# Karamel

## Day 6

By The Unnamed Pawn

Upon heading downstairs Big Mac caught his sister eating a muffin and reading a scroll. “Looks like Caramel’s comin’ back tomorrow,” she said as she passed the scroll across the table.

Big Mac glanced at the paper. “I’m sorry for leaving without telling you,” it read,” I just had a few things to sort out. I’ll be home tomorrow morning assuming this reaches you today. It’ll be good to see you again.

With Love, Caramel”

Big Mac set the paper aside. He didn’t even want to think about Caramel right now. On top of everything else he definitely wasn’t looking forward to that talk.

“Well aren’t ya’ excited?” his sister asked.

“Eeyup,” Big Mac said with a forced smile.

“Good to hear it.” Applejack stuffed the rest of the muffin into her mouth and stood up. “Now eat some breakfast. We’re cleanin’ the barn today and you’ll need all the energy you can muster.”

As his sister left the room Big Mac moved to prepare a large breakfast for himself in preparation for what was apparently a hefty workload.

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In truth, cleaning the barn was actually a much smaller job then Applejack made it out to be. Together they were pretty much finished before lunch. Applejack couldn’t think of anything else for him to do, so she ordered him to go to the hospital and see Blueberrie.

Without even getting a meal in, Big Mac was rushed out of the house. He didn’t question it though. Applejack probably just thought he was more worried about his friend than he was letting on. She was right of course, but he wasn’t sure he was as worried as she thought he was.

The hospital was a bit more full than the day before. Three closely grouped beds were taken up by a trio of similar looking fillies. Apart from them the only ponies in the hospital were the nurses and a multicolored pegasus who sat above the bed of the pinkest of the trio. “Hey applejacks brother,” she gestured for him to come sit beside her.

Big Mac examined the other two ponies on the beds for a moment. They were asleep, but they weren't squirming like their sister. "What's wrong with these two?" he asked.

The nurse pony approached the bed with a pair of icepacks. "It's just some migraines that's all," she said as she placed the packs on the sleeping pair. "They insisted on staying with their sister, so I'm taking care of them today."

"How's Blueberrie doin'?"

The nurse pony frowned as she glanced at the mare in the center. She was thrashing about just like she had been the previous day. "She's alive." The nurse sighed and glanced up to Big Mac. "Twilight Sparkle wasn't able to dispel the spell, but she's doing some more research today. Maybe she'll have a breakthrough." She stared at the mare for a moment more before leaving the trio alone.

"So that's why you're here." Rainbow Dash said as she looked at the squirming mare. "I thought you were visiting Pinkie's other sister." She pointed to the gray pony on the other side of the beds.

"Nope." Big Mac shook his head. "Ah'm here visitin' Blueberrie. Is that why you're here?" As he spoke he noticed a new pony enter the hospital carrying a bouquet of flowers.

Rainbow Dash shook her head. "I came to see Pinkie actually. Looks like she's out though."

The pink pegasus who had just arrived set her flowers down on Blueberrie's bed and took a seat next to Big Mac. "Hey Big Mac," she said. She then turned and smiled at Rainbow Dash. "Nice to see another of our regular's here," she said," Are you visiting Blueberrie too?"

"Pinkie actually," she said as she shook her fellow pegasus's hand. "So why are you visiting? I didn't think most ponies knew Pinkie's sisters."

"Actually," she said gazing somberly at the blue earth pony on the hospital bed," Blueberrie there is my fillyfriend."

Rainbow Dash smiled and nodded for a moment. "So Blueberrie's a filly-fooler huh?" She glanced downward at the pink pony in front of her. "I guess that does explain a lot," she mumbled.

The group glanced upward at the sound of an opening door to see that Bon Bon and Breezy had arrived with a couple bags of sandwiches in tow. "I told you they'd be here," Bon Bon said to her companion.

"Glad I didn't waste the bits," he said as they approached. "Who's this filly," he said looking at

Rainbo Dash.

