

A DASHED REPUTATION

A FANFIC BY DUBS REWATCHER

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The sun slowly rose over the hills of Equestria, bathing everything in its light. As the bright beams shot through the clouds, eliminating all traces of the night, the sound of snoring was the only thing that could be heard. That was, if you listened hard enough; when Rainbow Dash had made her home, she had taken extra care to make the clouds as thick as possible. While this usually resulted in a rather gloomy lighting situation, today was different. The sun was so radiant, even the great building's walls couldn't resist. The light filtered through, hitting the cyan mare's eyelids, causing them to quickly flutter and open.

"Agg..." Rainbow Dash let out a slightly annoyed groan as she swung blindly at her bedside table, looking for whatever non-existent alarm clock had awoken her. It was in vain, as she eventually searched too far and tumbled out of her cloud. If it wasn't for the thickness of her home, it was likely that she would have kept falling, but instead she simply hit the white mass with a soft splat. "Stupid sun..."

She had been having the best dream ever. It had started out with her in the Cloudiseum. She was just standing there, talking to her friends, when who should come up behind her but SPITFIRE! THE WONDERBOLT! She then offered to make Rainbow Dash a Wonderbolt. No tests, no nothing. It was only natural; she was the most awesome pegasus in all of Equestria. Soarin' said so himself. At least, in the dream he had. They were doing tricks, and flips, when suddenly Rainbow had looked at Spitfire and saw only light. The light got brighter and brighter, so Rainbow Dash closed her eyes...the next thing she knew, she was on the floor.

Picking herself up, she trotted through her room, heading into the kitchen. Her first instinct when entering was to rush through the cabinets, searching for whatever sustenance she could find. The first thing she pulled out was an apple that she had... *borrowed* from Sweet Apple Acres the day before. Shrugging, she proceeded to bite into it, her eyes scanning the room.

The clock showed that it was early; work wouldn't start for a few hours at least. The skies were relatively clear, so she could probably get some early morning flying in

before her job tore her away. There was a cold front coming in from Canterlot; that meant she was in store for a lot of cloudmaking. After that, what should she do? “I wonder if Pinkie is around?” Rainbow thought out loud as she cantered to her front “lawn,” which was really just a layer of cloud placed in front of her door. Stepping out onto the edge, she couldn’t shake the feeling that she was forgetting something. Deciding that a good fly would help clear her thoughts, she stepped off, letting gravity take over.

The wind rushed through her mane, gliding across her wings before letting loose behind her. The mare waited until she had fallen far enough before shifting her wings and quickly shooting upwards, leaving a rainbow trail in her wake. Flying was her life. It was the one time when she truly felt alive. At one point, Applejack, her best friend, asked Rainbow what it was like to fly. She couldn’t answer. It wasn’t something you could just explain. The feeling, the *euphoria*... you became a master of everything. And, as in this case, it could be very good for clearing the mind.

Rainbow had just pulled out of a loop, when the niggling thought she had popped into her head, full force. At that moment, she realized two things:

1. Yes, she had forgotten something.
2. She needed to get to Ponyville. *Fast.*

Rushing back to her house, she crashed into her room, and quickly tore it up, looking for the one thing she needed. “Goggles? No. Wonderbolts magazine? No.” She lifted her cloud bed, revealing a small orange lump underneath. The lump raised its head, revealing a mass of purple.

“Oh, Rainbow Dash, you’re here! I definitely wasn’t sneaki-”

“NOT NOW, PIPSQUEAK.” It was at that moment that she spotted it. Under Scootaloo was a thin plastic square, emblazoned with bright colors. Rainbow Dash shrieked, and threw Scootaloo out of the way. The filly flew across the room, heading straight for the open window. Scootaloo’s attempts to change path were useless, her wings were just too small. She let out a small yelp as she landed in the rainbow-pool outside. If Rainbow Dash had noticed, she didn’t show it. Picking up the thin square object, she stuffed it into her saddlebag and shot *through her floor*, pointing straight to Ponyville Town Square.

Derpy Hooves was a simple mare. She had a steady job. She had a small filly named Dinky. But, to this day she swears on her life that while on her mail route, she saw something amazing. Ponies ask her, "What do you mean? What did you see?" Her reply is always the same.

"A rainbow-colored meteor!"

