

Chapter 4

It was finally time. After spending the whole day bouncing around several of her friends homes, Fluttershy had at last arrived at her final destination, the elegant cloud that Rainbow Dash called home. She could not help but marvel that even her dwelling seemed to hold the grace and beauty of the Pegasus she had fallen for. With the added fading glow of a setting sun only helping to make the structure stand out all the more. Fluttershy took a deep breath and took to the air, landing gracefully on the front steps of the cloud home. Fluttershy paused for a few seconds more to marvel at the structure, wondering if the interior was as exquisite as the exterior.

Fluttershy gathered up her nerves and trotted up to the front door as boldly as she could. She reached out with a hoof and cautiously knocked on the door, the sound barely audible due to the door being made out of cloud. The pony's meek attempt at a knock did not help any. To Fluttershy's shock, an answer did come, but from behind her instead of through the door: "Hey Fluttershy! What brings you up here?"

With a squeak Fluttershy launched herself into the air in shock, this time with no tree to get caught in. Fluttershy merely ended up faceplanting into the cloud, burying half her body into its white fluffy softness. Fluttershy's rear legs futilely kicking in the air as she tried to free herself. Dash found the whole display hilarious, quickly bursting into a fit of laughter before moving to help her trapped friend. "Sorry Fluttershy, heh heh, should have remembered how easily scared you get," said Dash as she quickly hoisted Fluttershy free from the thick fluff .

"Oh... um... yes," was all Fluttershy was able to squeak out. Her resolve had quickly melted away - not only was she face to face with Rainbow, she was also surprised at how quickly she had got herself stuck in something, again.

Dash, on the other hoof barely noticed Fluttershy's apprehension, though considering the pegasus' usual state this was not hard to imagine. Fluttershy shakily stood on her hooves, blushing fiercely at not only confronting Dash, but embarrassing herself in front of yet another friend. "So...", Dash hoofed a bit of cloud trying to think of something to diffuse the awkwardness "You want to come in for a drink?"

"Oh... um... that would be... nice," Fluttershy said, her blush deepening, even though she knew Dash meant nothing by the section a small section of her mind could not help but cheer in joy over such a simple invite.

The two moved into the cloud home and Fluttershy took in the building's interior. The

inside, to Fluttershy's surprise, was rather plain - there were only a few pieces of furniture, most of which seemed to be floating rather haphazardly about the living space. Almost none of them held any definable shape. Only the two closest to the floor had something identifiable, a couch and a table respectively. Rainbow Dash, meanwhile, had disappeared into one of the rooms as Fluttershy took everything in. Other than the lack of furniture the only other noticeable feature was the trash scattered everywhere. Dash might have taken great care in the exterior of her home, but apparently the same attention to detail was rather lacking within. Fluttershy wondered if Dash ever had many visitors in her home to begin with as she trotted over to the couch, trying not to step on the various pieces of clutter. With a quick brush of her wings Fluttershy cleared off a spot on the couch, settling down to wait for Dash. "So what brings you all the way up here?" came Dash's voice, mixed with the sound of rustling items.

"Well... I..." While Fluttershy wanted to tell Dash exactly why she had made the visit. She once again found herself hopelessly mute in the presence of her crush.

Dash reappeared seconds later, carrying two cans under her wings. She plopped down on the 'couch' next to Fluttershy, handing her one of the beverages that she now recognized as soda. Fluttershy thanked Dash and opened the can, taking a few small sips. "I haven't seen you around recently Fluttershy. How are things going for you?" Dash asked.

Fluttershy gulped. She wanted so badly to talk to Dash, but her mouth felt like it had been filled with sand and glue. She took another sip, the somewhat sugary drink easing her parched mouth. Fluttershy fidgeted with her can, focusing steadily on it instead of Dash. Gathering as much of her will as possible she finally managed to find her voice "I have... been going through a bit of a rough spot lately."

Dash nodded a bit as she took a swig of her own drink. "Anything I can help with?"

Fluttershy squeaked, "um... it sort of... involves you."

"Come again?"

Fluttershy shifted in her seat trying to figure out what to say next and more importantly - how to say it. She opened her mouth but once more no sound came out. Fluttershy took another sip from her drink, and with a deep breath tried to speak. "Well... um, what would you do... if you really liked something... but did not know if you could have it?"

Dash ran a hoof through her mane as she thought. "I've never really thought much about that kind of stuff. I suppose I would still try and go for it. I mean if it was cool enough that I wanted to get it, then it has to be worth the effort right? I mean it would have to be awesome, to have attracted the attention of an amazing pony like me. Right?" Dash glanced over at her friend, wondering why Fluttershy would even need to ask such a question "Why? Is there something you wanted Fluttershy?"

