nothing of interest," said Nightmare Moon. "Though I'm sure you're about to regale us with the schemes you plan on using to elevate yourself to 'True Villain' status. Same as you do every night."

"Trixie does not *plan* to talk about her ideas. They simply come up organically. Besides, it won't be long now. Trixie will be the one Twilight Sparkle and her friends fear one day."

"Yes, yes, I'm sure," said Chrysalis.

"Your drink, Trixie Lulamoon." Discord slid the frothy mug in front of Trixie.

Chrysalis snickered. "I never tire of hearing that name."

"Yes, mock Trixie's minor villain status and her full name. That joke never gets old. You will all see how

Great and Powerful she truly is in due time. Mark her words!" Trixie waved her hoof threateningly before downing a few gulps of her drink. She coughed and spluttered, whamming the mug back on the counter. "That is *not* Trixie's usual!"

Discord wagged a claw at Trixie. "Now, now, you know better than to use that tone with me. I am the Spirit of *Chaos*. I don't do 'usual.'"

A growl left Trixie's throat. "Alright, fine! Consider yourselves off Trixie's list of allies! When she achieves ultimate power you will not be getting help from her!"

"Tell us Trixie," said Nightmare Moon, not bothering to even look at her, "just what do you think will elevate a simple unicorn to the level of the Lord of Chaos, the Queen of the Changelings, and the Corrupter of Souls? What do you think could possibly be within your power to challenge our capabilities?"

Trixie stared in silence, her brow furrowing more and more. She took another swig of her drink, forcing it down. "Trixie will do... unspeakable things."

Discord aimed a claw at the counter and with a zap of chaos magic, a fluffy, orange kitten appeared, casting its eyes on Trixie, letting out a soft mewl. "Kill this kitten."

Trixie's eyes did their best saucer imitation and she slowly looked up from the cat's sparkling eyes to three sets of smiling faces. "Trixie has to use the bathroom."

Nightmare Moon could feel the wind from the sheer speed of Trixie's getaway. "I'm assuming we all knew how that was going to turn out?"

"Of course," said Chrysalis. "She is the sorriest excuse for a villain I've ever laid eyes on. The *Flim-Flam Brothers* were better than her. Not to mention somewhat cute."

"If it's male, do you flirt with it?" asked Nightmare Moon, sneering at Chrysalis.

"Pardon me if that happens to be how I *eat*." Chrysalis's eyebrows arched. "We've been over this."

"Too many times to count." Discord waved a paw between them. "So let's move onto something more interesting, shall we? Now that Trixie is out of the way, I can present this." Discord held up the strand of mane he had stolen from the back of Prince Blueblood.

"A light blue. Well, well... I think we all know why those two were late," said Chrysalis, snickering.

"A piece of mane is hardly proof," said Nightmare Moon.

In a blink, Chrysalis had transformed into a perfect facsimile of Trixie. "No, but I can obtain some hard

evidence.”

“My dear, you truly are a fantastic joker.” Discord beamed at Chrysalis’s new form.

“Thank you. I try.” Chrysalis winked.

Nightmare Moon shook her head slightly.

“Alright, here are the orders,” said Blueblood, approaching with his face in a notepad. “Thanks to their constantly changing wants, that took me *far* longer than it should have and I am *not* about to read this out to you, so here you go.” He levitated the notepad to Discord.

“Trixie missed you.” Chrysalis tilted her head and reached a hoof over to touch Blueblood’s side.

Blueblood’s mouth turned to sheepish smile and he started slowly backing away. “I wasn’t gone that long. Now, uh, I’ve got other tables to get to.”

“Wait a moment. Come over here.” Chrysalis reached her hoof farther.

“No, no, I’ve got to get back.” Blueblood picked up the pace.

Chrysalis pouted.

Blueblood stopped and his face looked pained.

Chrysalis pouted deeper and batted her eyes at him.

With a sigh, Blueblood walked over to her.

Chrysalis touched a hoof to his neck. “Trixie really can’t wait till your shift is over...”

“Trixie,” Blueblood whispered, “I thought we were going to keep this private!”

With lightning quickness, Chrysalis brought her face close in for a kiss, finding lips that weren’t entirely unwilling to part. Discord glanced at Nightmare Moon and smiled broadly, receiving a flat expression in response. Suddenly pulling back, Chrysalis morphed into her true form and dipped her head. “Oh, Prince, I didn’t know you felt that way about me.”

