

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

When I began writing this story, season one had not yet finished, so Luna did not have a canon personality at the time. As such, I came up with my own characterization for our favorite lunar princess, and although it may not exactly jive with her canon self as it is now, attempting to “correct” her personality at that late stage of writing to fit canon Luna would have destroyed much of the significance and plot of the story as I had planned it, and would almost certainly have demanded a complete rewrite from the very beginning. Rather, I hope that you can enjoy her role in this story as much as I have enjoyed writing for her for what it is.

In addition, it may be important to note that certain events of significance to Equestrian History, i.e. the introduction of Discord, had also not occurred until a very late stage in the writing, and are therefore not featured in this work for reasons similar to that stated above.

Rather than change the story to maintain a strict adherence to the canon of the show and thereby create a product that was messy, confusing, and unenjoyable to me as a writer, I thought it better to simply continue writing as I always have, and allow the story to stand on its own for what it is. Thank you for your readership, and I hope that you have as much fun reading this story as I did writing it!

-Viktor Lionheart

Also, this is my first fanfic ever, so I would greatly appreciate any feedback you could give me to help me improve my writing. Thank you all for your time!

-Viktor Lionheart

Skyfall

Concept and writing by Viktor Lionheart

Chapter 1: The Visitor.

Applejack awoke to the sound of metal clanging against the floor of the kitchen below.

“Oh Angel, are you alright? You must be more careful! You’ll hurt yourself trying to do that.”

It was the voice of Fluttershy, who had evidently decided to wake up early again to prepare breakfast. Applejack groaned as she forced herself out of bed and plodded heavily down the stairs, wincing slightly at the stiffness in her shoulders as they worked clumsily around each other on her way down. Upon entering the kitchen, she saw what had caused the ruckus.

Fluttershy was busying herself about the floor where several half-cooked pancakes had recently landed while a rather disgruntled Angel was trying desperately to remove a substantial amount of batter from his fur. The little white rabbit always seemed to be a font of energy, never being one to stand still for any length of time, especially when he was helping Fluttershy with her chores, and it seemed that in his gusto he had been a bit too enthusiastic in his attempt at flipping the pancakes.

The scene would have been much more amusing if Applejack were not already so accustomed to being awakened in this way. With a heavy sigh, she repeated the familiar mantra she seemed to find herself uttering every morning these days.

“Fluttershah, how many times do Ah have to tell you? Yer mah guest. Ah’d be more’n happy to make breakfast for y’all.”

Right on cue, her pegasus friend replied with her typical infuriating politeness.

“Oh, no I couldn’t have that. It’s the least I could do after everything you’ve done for Angel and I. Don’t worry, we’ll have this cleaned up in no time.”

Applejack opened her mouth to offer a retort, but decided that it was pointless and simply sighed, shaking her head. She never could argue with Fluttershy. Instead, she spent a few minutes helping her friend clean up before beginning the familiar routine of her morning chores.

The yellow and pink pegasus had moved in a few days ago after the most recent “earthshake,” as the ponies had come to call them, had damaged her cottage. While repairs were underway, Sweet Apple Acres was the only place big enough to accommodate Fluttershy and all of her animals. Granted, it meant that the Apple family had to be a bit more vigilant than usual to prevent the animals from eating the crops, but Applejack was happy to be able to help Fluttershy in any way she could.

The day was looking to be an especially busy one for the Apple family. The Summer Sun Celebration was tomorrow, and this meant a prime opportunity to sell their wares. This year was a bit special, however, as they would be donating half of the proceeds to help the ponies whose homes had been destroyed in the earthshakes. Applejack had recruited the help of her close friends for the occasion, but Fluttershy was still finishing breakfast, and Rarity, Rainbow Dash, and Pinkie Pie wouldn’t be along for several hours. Twilight, meanwhile, would be unable to help, as she was away to Manehatten to oversee preparations for the Celebration.

After Applejack had readied the applecarts, fed the chickens, awakened Applebloom, and milked the cows with Big Macintosh, she and her brother returned to the kitchen, whereupon they were immediately greeted with the enticing smell of fresh pancakes and maple syrup. For a while the three Apple siblings, Fluttershy, and Angel enjoyed their breakfast in silence, all of them still too groggy to be much for conversation, when a sound came at the door. It wasn’t as much a knock as it was a single, deafening impact that would have caused Fluttershy to come dangerously close to hitting the stratosphere had the ceiling not painfully interrupted her sudden ascent.