Rainbow Dash smashed into the ground hooves-first and took off in a gallop, leaving nothing but some cracked concrete and a few startled ponies in her wake. She rushed through the town, weaving between ponies as if they were barrels. She was late, late, LATE. "*DARN YOU, MEMORY!*" She thought. In her haste, she didn't see [Raindrops](#), her second-in-command, exiting her home. The yellow mare began to wave, but was quickly bowled over by Rainbow dash, tumbling into a heap.

"ARRG! Rainbow Dash! Watch where you're going!" Raindrops yelled as Rainbow helped her up. Raindrops found that her companion was jogging in place, a worried look frozen on her face. "What? What's wrong?"

"Oh nothing, nothing much..." Rainbow Dash replied, looking around nervously. Suddenly, an idea formed in her head. "Say, how would you like to be Weather Captain for today?"

Raindrops was shocked. Her, Captain? Sure, she could barely keep up with her duties as it was, but when was she ever going to get this chance again? "Oh, uh...sure! But, why? What's up with you?"

"Oh, uh..." Rainbow Dash racked her brain for an excuse. Housesitting for a bear? No, Raindrops was too smart for that. Sick? No, she was running around just fine. She looked around for something that could help her for an excuse. Down the street, she saw the pink tower rising out out Sugarcube Corner.

“Pink...”

She looked the other way, only seeing a decrepit shack at the end of the street. The sign on the front was completely worn away, except for the letter “E.”

“E...”

Next to the shack was an actual house, with a pony mare inside. Walking towards the window, the mare placed a pie on the windowsill to cool.

“Pie. Pink-e Pie!” As soon as the last syllable was uttered, she realized her mistake. She had said “Pinkie Pie!”

“Oh, are you doing something with Pinkie Pie?”

Rainbow nodded so hard she felt as if she was going to throw her head right off the neck. “Yeah, you got it! You know how it is with Pinkie. Always doing something! Gonna be gone all day, maybe all night! Hahaha...” She gave a giant grin to compliment the laugh. Raindrops stared back at her with a quizzical expression on her face. Inside her mind, Rainbow was screaming at herself. *“YOU DOLT! Could you have been any worse at lying? Now I’ll never get away...”*

The yellow mare continued to stare, until suddenly a look of realization crossed her face. “...Ooooooooooh.” Raindrops responded, a smile on her face. She winked, and started to trot away. “Have a good time! And don’t worry, your secret is safe with me!”

Rainbow Dash scratched her head. “What is she tal-” She froze. Returning to her gallop, she tried to hide her beet-red face while attempting to force her wings down. But, it was for the best. No one could ever know her secret.

Stepping into the market district, Rainbow Dash finally slowed and took the time to breathe. Just as her heart had started to slow, it started pounding again as she looked up and saw what she had come for. In the middle of the square was a large sign. Said sign was decorated with the seductive visage of an amber yellow earth pony with a curled blue mane. Her dress was white with blue and gold accents, matching her hair

and skin. Below her, in large black lettering, it read:

SAPPHIRE SHORES
ZIGFILLY FOLLIES
SPECIAL SIGNING EVENT
TODAY ONLY

Rainbow Dash's wings, which had just settled back into place, immediately shot up again as she walked towards the sign, happily chanting "Ohmygoshohmygoshohmygosh! SAPPHIRE SHORES!" She pulled the small plastic square out of her saddlebag and held it between her hooves. It boasted an intricate picture of the pop singer climbing onto a stage while all measures of lights exploded behind her. Rainbow Dash had been a fan of the singer ever since foalhood. Her obsession with Sapphire Shores could never rival the Wonderbolts, but it was still sizable.

Walking past the huge sign, she searched for the booth where Sapphire would be signing CDs. Within a second she had spotted it; due only to its sheer *size*. Rainbow Dash had been right to try and secure a spot early. The line had already gone around half of the block, and was growing quickly. She would have galloped straight over, if it hadn't been for who she had seen at the back of the line. It was the Element of Generosity herself; Rarity. Rainbow quickly stuffed the CD back into her bag. Walking nonchalantly over to her friend, Rainbow Dash made a plan of what she would say.

Rarity noticed the cyan mare quickly, and greeted her. "Oh, hello, Rainbow Dash. Fancy meeting you here! Come to wait in line for the signing?"

