

"It looks like we're sinking," Maud Pie said in an unconcerned, bored sounding deadpan. She turned her head around to look at Tarnish for a moment and then she looked out of the back of the wagon. "There is a slope over there. All the water is running downhill and flooding the area where we are parked."

"So, if we leave the wagon here, we'll sink down so far that we'll never get out?" Tarnished Teapot asked. He blinked a few times, feeling a bit of a worry, and then joined Maud at the back of the wagon. He stared down at the ground. "We weren't almost up to our axles when we started eating a little while ago."

"We're in trouble," Maud said.

"We haven't even slept after going all night." Tarnish looked down at the swampy, soupy ground. "Do you think you can pull us out?"

"I don't know," Maud replied. "We might have to unpack the wagon."

"Where do we put everything so it doesn't get wet and muddy?" Tarnish stared at the wheels. For one troubling moment, he believed that he could see the wagon sinking further into the mud. "You and I are adding a few hundred pounds to the wagon, so maybe we're making it worse. If we got out, it might stop sinking and maybe we could pull it out."

"Maybe." Maud shrugged. Saying nothing, she lept from the back end of the wagon and landed with a splat in the mud. In moments, she sank in up to her hocks. "Hmm."

"Maud, you're naked."

"Tarnish, you are very observant."

"I worry about you getting sunburned."

"Not only are you observant, but you really love me and think of my needs." Maud paused and looked around. "The mud is cold and refreshing. I like this."

"Cold?" Tarnish looked down at the ground. He was sweating and he felt a curious urge to jump. Cold mud didn't sound too terrible; on the other hoof, he didn't want to get covered in mud. Maud was already trying to walk around and the mud made lewd slurping noises as she stomped around the squishy ground. Cringing, he lept from the wagon.

There was a loud, sexual sounding squelch. Tarnish, already cringing, thought about what he and Maud had been doing just before breakfast. It was impossible not to think about it. It took real effort to force his eyes open. Just as he was opening his eyes, something cold

splattered into his face, hitting his muzzle. He stood there in shock, blinking, staring at Maud, who had one muddy hoof still raised.

"I miss playing in the mud with Pinkie Pie," Maud said.

"You chucked mud at me!" Tarnish cried.

Maud, looking bored, scooped up more mud and then flung it at Tarnish. She watched as the mud hit him in the neck and splattered down his side. "And I just did it again. Mmm, mud."

Tarnish, not knowing what to do, just stood there. He was not about to throw mud at his wife. Something about that just seemed [i]wrong[/i] somehow. You weren't supposed to throw mud at fillies and you shouldn't fling mud at your wife. As he thought about his conundrum, another glob of mud and grass struck him, this time on the ribs. It was cool upon his skin and felt rather good. Another dollop of mud hit him at the base of his jawline.

"You look so dignified standing there... so majestic." Maud tossed another mud pie at Tarnish. "You don't want to throw mud at a mare. You make this too easy." Maud scooped up an enormous blob of mud and hurled it at Tarnish. On impact, it covered most of his front half in mud. "You wanted to be an earth pony... this is what we do for fun."

Tarnish gave his head a good hard shake to fling the mud from his face. He stared at Maud, not quite knowing what to do. He scooped up some mud with his hoof, looked down at it, and then looked at Maud, his muddy eyebrow raised. A second later, more mud splattered all over his chocolate brown pelt.

When Tarnish chucked his lump of mud at Maud, he felt no guilt. He heard Maud gasp and then he heard her say, "I didn't think you had it in you. You shouldn't throw mud at mares, I'm going to tell your mother." And then, a moment later, Maud slammed into him hard enough to knock him down into the mud.

Mud covered Maud was slippery and Tarnish had trouble getting a good grip on her, but that didn't stop him from trying. He grabbed and he groped, taking advantage of this situation. For a moment, he had Maud rolled over onto her back, but then he found himself face down in the mud in retribution for his efforts. There was much confusion as he and Maud wrestled in the mud and Tarnish tried to get a good grip on the slippery, mud slathered earth pony. After one very confused moment, Tarnish realised that Maud was sitting on his face. He blew a very muddy raspberry into the muddy crevice he found his muzzle stuffed inside of.

With a strange, alarmed sounding cry, Maud went shooting off, leaping through the mud. Tarnish lifted his head and looked at Maud. She was covered in mud from hoof to ear. Her mane and her tail were caked over with mud. Her eyes were wide and she stared at him. One ear was plastered to the side of her face with mud.

"Do you even know what you just did?" Maud asked.

Grinning, feeling mud dripping from his face, and looking very much like a fox in the henhouse, Tarnish nodded. He rolled over and got to his hooves, never once taking his eyes off of Maud.

"Tarnish?"

"Yeah?"

"About kinky stuff..."

Tarnish's mud covered ears swiveled forwards. "Yeah, Maud?"

"Once I'm finally clean again, if I asked you to go down on me, would you?"

Something about Maud's bluntness was arousing. Tarnish began to try and shake mud from his pelt. "You mean... like..." Tarnish's words faded away and so he stuck out his tongue and gave it a wiggle. He saw Maud's eyes go wide for a moment. The whites of Maud's eyes stood out in sharp contrast against the black mud and grass that covered every inch of her body. He saw Maud give a slow nod. Something about Maud seemed off. "Maud, are you scared or something? Did I do something wrong?"