Applejack hurried to the door. Upon opening it, her vision was filled with a rather noisy mass of pink fluff.

“HIYEEE!” Pinkie Pie squealed, a little too loudly for this early in the morning.

There was now a large, suspiciously Pinkie-shaped dent in the door. Fortunately, for some reason, Pinkie had been wearing a hard hat that was the same vibrant shade of fuschia as her unruly mane. Applejack simply stared at her friend for a moment, dimly wondering at Pinkie’s sheer cranial fortitude, before offering a response.

She shook her head, donning a friendly smile.

“Uh...mornin’, Pink. What’s with the hard hat?”

Pinkie Pie bounced inside with her usual amount of energy.

“Well, duh. I just came from Fluttershy’s cottage! Mr. Cobble says it’s all fixed for her to move back in, so I decided to come over early to tell everypony the good news!”

Applejack’s mind unfocused just long enough to picture Pinkie handling power tools. Mercifully, the image only lingered for an instant before being quickly swept away by the sound of Fluttershy’s voice.

“Oh, how wonderful!” Fluttershy chimed, gingerly rubbing her head. “Angel and I were beginning to get homesick.”

Applejack shook away her thoughts of potential Pinkie-related mayhem, happy to welcome her energetic friend.

“Well whah dontcha join us fer breakfast? There’s plenny to go around.”

“Thanks!”

In a single motion, Pinkie bounced into a chair and immediately buried her face in food. As the sun began to climb into the sky outside, the group of friends sat in silence as Pinkie babbled happily away about this and that, and one of them would interject with a knowing grunt or nod whenever she paused to inhale more of her breakfast. Even when they were fully awake, the ponies often found themselves baffled by the unpredictable machinations that dictated the path of Pinkie’s train of thought. Her energy however, was as infectious as ever, and they soon could not help but share some of her enthusiasm as they rose from their seats to face the day’s work.

After the ponies had finished with their meal, they set about the daunting task of harvesting the southern apple field. At about noon, Rainbow Dash and Rarity could be seen walking along the long dirt road to the orchard and soon joined in with the rest of them, Rarity plucking great spreads of fruit with a graceful wave of her horn, and Rainbow speeding by each line of trees one by one, the terrific gale of her wake shaking

even the most stubborn apples from their lofty perches. Even with the five of them, along with Big Macintosh and Applebloom, harvesting the apples took most of the day, and they worked long into the night preparing pies, candied apples, and all manner of appletastic treats.

At long last, at about three o'clock in the morning, all was ready for the Celebration. The ponies had loaded their delicious cargo onto the train that Applejack would be taking to Manehattan and now gathered on the boarding platform to bid their friend farewell, an exhausted Applebloom soundly asleep on Big Macintosh's back. The young pony seemed even smaller than usual as she rose and fell with the breathing of her older brother, like a tiny yellow ship in a vast sea of red. Applejack blinked sleepily, making no attempt to stifle an enormous yawn. She reached behind her, tightening the clasp on her saddlebag before turning to address her friends.

"Thank yeh kindly fer helpin' us harvest these here apples. I dunno whut we woulda done if it hadn't been for y'all."

Rarity smiled back, waving a hoof dramatically in front of her face as though to dismiss the idea.

"But of course, darling. We wouldn't dream of having you do all of that on your own, especially when it's for such a good cause. Although...are you quite sure you can handle everything on your own when you get to the city? I'd be more than happy to—"

"Naw, thanks, Rarity." She blinked slowly, her jaw working wearily about as though preparing for another yawn. "You guys have done enough. 'Sides, yeh got plenny o' work here to keep ya'll busy. I'll do jes' fine by muhself."

Fluttershy frowned. "I hope we made enough...what if you run out of food?"

"I know, right? I don't know how anypony could resist buying a dozen of each of those things!"

Pinkie rubbed her stomach enthusiastically, her tongue dancing eagerly across her lips in search of any leftover crumbs from the goods she had taken the liberty of "quality testing."

"Well, then I wish you the best of luck in your business endeavor. Please, do be sure to drop by the moment you return – I want to hear all about it!"

As the words left her lips, each of the other ponies offered similar tidings of good fortune before a sudden noise like a bandsaw made them all jump. Rainbow Dash was sprawled unceremoniously across a nearby tree branch and had begun to snore loudly.