Rainbow Dash forced herself to stay calm. How had Rarity seen right through her? HAD SHE BEEN SPYING?! "NO!" She shouted. Seeing the confused stares for not only Rarity, but others in the line, she added, much more softly, "No, of course not. I only listen to real music. Like *rock!*" She mimed a guitar in the air, silently praying that Rarity would buy it.

In response, Rarity only giggled. "Of course, Rainbow. I should have figured someone like you wouldn't care for a mare of Sapphire's style. Oh, I simply fell in *love* with her music after that song "*Single Mares*" came out!" She started humming the tune to herself, while Rainbow suppressed an angry snort. Sapphire had "made it big" with

that song. Rainbow had liked her before she was popular. “Well, anyway, would you care to wait with me? It surely won’t take long.”

Rainbow knew that if she went through with Rarity, there would be no chance to get her own copy of the CD signed. Abandoning her feelings of loyalty, she shook her head. “Sorry, Rarity, no can do.” This excuse would be much easier than the last. “Weather stuff, y’know? *Someone’s* gotta keep the skies clear.”

“Oh, darling, I completely understand. Be careful!” She called to an already retreating Rainbow Dash.

“That was close...” Rainbow Dash sat down on a bench, a few meters away from the line. “Now what? I can’t just take a place in line, Rarity’ll see me. Looks like I’m gonna hafta wait...” Rainbow Dash watched in agony as the line curled around the corner, excited ponies of all shapes and sizes taking their places. Checking to make sure Rarity wasn’t anywhere in sight, Rainbow made her way to the back of the line, bag in tow. As the end of the queue came into sight, she saw something that really annoyed her. Another mare was approaching the line; that was normal enough. But, what did she have with her? A CD? No. Five saddlebags, stuffed to the brim with every CD Sapphire had ever released? Yes. Considering the luck she had had today, Rainbow figured that this mare was looking to get every single thing she had with her signed. If there was one thing Rainbow was certain of, it was this: she would *not* be getting into line behind her.

The offending pony was only a few feet from the line. Realizing just how small her chance was, Rainbow Dash broke into a sprint, charging toward the line at speeds that would have impressed even the Wonderbolts. She was able to make it; but just barely. Squeezing into the closing gap between the mare and the next pony in line, Rainbow ended up knocking the mare back a few feet. “HEY! No cutting!” Looking back at her, Rainbow realized that the mare was actually just a filly; [Sunny Days](#), Rainbow recalled. Not exactly distinguished, but Rainbow remembered her from the talent show a while back.

“Uh, howabout no? I was totally here first. You can ask anyone.” Rainbow Dash replied. She turned away, believing that she had ended the conversation.

“WHAT?! Don’t turn away from me while I’m talking to you!” She grabbed a hold of Rainbow, forcefully pulling her back with a level of strength that was surprising from a filly her size. “You just pushed me out of the way cuz’ you’re bigger than me! Go to the

back!” Sunny Days exclaimed, pointing behind her. Rainbow decided to take a look, wondering if the argument was really worth it. She quickly decided: yes, it was. Since she had busted into the line, at least twenty more ponies had queued up. And, considering how close it was to noon, more were definitely on the way.

Rainbow Dash focused a glare onto Sunny Days. She didn't like to be mean, but she was also willing to do anything for Sapphire's signature. Also, this filly deserved it. “Listen, *little filly*.” She smirked with satisfaction, seeing the annoyance that crossed the filly's face. “I was definitely here first, no doubt about it. Now, if you'll excuse me, the *adults* need to talk with Ms. Sapphire. Go play in the mud, or whatever it is you do for fun.” That line was the straw that broke the camel's back. Sunny Days, a look on indescribable anger on her face, dropped her bags to the ground, launched herself onto Rainbow's back, and began beating Rainbow's head. “AHHH! GET IT OFF, GET IT OFF!” Rainbow yelped, jumping up and down, trying to get the murderous filly off of her. She even bucked a few times, not noticing that she was lashing out at other ponies in line. In response to the extra effort to get rid of her, the yellow filly proceeded to bite down on Rainbow Dash's ears. “OH CELESTIA, GET HER OFF!”

“HEY!” One pony yelled. “WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!” Another shrieked. “GUARDS, COME QUICK!”

At the request of the concerned citizen, two burly gray guards rushed to the scene. Ripping the two ponies apart, it was all the guards could do to contain the wild filly, who, in turn, was screaming all matters of expletives at the top of her lungs. One of the ponies raced away, returning with a quite sizable lollipop in his hooves. “Here you are, little miss,” he said to Sunny Days, placing it in front of her. “enjoy.”