“Ugh, changeling lips!” Blueblood jumped backwards, furiously wiping at his mouth. “You are a truly despicable deceiver!”

Chrysalis laughed heartily. “I’d say that the cat has found its way out of the bag.”

“No, it’s found its way onto my lap,” Nightmare Moon said to herself, staring at the fluffy creature which had crawled onto her leg. She picked it up via telekinesis and brought it up to her face, tilting her head at it.

“So, Blueblood, how has your night *really* been?” asked Chrysalis, hitting him on the shoulder playfully.

“Tell us, just how *Great* and *Powerful* was she?” Discord laughed.

“Hopefully she was very. Wouldn’t want his lips to touch anything ‘*common!*’” Chrysalis cackled alongside Discord.

“I knew you would let that ego down for another in the bed,” said Nightmare Moon, slowly levitating the kitten back onto the ground and snorting. “Stallions are so predictable.”

“I am still a noble, and mockery is no way to treat nobility!” Blueblood ground his teeth.

“That it isn’t, my dear Prince. I apologize.” Discord made a quick bow. “Proper decorum would demand some sort of royal announcement.” His eyes glinted. “Worthy of a *bar-wide* announcement.”

“No!” Blueblood’s expression turned pleading. “I can’t have word get out that I, *royalty*, am in a relationship with a common *showmare*.”

“Excuse me?” Trixie walked a few steps closer to the bar, her mouth hanging open. “Is that all I am? Just a *showmare*? What’s with the emphasis on that word, Blue? Should I be out working the streets?”

“Oops, looks like somepony overheard, and I’ve never heard her turn off the third-person before. This is looking promising.” Chrysalis smiled.

“I... I didn’t mean it like that, Trixie. I simply meant...” Blueblood spluttered.

“That you were unworthy of his regality. Looks like a simple fling, Trixie.” Discord shrugged. “What do you think, oh Queen?” He placed his arm across the bar and leaned close to Chrysalis, gesturing with his paw to the couple. “You can detect the amount of love in a being, can you not? Does Blueblood have enough love for our local magician to fill a serious relationship?”

“Barely enough to even fill a teaspoon,” said Chrysalis, quite loudly, her smile growing to a wicked grin.

“Well... fine!” Trixie snarled. “I... *Trixie* will just move on. No skin on off her nose! You weren’t so *royal* in Trixie’s bed anyway!” With a swirl, Trixie turned around and started marching out of the bar.

“Oh my, I would get some ice for that, Discord.” Chrysalis put a hoof across her mouth in mock shock.

“Now, wait, Trixie, no, come back!” Blueblood stared with horrified eyes at Trixie’s retreating figure.

"But... but none of the other mares like me," he whispered. Throwing off his apron, he started running after her.

"And there goes my one useful employee." Discord shook his head with a half-smile.

"That entire ordeal was... interesting." Nightmare Moon pushed her glass towards Discord. The kitten had refused to leave her so she had raised it back onto the bar and she prodded it gently as she spoke. "A refill, if you please. I'll require more alcohol to view the idiotic antics of this bar's patrons further."

Discord reached into empty space behind him and pulled out a bottle of wine, pouring it into the glass, leaving the bottle suspended in mid-air. "I find these antics endlessly amusing."

"As do I," said Chrysalis. She paused for a few moments while she gazed at Discord. "Discord, I have a question about relationships, if you're willing to answer."

"Yes?"

"I was wondering if you have had any prior. Simple curiosity." Chrysalis leaned over the counter, closer to Discord, her ears perking up.

"Or analyzing the exes," Nightmare Moon whispered to the kitten.

"Chaos tied down? A relationship? Me? I hardly think I should have to answer that question. I am a free spirit." Discord spread his claws across his chest and spread his other arm out in a grand gesture.

"That's not what I've heard," said Nightmare Moon with an amused expression.

"Oh, *rumors*." Discord tsked. "Out with them. They don't stay in mouths for long."

"There has been talk that you and one of the princesses had a relationship before they decided to dethrone you." Nightmare Moon placed the kitten on her shoulder and crossed her forelegs, eyeing Discord.

"Now that is simply preposterous."

"Is it?" Nightmare Moon raised an eyebrow. "Perhaps opposites attracted and Princess Celestia became a glorious object of your affection."

"Is this true, Discord?" Chrysalis transformed into a striking Princess Celestia. "Did you have relations with this mare?"