Rarity glared indignantly at the unconscious pony and shook her head in disgust.

"...But I think its time we all got some rest. We've all got quite a lot of work ahead of us if we're to do our part in helping the refugees in Ponyville tomorrow."

To emphasize the point, she used her magic to shake the branches of Rainbow's tree, knocking the slumbering pegasus to the ground with a heavy thud. Brushing the leaves from her mane, Rainbow took a moment to utter a few choice words under her breath before saying goodbye to Applejack and taking off in the direction of her cloudy home. All of the other ponies did not hesitate to follow suit, each of them eagerly anticipating a soft bed of their own.

After saying goodbye to her friends, Fluttershy quietly gathered her things, giving an affectionate nuzzle to Angel's sleeping body where he lay atop her back, and trotted out of the kitchen door, shivering slightly as the chilly night air washed over her tired form. Despite Big Macintosh's offer to allow her to spend another night at the farm, Fluttershy insisted on returning home with Angel, saying that she would be by in the morning to pick up all of her animals. With a final, weary farewell, she turned her back on the Apple Family Farm and began plodding slowly down the road, dreamily enjoying the sounds of night life and the faint aroma of cinnamon pie crust that still lingered in her mane.

The journey was not far, though it seemed to Fluttershy an eternity had passed before she finally saw the familiar lights of her cottage in the distance, warmly beckoning her to the soft blankets that awaited her upstairs. She had put Angel to bed with the rest of her animals and was about to do the same for herself when she noticed the silhouette of a tiny figure standing at the edge of the Forest through her window.

Her first instinct told her to hide, but it was overridden by the sudden realization that she recognized the figure as that of one of her close friends. Cautiously, she double checked through her window to make certain of what she was seeing, then ran outside and walked toward the figure until she was within shouting distance.

"S...Spike? Is that you?"

He did not respond. Perhaps he had not heard her.

"Um...Spike?" She edged closer to the baby dragon. "What are you doing out here all by yourself?" I thought you were supposed to be in Canterlot with the Princess."

Again, there was no response. He may as well be made of...oh no...

Fluttershy bolted toward Spike, fear quickening her steps.

"Oh...Oh thank goodness, you're alright. I thought maybe that awful cockatr...wait...who...?"

Before her stood a baby dragon, by all appearances the same age as Spike, but the resemblance to her friend stopped at that. His scales as well as his spines were of deepest emerald green, polished to the point that Fluttershy could see her own dim reflection in the moonlight. The eyes that seemed to stare past the pegasus before him were of a brilliant silver – white, his snout pointed and sharp, unlike the cute, round face of her youthful friend. For a while, the two simply sat in silence until Fluttershy's curiosity

prompted her to speak.

“Oh my! I never thought I would meet another baby dragon. Do you know Spike? He lives here in Ponyville. Are you hungry? What’s your name? Are you lost?”

Fluttershy’s excitement was clear in her voice as she rapidly fired one question after another at the newcomer. When he did not answer, something that should have been rather obvious from the beginning dawned on the yellow pony.

“...Where’s your mother?” she said slowly, looking around for any sign of an adult dragon with a faint sinking feeling.

“...ot...ere...”

The presence of the unfamiliar voice had caught her somewhat by surprise. She directed her gaze once more to the little dragon below, noticing that he suddenly seemed distinctly agitated, though for what reason she could not discern.

“Um...sorry, what did you say? I didn’t quite hear you.”

“...not...there. Where are they?”

The dragon’s eyes were unfocused, darting about with no apparent purpose in their movement, as though he were not even aware of her presence. The creature looked around at nothing in particular, then stumbled slightly in a small circle, apparently having some difficulty keeping his balance. His voice was very weak, barely above a whisper.

It occurred to Fluttershy that he may be delirious. Immediately, her motherly instinct kicked into gear.

“Oh dear, I must get you inside right away. You must be starving!”

In one swift motion, she moved to scoop the dragon up in her hooves when he did something that nearly sent her flying backwards in shock. Without warning, he jumped out of her reach with alarming speed. Suddenly, his eyes snapped into focus and glared piercingly in her direction, his tiny feet flying apart in a wide aggressive stance.

It was then that she noticed that this dragon had wings, rather wide for his small size, which he now displayed to the effect of making himself appear much larger than he actually was. He spoke once more, but this time, his voice was clear and sharp, with more than a hint of hostility.