The effect was immediate. Sunny Days flashed back to the smiling filly she was before, picking up the candy and stuffing it into her mouth. The guard ruffled her hair, and escorted her back into line. “Hey, why does she get to go back?!” Rainbow exclaimed, pushing herself into the guard. “*She attacked me!*”

“Ma'am, you are at least twice that filly's age. Do you really expect us to believe that she instigated this? It looks to me that she was just defending herself. Look at her.” The guard pony gestured to Sunny Days, who was apparently quite happy with the lollipop. As the line lurched forward, she skipped along, humming to herself. “Does that look like the face of a killer to you?”

“Yes! Well, no, but- HEY!” Rainbow Dash croaked as she was lifted off her feet.

The next thing she knew, she was staring down at a gray flank emblazoned with a nightstick. “What are you doing?!” She yelled at the pony carrying her away.

“I’m taking you to the back of the line.” Rainbow gave up. She knew it would be pointless to resist at this point, as it would only serve to get her into more trouble if she tried. Placing her down what seemed to be almost a city block back, he gave her a piercing glare. “Maybe this will teach you not to endanger the future of our country.” He said. His voice was cool but even Pinkie Pie would have been able to hear the menace behind it. Once he was out of sight, Rainbow Dash slumped down dejectedly. She may have been depressed, but she still had enough pride to make sure the guard didn’t see her mope.

She sighed. “What now?” Staring up into the sky, Rainbow spotted Raindrops and the rest of her team. Rainbow really wished she hadn’t. It made her feel worse enough to know that she was lying to those who needed her. Now, looking up at the work her- no, it was Raindrops’ today. Looking at the work Raindrops’ crew was doing, Rainbow realized exactly why *she* was captain, and the yellow mare who had replaced her *wasn’t*. Their cloud formations were all wrong. Due to the cold front coming in from the mountains, today’s weather clearly called for Stratocumulus cumulogenitus clouds, not the Cirrocumulus stratiformis ones that they were laying down. An amateur mistake that Rainbow Dash knew she would never make.

Shaking herself out of the angsty stupor she had fallen into, Rainbow Dash pulled her head out of the clouds, figuratively and literally, wondering why the line hadn’t moved yet. To her dismay, it *had*. The ponies in front of her, seeing nothing but a confused mare looking into the sky, had figured that Rainbow wasn’t actually in line. As such, they had left her behind. “No!” She squeaked, leaping into a gallop. “*Calm down, Rainbow Dash. People can’t see you getting so worked up over this.*” Slowing down to a trot, she looked for the pony that had been in front of her. Recognizing the tan coat and shaggy pink tail, Rainbow lightly tapped the pony on the shoulder. Once the pony had turned around, Rainbow Dash’s eyes lit up. It was [Dizzy Twister](#), head of Natural Disaster Squad. Even if the Natural Disaster Squad was almost never called upon, Rainbow knew Dizzy from their time together as classmates in Junior Speedsters Flight Camp. By chance, they had ended up both moving to Ponyville at the same time. She would totally give Dash her spot back! “Hey Dizzy!”

Dizzy, in turn, gave a look of bewilderment. “Oh, uh, hey…” She faded out.

“It’s me, Rainbow!” This worried her. How could Dizzy not remember someone as

cool as Rainbow Dash? “Remember when I flew past lightning on the first day of camp?”

Dizzy Twister grinned and nodded. “Oh, yeah, right! I remember now! So...how are you doing?”

“Pretty good.” Rainbow shifted into line behind Dizzy. “You know. Still awesome. Did you hear ab-” Before she could delve further into bragging about her exploits, a tap came on her shoulder. Turning around, she came face-to-face with a balding gray stallion, glasses on his nose, and an amused expression on his face.

“Hi, excuse me, sorry for interrupting.” He began. “First of all, congratulations on a *great* attempt at a chat-and-cut. Really good.” The smile that was on Rainbow’s face started to fade. “Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, that’s gonna work. Unfortunately, I happen to be on the line, so...”

Rainbow honestly had no idea what he was talking about. “What? I had this spot in line, and accidentally got out of it. You-”

“Yeah, I know a chat-and-cut when I see it. You used this mare,” He gestured to Dizzy Twister, who was kicking at the ground. “this poor, innocent mare, to sneak into the line.” Walking up to Dizzy, he continued. “Do you know her at all?”