“You know Rainbow Dash, Breezy.” Bon Bon and Breezy took a seat next to Heart Throb. “The real question is why she’s here.”

“She’s visitin’ Pinkie Pie,” Big Mac said.

It was obvious that until now the mare and stallion had not noticed the occupants of the other two beds. “I guess drinking too much runs in the family.” Bon Bon giggled.

“Well at least that means we have an extra sandwich for Rainbow Dash.” Breezy scrounged through the bag. “Do you want rose petal on rye, or daffodil on wheat?”

The sandwiches were passed around and the group shared a comfortable lunch together. At least, it was as comfortable as things could get in a hospital. The group remained around the beds until about six when Heart Throb was forced to leave for work. Together the group decided to make their usual trip to the bar a little early.

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Big Mac, Bon Bon, and Breezy took their usual booth upon entering the bar. Despite Bon Bon’s offer to join them, Rainbow Dash said, she’d prefer to drink at the counter and headed there. Heart Throb took the groups orders and headed to the bathroom to change into her uniform.

Breezy chose to stop by the bathroom himself, leaving Bon Bon and Big Mac alone. The mare smiled brightly at the stallion across from her. “So, Big Mac, are you excited? I hear Caramel’s coming home tomorrow.”

“How d’you know that?”

“Never mind how I know. Just answer the question. Are you happy he’s coming home?”

“Eeyup,” Big Mac said unenthusiastically. He was happy to see Caramel again, but in truth excited wasn’t quite the word he would use. He couldn’t help but be worried about the talk he would have to have with the colt when he got home.

“Glad to see it,” Bon Bon said. Obviously she failed to notice the lack of enthusiasm. “You two are such an adorable couple.” Bon Bon sighed.

“You okay Bon Bon?” Big Mac asked.

“I’m fine,” she said turning away from Big Mac and facing the door. ”It’s just that this whole thing with you two has gotten me thinking a lot about Lyra.”

“Whole thing?” Some panic edged into Big Mac’s voice. Did Bon Bon know about Karamel?

“Oh right I’m not supposed to talk about it.” The cream mare sighed and turned to face him once more. “Can I tell you a secret Big Mac?”

“What is it?”

Bon Bon paused and her smile grew a bit wider as she stared at the stallion. “Never mind,” she said,” I shouldn’t bother you with it.” Once again she turned to look at nothing in particular. “Besides it doesn’t matter anymore. It’s just ancient history.”

The table was silent until Heart Throb and Breezy returned with their drinks. “You two sure took your time,” Bon Bon punched Breezy playfully as he took his seat.

“I’m sorry your majesty,” the colt joked,” I promise next time I’ll stay while we wait for our drinks.”

Heart Throb let loose a laugh. “Since you guys are here so early would you like something to eat? We don’t have much, but I could get you some pretzels or something.”

Big Mac noticed his stomach growling and said,”That’d be great.”

“Alright. I’ll be back with those in a jiffy.” The waitress smiled and headed to the counter.

Big Mac barely got a drink of his cider before Breezy started talking to him. “So, Big Mac, are you excited for Caramel coming home tomorrow?”

Big Mac stared at him silently for a moment. “I already asked him that Breezy,” Bon Bon said.

“Without me?” The colt looked surprised. “You couldn’t wait for five minutes?”

“You didn’t miss anything. All he said was ‘Eeyup’.” Bon Bon did a rather horrible impression of the stallion on the last word that caused him to smile.

Breezy turned his attention back to the red colt across from him. “Is that true Big Mac?”

“Eeyup,” he said eliciting a laugh from the pair across from him.

Heart Throb returned a minute later with a large bowl of pretzels and set it down in the middle of the table. “Nopony ever orders these things, so I convinced boss to give you the whole bowl at a huge discount. It’s only one bit.”

“One bit fer a bowl this big?” Big Mac commented. “Might as well be givin’ ‘em away.”

The bowl went quickly and proved to be surprisingly filling. By the time it was finished with Big Mac almost felt like he had eaten a real dinner. When it was finished Bon Bon and Breezy stepped out. “I hope you don’t mind us leaving early Big Mac, but Lyra’s been worried about me lately and Breezy here has some work to do.”

