


The PONY of the OPERA



A Drama in Two Acts

*Penned by the Canterlot Operatic Society
In the Year 1,001*



~ Overture ~

It was a bright summer's morning in Ponyville. The Weather Pegasi had not yet made their early rounds, and the wispy, natural cloud that had floated in during the night was high in the air, carried on the light summer winds.

Fluttershy had already been up for hours, tending to her nocturnal animal friends by tucking them into bed and making sure they were well fed as the first rays of sunlight broke over her small cottage on the outskirts of the town. She had joined in with the dawn chorus, giving a daily practise session to a blue jay recovering from syringitis. Now she was preparing breakfast for her beloved Angel, chopping up carrots and lettuce into a salad for the fussy rabbit that sat by her hooves on the kitchen floor, rubbing his eyes and yawning.

Whilst Fluttershy was traditionally an early riser, she was making even more of an effort than usual, as she did on this day every week. This day, after all, was her spa day with Rarity; a social highlight in her otherwise empty calendar, and one of the few times she felt able to take the time off from helping all her animal friends and just indulge herself. Of course, most of the afternoon at the spa was spent listening to Rarity 'talking shop', but Fluttershy enjoyed the company, and more than once she had aided the fashionista in a difficult design with her (as Applejack put it), "freaky knowledge of sewing".

Once Angel was fed and content to run off and play, Fluttershy found herself with nothing left to do, surprising herself at her own turn of speed. She decided to double check and make sure that she hadn't forgotten anything, flying low around her cottage, dipping as she scanned bird's nests, rabbit's warrens, her chicken coop and every hidey-hole she knew of in the earth banks around her home.

Satisfied that she'd done all she could do, she decided to fly into town early, and spend the rest of the morning in the park, before meeting Rarity for lunch. She flew down the road leading away from her cottage and followed the path through the wild and untended trees that made up the outskirts of Sweet Apple Acres, listening to the birdsong and the soft breeze rustling the leaves.

The peace and tranquility of the road ebbed away as she arrived at the outskirts of Ponyville proper. Fluttershy could hear the chatter of ponies wandering the streets doing their daily grocery shopping, the clatter as they set up market stalls for the midday rush, and the cantering of hooves as the foals ran about, enjoying their break from lessons.

Fluttershy nodded politely at a few ponies who shouted good morning as they ran past, but continued at her own leisurely pace as she half-trotted, half-glided through the marketplace and past Sugarcube Corner.

At least, she'd nearly got past it when she heard an unmistakable voice call out after her.

"Hey! Fluttershy!"

Fluttershy stopped and blinked, her ears twitching. She was sure she heard Pinkie's voice come from **above** her. As if on cue, the pink pony fell from the air and landed in a tangle of legs at Fluttershy's hooves, beaming with barely contained enthusiasm and apparently none the worse for wear.

"Oh, hello Pinkie." Fluttershy replied, smiling as she helped nudge Pinkie Pie back onto her hooves with her muzzle.

"Whatcha doin'?" Pinkie asked, hopping alongside Fluttershy.

"Oh, well, I'd finished giving Angel his breakfast and making sure everyone was alright, so I thought I'd, um, go to the park. Before I meet Rarity for lunch, I mean."

"The park? Oo, I love the park! Can I come? Can I, can I, can I?" Pinkie bounced up and down on the spot with each syllable. Fluttershy cringed a little, inwardly. She would have enjoyed a quiet stroll and flight in Ponyville's park, but when you were around Pinkie Pie, quiet was the one thing you could be sure would **never** happen. Still, she couldn't back out and refuse without hurting the pink pony's feelings, so she smiled and nodded. Pinkie squeed happily and trotted alongside Fluttershy, talking at high speed and pitch about [an unusual customer](#) she'd had at Sugarcube Corner the other day. Fluttershy only half-listened; it was nearly impossible to give Pinkie Pie your full attention purely because her train of thought seemed to leap about like the rails were made of rubber.

Passing through the town square and out along the north road, the pair soon arrived at the park. Fluttershy took a deep breath, savouring the lingering crispness of the morning air as the day gave way to 'noon. The scent of the flowers in the park was so strong that she could taste it, enjoying the subtle differences between the many blooms. Most pegasi never learnt of the wonders of the ground, too busy flying high with their heads in the clouds, but Fluttershy revelled in the beauty she saw beneath her hooves.

She was dragged back out of her thoughts by Pinkie Pie animatedly nudging her.

"Fluttershy! Look! Somepony's gathering all the birds on the fountain!" She pointed with a hoof. Fluttershy looked over in that direction, eyes wide in amazement as she saw the birds arrange themselves in order of size up and down the tiers of the fountain, and with a wave of a hoof from a grey pony apparently acting as conductor, burst into song. Not the free-for-all of a dawn chorus, but proper, organized song.