“I...I mean...well.” She turned to Rainbow Dash. “The last time we talked was at Junior Speedsters. An-”

“SEE? SHE KNOWS ME!” Rainbow Dash interrupted, jumping a few feet into the air and hovering.

Dizzy sighed. “Really, Rainbow, I don’t. We weren’t even friends back then.”

The gray pony continued, still talking to Dizzy. “Do you think she’s doing a chat-and-cut?”

“I...I kinda feel like you are. I feel a bit manipulated.” Rainbow’s smile was completely gone, replaced by a look of annoyance.

“You see? She feels manipulated. You manipulated her.”

Rainbow spun around, now facing the stallion again. "What, do you want me to go to the back of the line too? Would that be better?" She put on her most intimidating face, and loomed over him. The stallion wasn't fazed.

"Yes, it would." He said with a smirk.

"Well, you know what I think?" Rainbow began. "I think you should be quiet, and just let me enjoy my day!" She gestured all around her, moving her head along with it. As she moved her head to the left, her blood ran cold. Walking down the avenue were Twilight and Applejack! Rainbow felt her primal instincts take over, forcing her to search for someplace to hide. Without her even realizing, she leaped toward and into what her brain had chosen...only to find out that it was a garbage can. "*Well, this is better than nothing.*"

She could hear the stallion whom she was seconds away from beating up talking. "Man, this town is fulla weirdos."

Resisting the urge to leap out and go buck him, Rainbow continued to crouch inside the can. After a few seconds of silence, she peeked out the top, assuming that they had passed.

"Rainbow? What in tarnation are ya doin' in there?" Evidently, they had not. She lifted herself out.

"Oh, uh, hi, AJ. Twilight. I was a..." Rainbow racked her brain for an excuse. Even if she was the physical embodiment of loyalty, years as a die-hard prankster had trained her to lie. Her mind flashed back to all the times she had crashed into Twilight's library, or Rarity's boutique. "I was trying out a new trick! Didn't work like it was supposed to."

Twilight shook her head. "Really, Rainbow. You need to be more careful about these things! What if you hurt somepony?"

"Oh, calm down. An egghead like you just doesn't understand the way my tricks work." Rainbow lifted a hoof to her chest in pride.

"Yea, yea, whatever you say. Anyway, me and Twi were headin' over to the Sunflower Sammich Deli for a bite to eat. You in?"

Rainbow Dash contemplated it. If she were to go, the line would be even longer

by the time she got back. If she didn't go, that would mean blowing off her friends. And, knowing Applejack, that could result in them trying to find out just what she was doing. Besides; she was out of excuses. "Sure. Let's go, quickly." She galloped off.

"HOLD ON THERE RAINBOW!"

"So, I told Spike, 'That's the Z section, Spike!'"

"Ah know what ya mean. Sometimes Big Mac gets so distracted that he'll end up walkin' through the entire orchard without buckin' a single tree."

Rainbow Dash put her head down on the table, holding back a scream. They had been there for...two hours? Probably. It felt like a day. It was terrible. Well, not terrible. The food was decent. Nowhere near the best in town, but good enough. But, if she didn't get back to the line soon, she would never get a chance to meet Sapphire Shores. She lifted herself up, and cleared her throat. "Uh, girls?"

They both looked across the table at her. "Yes, Rainbow Dash?" Twilight asked politely.

"As interesting as this conversation is, I have to get going. Stuff to do!"

"Really? Like what? Maybe we could help ya!" Applejack offered.

"Oh, noooo..." A small part of Rainbow Dash's mind started to panic. "Uh... hey, look over there!" She said, pointing. Both mares quickly spun around, looking for whatever it was they were looking for. They didn't see anything. Well, they did see Pinkie Pie dressed as a bale of hay, but that had become somewhat normal at this point. They turned back to Rainbow, only to see an empty seat.

"Landsakes! Where did that filly run off to?"

While she was gone, the line had grown to at least double what it was. Rainbow placed herself within its ranks, and was determined not to leave. Nothing short of a hurricane could stop her now.