"Yes, our breakup left me *stone-cold*," Discord said with a sneer. "I can most definitely state that any amusement I gained from that large, white, humorless simpleton, was that of her ridiculous view of

morality.”

“Then perhaps it was the other one?” Chrysalis turned into Princess Luna.

Discord hesitated for a fraction of a second too long. “Also preposterous.”

“Aha, so it was *Luna!*” Chrysalis pointed an accusatory hoof. “The rumors had one thing right, they just were a little off on the particulars!”

Discord growled at the two villains in front of him. “Listen *carefully*. I was a very different draconequus back then.”

“Discord! I am most surprised!” Chrysalis winced and un-shifted. “And suddenly all my attraction to you has gone away.”

“Wait, attraction?” One of Discord’s eyebrows shot up.

A glass crashed into the floor. “I inhabited a body that was *with* you! Simply disgusting!” Nightmare Moon shivered and clutched her head. The kitten mewled loudly.

“Oh, please, I hardly expected such immaturity from a being as old as you.” Discord shook his head.

“I guess it brought new meaning to ‘sending you to the moon,’ though, didn’t it?” Chrysalis snickered.

“Oh, quiet, none of *that!*” Nightmare Moon waved a hoof at Chrysalis.

“I guess it was a good thing she was Princess of the Night. She could make them as long as she wanted!” Chrysalis clutched at her side.

“That *is* quite enough of that.” Discord gave Chrysalis a hard look, which lasted all of a few seconds before it turned into grin. “Though that was a good one. Still, it was nothing like that.”

Chrysalis did her best to stifle her laughs. “So what exactly was it like?”

“Oh, now that would be telling.” Discord winked.

“Majesty of Villainy, I have a complaint to bring forth from the hive.” Carl looked blankly at the trio of villains.

“Oh, Carl, feeling better?” Chrysalis asked.

The Second looked down and rubbed the back of his neck. “The experience will forever haunt me in my sleep, Your Evilness, but for now I am fine.”

"Ah, no worries, then. Do continue, Carl."

Carl stepped aside to reveal a precariously balanced griffon. "Hey," she said, waving a claw and catching herself before she almost fell over.

"So you carried Carl off and then proceeded to get drunk?" Discord put his arms at his sides, shaking his head.

"Tha drinksh in the back are amashing." Gilda wobbled up to the counter and splayed herself over it.

"And also expensive," said Discord. "Do remind me why I haven't fired you by now?"

"How has she been bothering the hive?" asked Chrysalis.

"She has been hanging around our table demanding we shape shift into various creatures." Carl frowned.

"They can look like anything they want but they jusht lay around and look normal. I don't get it." Gilda shook her head.

"Gilda, I'm going to tell you something important, so I want you to pay close attention." Discord leaned in close to Gilda.

"Yeah?"

"You're fired and here's a free drink." Discord handed her a mug.

Gilda's eyes widened and she snatched up the mug and started chugging it.

"You have odd solutions," said Nightmare Moon.

Finishing her drink, Gilda plopped the mug on the counter and proceeded to fall backwards and collapse on the floor.

"Thank you." Carl nodded at Discord and walked back to his table.

"I'm assuming you just plan on leaving her there?" Chrysalis eyed Gilda's prostrate form.

"I plan on letting the bar close without even waking her up," said Discord.

Nightmare Moon closed her eyes with a sigh and grabbed the wine bottle hanging before her, drinking straight from it. She reached a hoof up to pet the cat on her shoulder lightly.

“Discord, emergency!” Screwball crashed into the back of the counter. She grabbed a bottle from underneath it, ate the entire thing, and looked up at Discord. “There’s a problem.”

“Where?”

“Headed your way.”

Discord scanned the area in front of him, spotting the incoming trouble. “Ah, more fun.”

“Discord, you simply must solve this pressing—“

“Nay, dire—“

“Yes, urgent matter for us.”

Discord stared at Flim and Flam with a serious expression as they approached the counter. “And what would you two classify as urgent? It must be something positively life-threatening.”

“This rock that we’ve found is being wrested from our hooves by those foul canines!” Flam placed a large, gray rock which was pocked with small craters on the counter, glancing behind him.

Chrysalis raised an eyebrow at it. “It’s a rock.”

“It’s not just a rock,” said Nightmare Moon slowly. Her left eye started to twitch. She brought the kitten down from her shoulder and hugged it close to her.

Chrysalis turned to look at Nightmare Moon. “Are you alright?”