“A shipment of new fans is supposed to arrive at the store today,” Breezy smiled.

“Now now Breezy don’t get too excited. It’s just fans after all.” Bon Bon punctuated her sentence with yet another playful punch to Breezy’s stomach. “See you later Big Mac.” The pair waved goodbye to the colt as they left.

“Ah’ guess Ah’ll just walk ‘round the bar fer awhile then.” Big Mac moved out of the booth.

Heart Throb nodded. “Okay. I’ll be in the corner if you need anything.” With that she trotted off.

Big Mac headed to the counter to see Rainbow Dash talking with a mare in a pair of ridiculous looking purple glasses. For some reason they struck him as incredibly familiar. The mare behind the glasses was a white pony with a wild blue mane. “I’m telling you Dash you’ve got to try one of these things,” she said,” I think it’s called a Mojito and it’s the most delicious drink ever.”

Rainbow Dash just laughed before noticing Big Mac pull up a stool. “Oh hey Applejack’s brother. Vinyl this is Big Macintosh. Big Mac, this is Vinyl Scratch.”

“Nice to meet ya’.” The filly and Big Mac exchanged a quick hoof-shake.

“Vinyl here just got back from a big gig in Manehattan,” Rainbow Dash said after the introductions were finished.

“Yeah. Then I heard that the Wandering Ram had moved to Ponyville and I had to check it out. I’ll admit that I was surprised to see Dash here though.” The mare gave her friend a jab in the shoulder.

Rainbow Dash laughed and returned the favor before turning back to Big Mac. “Me and her were going to head out, but I wanted to talk to you before we left.”

“Why would ya’ wanna talk to me?” the red colt asked.

Rainbow Dash blushed and leaned in close. “I just wanted to say thanks again,” she whispered. After that she hopped off her bench and waved to him on the way out. “See you later Big Mac.”

Vinyl smiled as the filly headed out and hopped off of her own stool. “I don’t know where she thinks she’s going alone,” she said. After a brief laugh she turned to Big Mac. “By the way,

somepony outside said he was looking for you. Unless there's another big red stallion in here somewhere that I'm not seeing." With a wave and a "Seeya," the mare headed out the door.

Big Mac took a quick look around the bar to see if Karamel had arrived without him noticing. After deciding that it was safe to leave, he headed outside to see Film Reel sitting just out of sight of the bartender and busily punching a typewriter. Big Mac watched perplexed for a moment by the dexterity of the colt as he somehow managed to pound the keys with his hooves.

"You wanted to see me," he said after he managed to regain his train of thought.

The colt slid the typewriter back to its standard position with an audible click and looked up. "Hey Mac. I see you got my message."

"What was it ya' wanted?"

"I just needed to know what was going on in the bar. I figured you're always in there, so I told the first pony I saw to go get you." The colt slid his typewriter aside and stood up. "So, have you learned anything interesting?"

"Nope. And to be frank, Ah' don't even know what it is yer lookin' for."

Film Reel sighed. "I knew a layman wouldn't be able to spot it. I'm looking for everything Mac. Anything could blow this story wide open." The colt stood on his hind legs and spread his arms wide to emphasize this point. After he landed he just glared at Big Mac. "I'm surprised you haven't been looking into this more. I thought you and that gray pony from yesterday were investigating this."

"Nope. That was just her."

Film Reel just sighed. "I'm never gonna be able to get this thing written at this point," he grumbled and heaved his typewriter onto his back. "You're sure you don't know anything? Last night you said she was a friend of yours."

"Sorry. Ah' don't know anythin' but how she's doin'. You can see that at yerself the hospital."

Film Reel shrugged. "I guess I'll head to the hospital then. Maybe I can interview the family or something." He trotted off. "Seeya in the papers Mac," he said as he headed toward the hospital.