And the hurricane never came. Hours passed. The shadows grew longer. It was almost evening before Rainbow Dash rounded a corner, and caught sight of the tan colored pony at a large booth. As Rainbow noted, she didn't look too good. Her mane was disheveled, and there were bags under her eyes. No doubt from a long day sitting in the hot sun, doing nothing but signing autographs. Rainbow understood the feeling; more than once had she come home, exhausted from a day of flying. She would be courteous, and try to get out of Sapphire's hair as soon as possible.

There were only eight more ponies in front of her. Rainbow's wings flared up. This was it. Seven ponies.

Six ponies.

"What will I say?"

Five ponies.

"What will she say?"

Four ponies.

"Hi, Sapphire! I'm your biggest fan! No, that's stupid."

Three ponies.

"Maybe I shouldn't say anything. The silent, mysterious type. Wait. No. What am I trying to do, hook up with her?"

Two ponies.

"I've stood in line, shirked my responsibilities, got beat up by a filly, lied to my friends, and hid in a garbage can just to see you! ...Maybe."

The last pony came and went. Rainbow Dash stepped forward. Glancing at her,

Sapphire began to stand. Rainbow went wild. “OHMYGOSHOHMYGOSHOHMYGOSH! She knows me, and wants to shake my hand! Certainly, Ms. Shores, you can have my autog-” Her thoughts were interrupted by a large guard pony stepping in front of her, and placing a sign that blocked her path. Slightly irritated, Rainbow quickly read the sign. She did a double take at what it said.

CLOSED MS. SHORES OFFERS HER APOLOGIES TO ALL WHO DIDN'T MEET HER

She saw Sapphire walk through a set of doors, and disappear from sight. A few of the ponies behind Rainbow groaned, walking away from the line, obviously ticked off. Rainbow stayed and sat in front of the sign. She was silent. Not one sound passed her lips. Eventually she fell to the ground, and covered her face with her hooves. Everything she had done that day came crashing down on her. She had cut work. Work that was essential to the daily lives of everypony. She had lied through her teeth to her friends, and hadn't even batted an eyelid. She had stood in line for more than *five hours*, just to be denied at the last moment. She was trying and failing to contain her tears. Just as the first drop escaped her eyes, she felt a hoof on her shoulder. Daring to look at it, Rainbow followed the white appendage up to Rarity's face. “Rainbow? Are you...crying?” She didn't answer. Rarity took this as a yes. She embraced Dash.

“Oh, dear, what's wrong? What happened? Was it something with the weather?” Rainbow composed herself. If Rarity, or anypony for that matter, found out that she was crying over *this*? She would be ruined! No pony would ever take her seriously again!

“I wasn't crying! Why would I ever cry? I must have gotten something in my eye. Yeah.”

“But, why were you on the ground?”

“I WAS TIRED! What, you've never seen a tired pony before?” Rainbow heard hoofsteps behind her. Turning around, she saw Applejack and Twilight.

“Hey guys, what's going on?” Twilight asked.

Before Rainbow Dash could answer, Rarity pointed an accusing hoof at the cyan

mare and exclaimed, "Rainbow Dash was *crying*, and she refuses to say why!" All eyes were on Rainbow now. Every face showed concern, but Rainbow didn't want any of it. All she wanted was to *go home*. Suddenly, another voice joined the conversation.

"Hey, Rainbow Dash!" It was Raindrops. "Just figured you'd want to know how things went today."

Rarity gained a confused expression. "What? Why wouldn't she know? Rainbow told me that she would be with you all day!" Now all eyes were on Rarity, as everypony became confused (except for Rainbow Dash, who was just scared).

Applejack was the first to speak. "That can't be true! Me an' Twi found her practicing her flyin'! At least, that's what she told us, after she climbed outta that garbage can..." Rarity was disgusted, but before she could comment, Raindrops interrupted.

"What? I thought you said you were going to be with Pinkie all day!" As if she had been there the entire time, Pinkie Pie proceeded to pop up between Raindrops and Rarity.

"HAY GUYS! I heard my name, what's going on? Are we having a look-very-confused-but-in-rainbow-dash's-case-very-worried-party?" She pulled a large bag labeled "IN CASE OF EMERGENCY PARTY" from behind her back. Now, even Rainbow Dash was curious.

"Pinkie, where did that even come from?" She asked.

"Duh, haven't you ever heard of hammerspace?" Pinkie shook her head in pity. Normally, this would be the time that Rainbow would call the pink pony random, but she wasn't in the mood. The pity only lasted for a second as Pinkie immediately sprung up, and pushed herself into Raindrops' face. "So, what were ya saying 'bout me? Huh? Huh?"