“Yes, yes there it is! Hand that rock over to us!” The three diamond dogs approached, with the largest one speaking.

“Stay your greedy paws. I’m guessing from Miss Lunacy’s shocked state that this is a moon rock and I want to observe it.” Discord picked up the rock and turned it around, prodding its craters, and staring at it with one eye.

“I’m going to give you ten seconds to put that away,” said Nightmare Moon, her eyes shining with magic.

“Has anyone ever told you that you are no fun,” Discord pouted. “Here, have your rock back.” Discord tossed it into the air.

“I’ve got it, Flim!”

“No, I’ve got, Flam!”

With a loud crash, the rock smashed into the ground, sending shards of green crystal scattering.

"It *was* filled with gems!" The Diamond Dogs dived for them.

"Those are *our* property, get your paws off them!" Flim and Flam started pulling the dogs with magic. This quickly prompted the dogs to retaliate and it barely took a minute before it became a full brawl.

"Yes, finally, a fight!" Chrysalis raised her hooves in joy. "I have one hundred bits on the one with the mustache!"

"This is only a fight in the loosest sense of the word. Oh, and this one goes to the Diamond Dogs. Sorry." Discord leaned over the counter to get a better view.

In the ensuing... "battle," one of the Diamond Dogs was pushed back with a bolt of magic from Flim, sending the canine hurtling into Nightmare Moon. The kitten she was holding flew from her hooves prompting her to quickly catch it with her magic. She placed it gently on the counter before standing up.

"Enough of this!" Nightmare Moon's horn glowed with a harsh light and arcs of electricity shot from it to hit all of the pieces of crystal lying on the floor, disintegrating them. "I tire of all of the drama! I tire of all of the antics! I am an ancient being of evil and I will have my solace!" She bared her teeth.

Flim and Flam gave Nightmare Moon one look and ran. The Diamond Dogs instantly started cowering and crawling to a safe distance.

Her demeanor calming, Nightmare Moon returned to her place at the bar counter and let out a heavy sigh.

"Feel better?" Discord raised an eyebrow.

"No, no I do not. I'm tired of... this." Nightmare Moon spread her hooves wide. "I simply wish I had not underestimated the Elements of Harmony. I would be out in Equestria basking in the glow of the moon and stars right now, watching as the ponies before me worshipped my every move, not daring to oppose me."

Chrysalis grumbled and stared into space. Discord prepared himself another drink, eyeing Nightmare Moon.

At length, he spoke. "Tell me, Miss Moon, just what was your plan for Twilight Sparkle and her friends had you been victorious?"

Nightmare Moon stared at her reflection in her glass. "I would have banished their essences to the stars, each of their horrified, defeated faces forever captured in their own constellation. All of Equestria would

be able to see one every two months, a constant reminder at the price they'd pay for rebellion against my rule." A small smile spread across her face.

"A bit old-fashioned, but it has taste." Discord stroked his goatee. "Come to think of it, I would have setup a new government over Equestria, making Twilight Sparkle and her friends each a head of a different department. With all their worst traits brought out, they would make a mess of everything. Order that spreads disorder. Delicious. Of course, this would have been *after* I encased Celestia in wood. I'd probably give her a news update every night on all the new chaos that had been created by her very own Elements."

"You'd be keeping Luna for yourself, though, right?" Chrysalis smiled.

"If you don't cut that out..." Discord frowned.

Chrysalis leaned across the counter. "I for one would have separated each of them into prison cells and surrounded them with changelings morphed to look like their friends. Their love for each other would have created a reserve large enough to feed most of the hive. They each would have lived the rest of their lives not knowing that the friends surrounding them were fake. They'd probably try to come up with escape plans, thinking they can rely on the ponies around them, only to have them foiled time and time again."

"These are quite the devious plans, I like them." Discord smiled. "It makes me wonder if we had simply had the chance to work in tandem, we could have taken Equestria with ease."

"True, though, how would we have divided the spoils?" asked Chrysalis.

"Oh, I'd leave any control over the populace to you two," said Discord. "As long as there's chaos running amok, I'm happy. Though I do claim dibs on mentally torturing Twilight Sparkle every weekend."

"Quite unfair," said Nightmare Moon. "How about every other weekend? I want to make the filly bawl."

"I think those honors should go to the Queen." Discord nudged Chrysalis. "After all, she did a stupendous job on Twilight just prior to the wedding."