Confident he was finished with Film Reel, Big Mac headed back inside to wait for Karamel. On his way in he was passed by Heart Throb on her way out early again. The unicorn at the bar glanced up at him as he entered. "Cud. I knew I shouldn't have let her go," he mumbled. "Do

you want anything to drink?"

"Ah'm good thanks. Ah've still got some cider Ah' think." Big Mac took a seat at the booth and drank his cider while he waited. It was around eight-thirty when the unicorn finally entered the bar and sat down.

"Glad to see you got my note," he said. "An appletini here bartender."

Big Mac took in a deep breath. "Karamel, Ah' need to talk to you 'bout somethin'."

"Okay, but let me go first. I'm the one who left a note after all."

Big Mac nodded. He didn't want to be here long than he had too, but he was still having trouble thinking of what to say. This would at least buy him some time to figure out the words.

The bartender arrived with Karamel's drink and he gulped it down before starting. "I told you in the note that tonight was my last night in town right?" Big Mac nodded. "What do you think of coming with me?"

Big Mac's eyes popped open wider than they had been all week. "W-what?"

"I know it's kind of sudden, but I really like you big guy." The unicorn chuckled. "Besides, it's not like you've got anything holding you back after all."

"Karamel Ah' can't-"

"Think about it. You could be free from all that silly farm work and that judgmental family of yours. Not to mention," the colt slid his hoof across the table," We could be together."

Big Mac closed his eyes and lowered his head. Things were just getting worse. This poor colt actually cared for him.

"I'm not really used to travelling with company," the colt continued,"But it can't be all bad. Especially when you have such nice company," he chuckled.

"Ah'm sorry Karamel."

The smile refused to leave the colts face. "You don't have to answer right away. I'll be here until tomorrow afternoon. We can talk then once you've had more time to," the colt inched ever closer," think."

"Ah'm sorry fer what Ah' have to tell you."

A look of concern finally started to show. “Like I said. It can wait until tomorrow.”

“Let me talk Karamel.” The colt backed away. “To start ya’ need to know that Ah’m not a secret colt cuddler.”

“Then why were you so eager to have me jump out the window?” The unicorn chuckled nervously.

“The truth is, Ah’ already have a colt.” The smile on Karamel’s face faded instantly. “His name is Caramel.”

Suddenly the smile jumped back. “Oh I see. You’re joking. You had me going there for a minute. That poker face of yours is pretty impressive.”

“It’s the truth.” The smile once more disappeared. “Ah’ never meant to lead you on, or to cheat on him. To be honest Ah’m still not sure how any of this happened.” Big Mac sighed. “But it did anyway. Ah’m sorry.”

“I don’t like the idea of being the other stallion big guy.” Karamel angrily rose from the booth. “But my offer still stands.” Big Mac looked up to see an almost frightening smile on the colt’s face. “Just be sure to drop the dead weight before you come see me okay.” With that the stallion strode calmly out of the bar leaving Big Mac to his thoughts.

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Somehow, despite the turmoil of the previous night and the new turmoil that was bound to ensue in the morning, Big Mac actually got through the night in peace for the first time in almost a week. He awoke in his room to the sound of knocking.

The first thing he did was check to make sure that Karamel hadn’t snuck in the previous night and he was pleased to find the room empty. “Come in,” he said as he climbed out of bed.

He was surprised to see the pony to open the door was not his sister, but his colt Caramel. “Good morning Big Mac,” the stallion said as he entered the room. Before Big Mac could even say hello the brown colt trapped him in an embrace. “It’s good to see you again,” he said warmly.

“Caramel,” Big Mac mumbled sadly. He couldn’t bring himself to return the embrace.

“Are you okay?” Caramel asked. After releasing Big Mac from the hug and examining him for a moment, the colt’s expression dimmed. “Are you still having nightmares?”

Big Mac shook his head. “That’s not it.”

“Then what’s wrong? Are you sick?” Caramel placed a hoof on the stallion’s forehead, and Big Mac reflexively backed away.

“Caramel-“ he began to speak, but was cut off by a sound coming from the window. Both colts turned to see a yellow unicorn climb into the room.