“You! Who are you!? Explain yourself!”

Fluttershy recoiled violently at the outburst. Without hesitating to capitalize on his advantage, the tiny dragon stepped toward her.

“Did your mother not teach you to speak when spoken to? Obey! Tell me your name!”

As quickly as it had come, Fluttershy's natural confidence in dealing with creatures had vanished at his sudden and inexplicable change in behavior. The little dragon's words did not suit the childishly cracking voice of the tiny body that spoke them. Instead, he spoke with all the confidence and command of a grown dragon, and it was making Fluttershy much too frightened to be able to speak in return.

He moved to take another step toward her when he paused mid-step, sniffing the air. Suddenly, the dragon stumbled backward. As his eyes stretched wide with what appeared to be shock, he stared at Fluttershy for a few moments before speaking again.

"I...I can smell it...but its not where it' supposed to..."

The dragon glanced behind him into the heart of the Everfree Forest, then looked down at his own body, as if realizing where he was for the first time. Finally, he cast an appraising eye upon the shivering pegasus mare, who was now partially hidden behind a bush several feet away. When he spoke again, his tone was no longer hostile, but carried a note of surprised fascination.

"...That's interesting...I suppose I should have considered that..." he muttered to himself, absently patting the front of his body, as though he were looking for something but couldn't quite remember what it was. For several seconds, he continued to whisper rapidly beneath his breath, occasionally glancing in Fluttershy's direction as he searched in vain for whatever it was he was looking for.

After a few moments in which the dragon seemed to be lost in deep thought, Fluttershy spoke again. She suddenly wanted nothing more than to be safe in her home behind a locked and sturdy door.

"I...I'm sorry. I-I-I'll just ...I-I'll just go...."

She took off as quickly as she could manage in the direction of her home, but before she could fly more than a few feet, the dragon called to her.

"No, wait! Please! I'm sorry that I frightened you...please, don't leave..."

This time, his voice had lost all of its former hostility and had taken on a tone of genuine desperation. Fluttershy hovered uncertainly, staring at the young dragon (by far the moodiest dragon she had ever met, she thought to herself).

"Please, I didn't...didn't mean to shout..."

His eyes wavered, shifting in and out of focus.

"I have to... have to get back...before..."

He stumbled as he tried to turn back toward the Everfree Forest, the formerly intimidating figure reduced to a bumbling baby once more.

“Where is it? I just...I need...”

The young dragon managed a few more unsteady steps before collapsing, unconscious, to the ground. All of her fear washed away by a sudden flood of concern, Fluttershy swooped down to get a closer look as a single, feeble moan escaped his lips before he fell completely silent.

He was completely immobile. Fluttershy felt a sickening lump form in her throat when she noticed what was wrong.

“Oh no! Oh my goodness, oh my goodness he’s not breathing! What do I do?!”

Once again, the familiar doubtless sense of nurturing purpose took over as she scooped up the baby dragon, searching frantically for any sign of the baby’s parents. She screamed into the darkness. screamed as loudly as she could, screamed for anyone to help. But no one came.

In a panic, she remembered the CPR training she had received as a volunteer at Ponyville Urgent Care. As she began the first compressions, Angel burst out of the cottage and was at her side in a flash. At first, he hesitated, his gaze shooting nervously back and forth between Fluttershy and the stranger she was trying desperately to revive. Fluttershy had only to look into his eyes for a moment to convey the urgency of the situation. Immediately, Angel moved to race toward Ponyville but stopped short knowing that he would never make it in time. As he whirled about to face Fluttershy again, a peculiar pattern in the earth caught his eye – a trail of tiny footprints leading back to the edge of the treeline. Without hesitation, Angel bolted along the path into the Forest.

“ANGEL, WAIT!”

But he had already been swallowed by the wall of trees. Several tense moments passed. All was silent. There were only the sounds of Fluttershy’s frantic efforts to revive the dragon, punctuated by an occasional sob. She knew there was not much time left before....

WHACK

Fluttershy shook her head to clear the stars from her vision. Something small and hard had hit her between the eyes, and now hung limply off the tip of her muzzle. Trying with some effort to focus her eyes in the half- light, she saw that it appeared to be a pendant, ornamented with a single, oddly shaped black gem. The stone was...strangely, mesmerizing; in the depthless heart of the gem shone a tiny, almost nonexistent point of light. Despite the pounding of her heart, some small part of herself could not help but pause in wonder as she gazed into its inky center, but her torpor only lasted for a moment before a blur of motion in front of her caught her attention. She looked up to see Angel, who, judging by his stance, had just hurled the object at her head, and was now gesturing frantically toward the dragon.