"Oh, well thank you, Discord." Chrysalis beamed. "Though if you simply leave me Shining Armor and Cadence, I shall still be a happy changeling. Though I wouldn't mind pestering that pink one every now and again. She is the epitome of annoyance."

"I will second that. I would like to see her in a world of utter darkness. See how long she can keep her spirits up." Nightmare Moon huffed into her wine bottle.

"Oh, Pinkie?" Discord laughed and waved a dismissive claw. "She's actually quite fun. No, I'd rather see Fluttershy suffer. Stick her in a cave full of horrors, force her to fend for herself, and then see how long

her bashfulness lasts.”

“I second that notion,” said Chrysalis shaking her head. “Can you believe that she didn’t harm a single one of my changelings in the wedding fight?”

“She *is* the Element of Kindness. No, the piece that needs to be destroyed is Loyalty. I was *that* close to persuading that pegasus to join the Shadowbolts.” Nightmare Moon pounded her hoof on the counter. “With all the selfish traits she’s shown since then, I fail to see how that didn’t work.”

“You were aiming at her dreams, not her cares,” said Discord. “Had those Shadowbolts been her parents, you would have been golden.”

“Her parents?” asked Nightmare Moon, looking at Discord with incredulity. “That doesn’t even make any sense.”

“What fun—”

“No, stop!” Nightmare Moon lifted her hoof in a halting gesture. “I have no desire to hear that line for the fifty-seventh time.”

“It hasn’t been that many times, has it?” Discord looked up in the air and started counting on his claws.

“It has,” said Chrysalis. “And I believe you all are leaving out the most fun of the Elements to bother--Rarity. I could have had my changelings imitate the cream of Equestria’s fashion designers, have them surround the mare, insulting her skills, and that’s all it would have taken to drive her mad.”

“Ah yes, the Pony Everypony Should Know.” Discord giggled. “A giant rock. That was one of my best.”

“That was another miscalculation. At the time I had no idea how fashion-conscious she was.” Nightmare Moon snorted and poured some of her wine in a small puddle on the counter for the kitten to lap from.

“And, um... wasn’t there another one?” Chrysalis scratched her head.

“No pony important,” said Discord.

“There’s really only five Elements and a tacked on trinket,” said Nightmare Moon.

The three villains shared a snicker, one which quickly faded away.

“We could make Equestria quite the place,” said Discord, staring across the bar.

“We *could* have made it quite the place,” said Nightmare Moon quietly.

“I know. I’m depressed, now. Thanks.” Chrysalis twisted her mouth at the blank spot on her counter.

“Well, you know there’s one solution to for that?” Discord’s voice was hopeful.

“No, no, don’t even—“

“Karaoke!” exclaimed Discord, cutting Nightmare Moon off.

“For the last time, Discord, we are *not* going to sing in front of a crowd. Every night you suggest it and we don’t go through with it.” Nightmare Moon watched the kitten pull back from her wine puddle and wobble over to Nightmare Moon’s hoof, falling on it.

“I don’t know... Singing actually sounds like fun, tonight. I’m feeling it.” Chrysalis stood up.

“For the love of blackness, surely you’re not going to go through with this?” Nightmare Moon stared at Chrysalis in bewilderment.

“How about I load you up with a few more bottles? I guarantee you’d find singing in front of a crowd far more doable afterwards.” Discord poked Nightmare Moon with his elbow.

Nightmare Moon stared hard at Discord. “It’s a deal.”

...

Chrysalis lay across the counter, staring up at the “night sky.” “Half the bar left after the second chorus,” she said flatly.

Discord propped his elbow on the bar counter and leaned his face against his claws. “I noticed.”

“Mmmf,” said Nightmare Moon, her face pressed against the counter, forelegs hanging limp on either side of her. The kitten leaning against her face yawned and snuggled in closer.

“So we agree to never again sing before a crowd, especially not after we’re drunk?” asked Chrysalis.

“Oh, I suppose,” said Discord, scratching the bar with his claw in a circle.

“So... I changed my mind. Do you wanna kiss?” Chrysalis extended a hoof to poke Discord, without even looking at him.

Discord paused and looked at her. “I’m not supposing you could... shift into Luna?”

“Why the soul, not?” Chrysalis shrugged.

"I'm leaving," said Nightmare Moon suddenly, slowly hauling herself up. She gently grabbed the kitten in a spell and lay it on her shoulder.

"Same time tomorrow night?" asked Discord.

"Of course."