“Hey big guy,” Karamel said as he heaved himself into the room. “Good morning,” he chuckled.

“Big Mac who is this?” Caramel asked. Big Mac was too stunned to answer. All he could do was stare at the grinning unicorn in front of the window.

“You must be Caramel,” the unicorn said as he extended his hoof for a shake. “I’m a friend of Big Mac’s from the bar. I’ve was hoping to meet you.”

Caramel was clearly confused, but he approached the strange unicorn nonetheless. “Okay,” he said as he approached,” Why did you climb in through the window?” He reached out to shake the yellow colt’s hoof, but was surprised to find himself flung towards the open window.

Big Mac was snapped out of his stupor by the scream as his colt flew out of the room. Without thinking he leapt for the window and managed to catch Caramel before he fell too far. He was barely hanging on by his hind legs. Big Mac managed to heave them both back into the room. When they both managed to stand they found themselves looking at an angry yellow unicorn.

“Didn’t I tell you to drop the dead weight big guy?” Despite the anger in his expression, Karamel spoke with a frightening calm.

“What the hay was that about,” Caramel shouted.

Karamel glared at the caramel colt next to Big Mac for a moment before lowering his head. “You’re in the way Caramel. So I’m going to have to move you.” Without another word the unicorn charges straight at the confused stallion.

Caramel was clearly too frightened and confused to move, but Big Mac once again reacted without thinking and pushed his lover out of the way towards the door. He heard a crash behind him and turned to see that the unicorn had managed to lodge himself in the wall. “Hey big guy,” he chuckled nervously,” Could you help me out a little here. I seem to be stuck.”

“Let’s get out of here Caramel,” Big Mac said as he helped the colt to his feet.

“Hey big guy don’t run,” the colt chuckled nervously as the pair headed out the door.

Big Mac and Caramel stopped dead as soon as they left the room. Big Mac stared in terror and

Caramel stared in confusion, at the labyrinth laid out before them. “Get back here!” A voice screamed from behind them. They turned to see that the apple home had vanished and instead behind them was a gigantic half-demonic unicorn.

One half of the creature looked just like the Karamel Big Mac had seen many nights over the course of the week, but the other half was a blackened soulless husk of a pony with nothing but a distorted black hide and a clear eye.

“W-what’s going on Big Macintosh?” the colt beside him asked.

Big Mac grabbed the colt’s hoof and started galloping as best as he could. “Ah’ll explain later just run.”

He charged through the maze with his colt in tow and the unicorn behind in pursuit. “Just let him go big guy,” the demon said in its horrifically happy voice as it threw bolts of lightning at the pair. “He’s just dragging you down.”

The maze was the most complicated Big Mac had seen yet, but Caramel proved surprisingly helpful considering his confusion. He pointed out several turns that Big Mac would have normally missed allowing to keep pace just ahead of the monster. “Stop running,” the specter cooed,” I just want to kill the pony with the stupid mullet. You’ll be fine.”

Big Mac wasn’t even listening to the voice as he charged. The only thing in his head was that Caramel needed protection. Nothing else ran through his mind.

Eventually the couple managed to reach the all too familiar doorway and without even a moment of thought Big Mac bucked it down with all his force. The monster behind them screamed in pain as the light shined through the portal.

Caramel stared in horror as the beast dissolved behind them. “B-Big Macintosh,” he said,” What just happened?”

“It don’t matter Caramel.” Big Mac reached to embrace the colt but he backed away.

“What are you saying? Of course it matters,” Caramel shouted in a panic. “Why was that crazy unicorn trying to kill me? A-and what is this place? What was that thing? What in Celestia’s name is going on?”

Big Mac reached out his hoof to turn the colt’s gaze back to him. He gazed calmly into Caramels eyes and said,” What’s important is you’re safe.”

Tears came to the colt’s eyes as he leapt into the stallions arms, and together they traveled through the doorway.

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Big Mac sprung up in his bed and looked around his room. He had awoken once more alone, and in a cold sweat.