The pegasus looked down at the tiny form beneath her, her mind whipping painfully back into reality. As she bent down to continue resuscitating the dragon, his body heaved violently, his eyes shooting open. Immediately, they found the pendant and just as quickly jumped upward to meet Fluttershy's anxious face in an urgent, wordless plea. He gestured weakly, reaching toward it with a tiny scaled hand, but was unable to manage anything more than a pained gasp to communicate his intent. Whether by motherly intuition or some deeply buried instinct, Fluttershy kneeled to bring the pendant down within his grasp. He leaned forward, grunting with exertion, and his tiny claw began to close as he found the end of the pendant's chain.

In an instant, all that she knew had vanished around her.

Complete and utter oblivion. A yellow pegasus with a pink mane sat alone in the nothingness, dimly aware that something was wrong – very, very wrong. Who was she? She couldn't remember. Where was she? She didn't know. And yet...she was not afraid. It felt peaceful in some strange way that she could not understand, as if she had just awakened from a terrible nightmare and was just now truly aware of her surroundings for the first time. She basked in the eerie tranquility of the feeling with no grasp of how long she sat in this way. From every direction at once, a single word echoed endlessly.

"Fluttershy...Fluttershy...Fluttershy..."

It occurred to her that this must be her name. It sounded foreign to her, but she somehow knew it to be so, knew that it could not possibly be anything else. With this epiphany, other words began to dance through her consciousness in rapid succession, all of them warmly familiar, yet somehow alien. Before long, a series of images joined the ethereal parade. She saw a white pony with a flowing mane of royal purple. Her name was... Ror...no...Rarity. Then, an image of a sky blue pegasus with a multicolored mane. "Rainbow Dash." She soundlessly mouthed each syllable as the words flowed through her thoughts like foam carried on a river's surface. And more...other ponies whom she knew, whose names filled her with a strangely detached nostalgia. She frowned, trying to grasp the significance of those familiar outlines. They whispered to her, offering words of kindness, their voices weaving together in a blanket of creeping warmth.

More images, less familiar this time – a grey Alicorn with a beautiful pale mane of white and blue...a castle, a castle wreathed in flame. The images increased in speed, faster, faster, faster. Ponies, thousands of them, beneath a black sky. Chains that seemed to stretch forever. Raining fire. Screaming faces. So many faces screaming. The images flew by in a constant, blinding blur, so fast that it hurt. All of the words, all of the voices she heard blended together in a piercing whine that cut to her very core. The voices screamed within her mind, all fighting desperately to be heard at once.

In an instant, her former blissful calm was replaced by a sudden, all - consuming terror. Above the light and the noise a single voice boomed...a voice that she knew, though she could not remember how. It terrified her. Over and over, louder and louder, it repeated her name.

“Fluttershy...Fluttershy...Futtershy...”

Fluttershy screamed in the swirling horror that engulfed her, but the sound was obliterated by the wall of noise. The voice grew louder and louder still. It was laughing now, so loudly that Fluttershy felt her head would surely burst. She slammed her hooves into her ears, yelling at the top of her lungs, hoping to drown that awful voice beneath her own screams, but it simply grew louder, more manic, great peals of terrifying laughter arcing across her awareness like so many bolts of lightning.

Then, as suddenly as it had all started, all was silent again. The voice that she heard next floated numbly through the haze that still gripped her by the last confused threads of dawning consciousness. It mumbled incoherently for several moments before finally snapping violently into focus.

An anxious white blob danced chaotically before her eyes as she blinked rapidly in the sudden flood of light that assaulted her retinas.

“Fluttershy! Oh thank goodness you’re awake! What happened?! Are you alright? Please, speak to me!”

Fluttershy sat bolt upright, and immediately regretted the decision. Her vision swam, filled with the face of her friend Rarity, her stomach convulsing painfully in a series of fantastic knots as she fought the urge to vomit. She felt cold, and was keenly aware of a throbbing pain in her temples. Her breath coming in short, frantic gasps, the white unicorn turned to a rainbow – maned pony beside her.

“Don’t just stand there, bring her some water! Oh my goodness, how did this happen?! Pinkie, get a doctor, now!”