"You just startled me." As Maud relaxed, her eyes returned to their usual sleepy looking half-closed position. "Tarnish, I am very self conscious about my body. Perhaps because I wear clothing a lot. I didn't know how to respond to you poking your nose around down there."

"Um, did what I just did to you feel good?" Tarnish asked. He watched as Maud nodded and he heard the sound of mud splattering as some of it slid free from Maud's face. Feeling a little awkward, Tarnish changed the subject. "Well, I think both of us are protected from sunburn."

"I should get hitched to the wagon." Maud, her movements almost timid, headed for the front of the wagon. "Tarnish, if you can, pull down the canopy and try to get everything stowed away while I get buckled in."

"Sure thing, Maud," Tarnish replied. Even with the mud around his body, Tarnish now felt too warm. He thought about where his muzzle had just been. He gave himself a good shake and tried to clear his head. These were thoughts for another time and there was work to be done now.

[hr]

When Maud slammed into her harness, the whole wagon lurched forwards and there was a squishy squelch. She pulled a little to the right, then a little to the left, trying to free the wheels, and then with as much strength as she dared to use, she braced her hind legs and pushed forwards.

Behind the wagon, Tarnish, working with a long sapling that was now a makeshift pole, took advantage of his telekinesis and basic leverage. He couldn't lift the whole wagon, but he could use leverage. He speared his pole down deep into the mud, pressed it against the back of the wagon, and shoved forwards on the top of the pole as Maud heaved. The force of his efforts made his horn ache and blue sparks arced from the tip.

The two mud covered ponies strained to get the wagon moving. With a loud slurp, the wagon lurched forwards several inches, the narrow wheels slicing through the mud. Every muscle in Maud's body was now rock hard and would have stood out in sharp contrast, but was hidden beneath a layer of mud. Maud's white, square teeth were visible as she grunted and strained.

Tarnish repositioned his pole, sliding the bottom beneath the wagon and then pushing forward on the top end. The rear wheels lifted out of the mud a bit, the wagon sliding upwards along the angle of the pole. Maud tugged the wagon forwards and the wagon slid down the pole, the rear wheels sinking down into the mud. Tarnish repositioned the pole once more and made ready to apply leverage once again.

The wagon was moving now. They had momentum. Maud was getting it closer to the road. The road was muddy with deep wagon wheel ruts, but the ruts were hard packed and only had a few inches of mud; Tarnish had checked. If they could get the wagon back onto the road and into the ruts, they would be fine, or so Maud had said. Fighting a few inches of mud was a lot easier than fighting mud that was almost axle deep. The wheels creaked and squeaked.

"Maud, you alright?" Tarnish asked. He heard Maud grunt and guessed that the grunt was the only reply he was going to get. He wondered how he and Maud were going to get clean. There was only so much water in the barrel. He was tired and needed sleep.

The wagon was now almost on the road. They would need to hit it at an angle, getting the wheels over the first rut, and then allowing the wagon to slip into the deep, worn down grooves created by the many wagon wheels that had rolled over this section of road.

The whole wagon shuddered when the front wheels slipped into the ruts and then the back end slipped down, scraping along the muddy sides of the grooves worn into the road. The back of the wagon shimmied and Tarnish could hear things clunking around inside.

He checked the rear wheels; the mud didn't even come up past the outer rim of the wheel, reaching the spokes. He began trying to clean mud off from the wagon using his telekinesis, knocking mud clots from between the spokes, trying to lighten Maud's load any possible way that he could. The wagon was moving at a good speed now that it was free to roll over the hard packed ground at the bottom of the ruts in the road.

He wondered how far Maud planned to go. Neither one of them had slept, but they had eaten. The day was hot and the rain had made everything humid. The mud was doing a good job of keeping them cool as well as protecting them from the sun, but Tarnish feared that the mud would dry out and flake away in the heat. Tarnish chuckled his makeshift pole when he came to the conclusion it was no longer needed.

Slathered in mud, Tarnish fell into place beside Maud, giving her a loving sidelong glance as he walked beside her. She walked on the hump that stuck up from the road, the tall place between the ruts, and the wagon rode low behind her.

"Maud, I would have never expected for you to start a mud fight," Tarnish said.

"I think that was the first time I ever started one. Usually, Pinkie Pie flung mud at me. Or Limestone. Marble started a few times." Maud glanced over at Tarnish. "Once, Pinkie threw mud at Daddy."

"What did Igneous do?" Tarnish asked.

Maud resumed looking ahead and checking the road for signs of trouble. "Daddy let Pinkie have it. He pinned her down in the mud, rolled her around until she was thoroughly muddy, and then tickled her until she begged for mercy. Mama was upset. She lectured both of them for getting muddy."

"Yeah, your mom seems like a clean sort of pony." Tarnish grinned at the thought of Igneous being covered in mud.

"Daddy flung mud at Mama. He got her good... and then Pinkie joined in. Mama got muddy." Maud heaved a sigh. "I miss my parents already."

"I've never been this muddy in my life... I wonder what my mother would say... she freaks out if she gets dirty." Tarnish glanced over at Maud and watched as her mud encrusted curls bounced up and down.

"I never understood the fear of mud and dirt. I mean, we grow our food in the dirt and we eat the food. I mean, if dirt and mud are somehow bad, why do we let our food touch it?" Maud shook her head as she walked.

“Somehow, you’re still beautiful, even all covered in mud, Maud Pie.”

Under her coating of Mud, Maud experienced a full body blush.