Entranced, Fluttershy floated over, her wings guiding her subconsciously as she listened to the birds belt out a full cantata. As the melody washed over her, she felt an irresistible urge to join them in song, and flew to the statue atop the fountain, oblivious to all else except the music of the birds.

She sang with them in harmony for what seemed to her like hours, the joy of the piece filling her heart and overflowing into her voice. It was only when the piece ended on a final triumphant note that she heard the sound of several ponies stamping their hooves on the ground in applause.

Realization dawned on her and she blushed fiercely, dropping off the fountain and walking away, head lowered with her pink locks covering her face. They were doing such a good job of this that she soon walked directly into another pony.

Flicking her hair out of her eyes, she saw a grey earth pony splayed out, daze, on the ground, and her expression changed from one of embarrassment to concern.

“Oh my goodness! I’m so sorry, I wasn’t looking where I was going, are you alright? Are you hurt?” She said, quickly helping the pony to his hooves. He swayed as his eyes rolled back into their correct position, then laughed.

“My dear, I’m more than alright! I’m overjoyed! Never have I heard such sweet singing! Tell me my dear, what is your name? I simply must know!” He said in an airy, sing-song voice, beaming at Fluttershy. She shied back from him a little and blushed at the compliment.

“I-I’m Fluttershy.” She replied, mumbling into her hair. The earth pony’s eyes lit up immediately.

“No? **THE** Fluttershy? But I should have seen it immediately, your grace and poise, it shines through you just as it did in Photo Finish’s pictures! Not only a beautiful model, but a singer as well? My dear, this is a grand day! A momentous day!” He said, nearly bowling Fluttershy over with the force of his enthusiasm.

“Oh! How terribly improper of me, where are my manners? My name is Falsetto, composer by trade. I was conducting the birds just now, bit of a hobby.” Falsetto offered a hoof, which Fluttershy shook, not wanting to seem rude. She noticed that his cutie mark was an open book of music crossed by a conductor’s baton, and judging by the white around his muzzle and the bags under his eyes, he must have been an older pony.

“Fluttershy! There you are!” A voice called out from behind, and Fluttershy turned to see Rarity approaching with Pinkie Pie in tow. Fluttershy was surprised to see Rarity, knowing that she usually spent the morning before their spa sessions making sure she was caught-up on her orders. Falsetto looked up at Rarity and smiled, glancing between her and Fluttershy.

“Ah, you know each other? Marvellous!” He trotted over to Rarity, sweeping up her foreleg and kissing her on the hoof. “Rarity my dear, your friend has a remarkable voice! Such talent! In fact, she might just be the answer to my dilemma!” Fluttershy blinked. Rarity turned to her and smiled.

“Fluttershy, darling, this is Falsetto, an old friend of mine. He was recently made manager of the Canterlot Opera House, by Royal Appointment no less, and he came to Ponyville just this morning to ask me to design the costumes for his new opera!” Fluttershy blinked again as Falsetto cut in.

“Indeed, but it seems that I’m short one singer for the performance. In the preliminary practise sessions, our lead singer handed in her notice, claiming some nonsense about the place being haunted. Nothing I could do would stop her, and I haven’t been able to find a suitable replacement...” He looked Fluttershy up and down and beamed once more.

“... at least, until now!”

Like realization before it, comprehension dawned on Fluttershy and she quickly began backing up.

“Oh, no, no, I wouldn’t be right for the part, I mean, uhm, I don’t know any of the songs, and I’ve not had any formal training... and I can’t sing in front of crowds and, uhm, then I have Angel and the animals to look after, and I just couldn’t-” She was quickly stopped by a raised hoof from Falsetto.

“I’ll have none of that, my dear! You’re perfect for the part, and rehearsals have only just begun. Not to mention, even without training you sing better than most of my company! As for your pets, I’m sure I can make arrangements. I’m not without the funds, you know. Oh, funds! Indeed, you will be paid highly for your part!”

Fluttershy opened her mouth to say something, then caught Rarity’s look over Falsetto’s shoulder. It was that same pleading, pouting expression she’d worn when Fluttershy had agreed to model for Photo Finish. Fluttershy could feel herself being backed into a corner, and glanced up at Pinkie Pie for support, only to find the pink mare oblivious to the whole conversation, watching a butterfly flit about.

She sighed, but instead of feeling her heart sink at the prospect, as she expected, she realised she felt oddly intrigued by it.

“Well, if you’re really sure about this...” She began, but was cut off by Falsetto shaking and kissing her hoof, in equal measure.

“My dear, you will not regret this! Mark my words!”

Act I: Scene I ->>