"Oh, well, this morning Rainbow Dash gave me control of the weather team for the day, while she was on her date with you."

Rarity stared. Applejack's jaw dropped. Twilight began to blush. Rainbow started to back away from the group, and was dismayed at the revelation that there was a wall behind her. Pinkie kept smiling. "Well, that's weird! I don't remember planning a date

with Rainbow Dash...sounds fun, though!" The other mares turned back to Rainbow, who was currently trying to figure out a way to silently pass through a wall and escape.

"Rainbow, just what is going on here?" Rarity asked, a hint of worry in her voice. "Why would you lie to us?"

"I, I..." She stuttered in response. Twilight moved in closer.

"Rainbow, tell us! Let us help."

"Well, um..."

Applejack stamped her hoof on the ground. "Come on! Just spit it out!"

Rainbow jumped into the air above the five others. "OK, FINE! YOU WANNA KNOW WHY I LIED TO YOU ALL?" She pointed to the large sign in the middle of the square that depicted Sapphire Shores. "I stood in line, or at least I *tried* to, all day just to get her autograph!" The mares stood shocked, staring at the mare who was screaming at them. "So go ahead! Laugh at me!" At this point, her voice was cracking with every other word. "I don't care anymore."

Everypony, Pinkie Pie included, was still. The powerful, albeit short tirade had left Dash out of breath and feeling even worse than before. Everypony was silent; until Pinkie started to laugh. All ponies present looked at her, a mix of anger and confusion on their faces. Tears started to run down Dash's face. It was as she had feared; she had become a laughingstock. No pony would ever respect her again. Even Scootaloo would probably go looking for a new role model. Her life was ruined.

"Pinkie, how can you laugh at your own friend?!" Twilight asked angrily. "Can't you see she's upset?"

Pinkie kept on laughing. "I'm *laughing* at how silly she's being." Pinkie calmed down, and turned to Rainbow Dash. "Dashie, why would we ever laugh at you? You're our friend!" She popped up next to Dash. "Our amigo!" Transported to the other side. "Our ystävä! Who cares what kind of *music* you like?"

Rarity stepped forward and touched her muzzle to Dash's. "I agree. Why would I make fun for something as trivial as that? Besides, Sapphire Shores is amazing! There's no shame in liking her."

It was Applejack's turn to speak. "Ah may not be a fan of this here Sapphire Shores, but Rarity is right. Be proud of what you like. Ah certainly don't judge."

Everypony turned expectantly to Twilight. Rainbow Dash mentally prepared herself for a long, somewhat sappy speech. "Actually, I don't have anything to say." Twilight smiled. "Everything I can think of has already been said." Pinkie, Applejack, Twilight and Rarity embraced Rainbow Dash.

"Oh Dashie, don't you see? We'll always be friends, no matter what!" Rainbow wiped her eyes, and smiled.

"You guys are awesome." Now everypony was laughing happily. Well, except for Raindrops, who was standing awkwardly on the side.

She shuffled her hooves a bit before speaking. "Uh, Rainbow Dash?" Dash turned to her. "I can see you're having a moment here, so...see you tomorrow, I guess." She walked away slowly, obviously alienated by the public display of affection the friends gave. As she trotted off, Rainbow waved to her, before drooping her shoulders a bit.

Rarity was the first to notice. "Dear, what's wrong? No pony is laughing at you."

"Yeah, it's just... I spent all day just trying to get this autograph, and Sapphire left right before I could! It's just not fair."

The white unicorn brought her hoof to her chin, and furrowed her brow for a moment. All at once, her eyes lit up as she exclaimed, "IDEAAAAA! Rainbow Dash, did you see where Sapphire Shores went?"

The cyan mare looked back at her, a bit confused. "Uh, yeah, sure. She went through that door, right over there." She pointed to a plain black door that was a few feet away from where Sapphire had been sitting. "Why?"

"Oh, no reason... just wait here, I'll be back." Doing as she asked, Rainbow went to sit down with her other three friends.

"So... what did you guys do today?" Rainbow asked the others.

“Oh, I was playing hide-and-seek with Sir Lints-A-Lot!” The trio stared at Pinkie, who stared back happily. “He wasn’t very good at it.” The group stood in silence for a moment before Applejack spoke.

“Well, ah was helpin’ Twi and Spike organize the library. We were just gettin’ lunch when we found ya.” She said. After a moment, a puzzled expression crossed her face. “Speakin’ a’ which, if you weren’t practicing your flyin’, why were you in that garbage can?”

Rainbow Dash laughed. “It’s a long story, I’ll tell ya later.” She turned to Twilight. “So, why didn’t Spike come along? You haven’t stopped feeding him, have ya?”

“No, I haven’t. He wanted to get done with organizing before nightfall. Besides, he doesn’t like the Sunflower Sammich Deli very much. Not enough gems. But, I figure by the time I get home he’ll be done, and I can write a letter to Princess Celestia.”

“What did ya learn today, Twi? I was with ya all day, and I didn’t notice anything.”

“Well, actually, *you* taught me the lesson, Rainbow Dash.”

“Huh?” Rainbow Dash was baffled. She had never seen herself as the type to teach anypony anything, let alone Twilight, who knew everything.

“You taught me that a true friend doesn’t judge another friend on the small things, like what music they like. A true friend will stand by your side, no matter what.” As if on cue, it was that moment that Rarity decided to return.

“Rainbow Dash, I have a surprise for you!” Rainbow slowly turned toward her friend.

“Really? What did yoooOOOHMYGOSHOHMYGOSHOHMYGOSH.” Standing a few steps behind Rarity was the Pony of Pop herself, Sapphire Shores. She cantered confidently up to Rainbow.

“Hello there, darling. Ms. Rarity tells me that you are a big fan of my work, and that you didn’t get to speak to me today.” She put her hoof under Dash’s mouth, closing it. “Now, we can’t have that, can we? I’d be *delighted* to sign your CD.” Rainbow Dash stood stock still, not being able to move a muscle in front of the celebrity. Rarity levitated the CD out of Rainbow’s bag, floating it to Sapphire. Pulling a black marker out of her

blue mane, she quickly signed the plastic container, and handed it to Dash. The cyan mare kept staring at Sapphire. “Uh, darling?”

Rainbow Dash shook herself out of her stupor. “Thank you so much! You have no idea how much this means to me!”

“No, thank you for being so devoted to my music. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have to make my exit. Schedules and all that. You know how it is.”

While the exchange was happening, Applejack had tapped Rarity on the shoulder, and pulled her aside. “Rarity, how did you convince Shores to do this?”

Rarity smiled, knowingly. “After I told her about the Diamond Dog incident, she was so grateful that she told me that she owed me a favor. So, I decided to make good on the offer.”

Applejack chuckled. “Well, I guess they don’t call ya the Element of Generosity for nothin’.”

“Anything to help a friend.” Rarity replied, turning back to Rainbow Dash. The mare was currently staring her CD, on which were emblazoned in big, black letters:

“To my biggest fan, Rainbow Dash. You are truly sensational.”

THE END

AT LEAST IT WOULD BE, IF THERE WASN'T AN EPILOGUE

Sweetie Belle and Apple Bloom stood outside Scootaloo's home, waiting for the orange filly to come down. She had called out her window that she would be down in five minutes. That was twenty minutes ago. Finally, the two fillies had had enough. Knocking on the door, they were greeted with the friendly face of Scootaloo's mother. "Oh, hello girls! Scootaloo is upstairs in her room, if you want her."

They proceeded to climb up the stairs, arriving at Scootaloo's door quickly. Apple Bloom knocked loudly. "SCOOTALOO, YOU COME OUT HERE RIGHT NOW, YA HEAR ME?"

They heard a crash, before Scootaloo's rough voice rang out. "Don't come in! I'm...naked! Yeah!"

"But, Scootaloo, we don't even wear clothes." Sweetie Belle replied. The two fillies walked in, and were greeted by a sight that neither of them ever expected to see.

In the center of the room stood Rainbow Dash. Well, at least it might have been if

she also had a rainbow-colored coat as well as a mane, and was a filly. If it hadn't been for Scootaloo's large purple eyes, the two might not have recognized the filly at all. There was a small can of orange paint next to her. In response, Apple Bloom fell to the floor, laughing.

"It's not funny!"

author's notes

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Second, thanks to the people in Yari's synchtube who helped me pre-read.

I would also like to offer an apology to Larry David. I'm sorry I made a [very heavy-handed reference](#) to your show in my awful fanfic. Please forgive me.