“Um...” Fluttershy trembled slightly, trying her hardest to say something, anything. She only managed a squeak.

Dash gave the shy pony a rather odd look, sure Fluttershy scared easily but this was getting ridiculous. “You okay Fluttershy?” she asked looking over her trembling friend with concern. Fluttershy only retreated more into her mane.

“Look Fluttershy, something is bothering you. You thought it was bad enough that you came to me for help. Now I can’t help you unless you actually tell me what’s wrong.”

Fluttershy said nothing.

Dash groaned, a hoof rubbing the side of her head in frustration. Fluttershy wanted to say something, anything, to calm Dash down and explain her situation. The words she so desperately wanted to speak had become a jumbled mess in her head, tying themselves in a knot making any attempt at using her voice impossible. Fluttershy risked glancing back at her friend, hoping that maybe she could gain some kind of insight to her thoughts. All she saw was an empty couch.

Panic gripped her heart. *I did something wrong*, she thought *Dash hates me now I’m sure of it!* Fluttershy did not know what to do. Her instincts said run, but her body felt like it had turned to stone. “AHA! So that’s where I left you,” Dash’s voice drifted down from the upper rooms, the pegasus herself following soon after.

Dash paused in front of the couch giving Fluttershy an odd look. “You okay Shy? You kinda look like you have just seen a dragon or something.”

Fluttershy barely moved, only the slightest nod of acknowledgement followed.

Dash shrugged before gingerly laying down a small rectangular box in front of Fluttershy, beaming happily at her friend. “It’s a bit early I know, and I don’t know if it will help you any, but right now it looks like you could use something awesome.”

Fluttershy stared at its blank surface as if it was some foreign object. “Well don’t just sit there open it!” Dash said with a slight twinge of glee in her voice.

Sitting down her drink, Fluttershy picked up the box and gently nudged it open. Within was a necklace, with a simple gold chain a light pink colored pendant, a small butterfly was engraved into the center. She looked back and forth between Dash and the necklace. Her mind racing at the possibilities as to what it meant. “Well you gonna try it on or what?” Dash beamed at her friend.

Fluttershy looked back at the necklace before she slightly mumbled "Could you...um help me get it on?"

"Course Fluttershy!" Dash quickly grabbed the necklace and placed it around Fluttershy's neck. The shy pony moved her rather long mane out the way so that her friend could more easily clasp the pendant around her. "There, looks good on ya," Dash gave the pendant a quick shine up before letting it hang freely around Fluttershy "well what do you think?"

For what seemed like ages Fluttershy merely stared at the little pendant that now rested along her neck. "Its beautiful,"

"That's not even the best part!" said Dash, her joy at seeing Fluttershy with her gift was blatant.

Fluttershy turned to Dash in confused excitement. "Here let me show you," Dash reached down and gently pressed down on the tiny butterfly engraving. In seconds a bright series of colors spread out across the surface before it returned to its normal pinkish color. Fluttershy could not understand what had just happened. She stared at the pendant almost half expecting it to explode.

"What, what was that?" was all she could say.

"Just something I had Twilight help whip up! Since you did kinda help me get my cutie mark and all. I mean I only really entered that race because those bullies were picking on you. I couldn't stand it and I just had to teach them a lesson, then BOOM my first ever sonic rainboom!" Dash leaped up into the air spreading her arms wide for emphasis before settling back down on the couch "Its all thanks to you Fluttershy, so I figured what better gift to get you then a little pendant that lets you have little rainbooms wherever you go! Isn't that so awesome," Dash squealed a bit thanks to her own memories of the pendant idea and the day she got her cutie mark.

"Dash....I don't know what to say," Fluttershy was transfixed by the pendant having pressed it several times, intently watching the display of colors flash across it again and again.

"Heh, no need to thank me. I know I was supposed to save it for tomorrow as a surprise but it seemed like the perfect time to give it to you. I mean sure you tend to act all shy and scared all the time but, I don't know you just really looked like you needed some cheering up. You did say you had a rough week right?"

"Tomorrow?" Fluttershy tore her gaze from the pendant and gave Dash a curious look.

"Um...it's your birthday tomorrow right?"

Fluttershy merely stared in confusion

“Don’t tell me you forgot your own birthday.” Dash tilted her head slightly not quite believing that Fluttershy forgot what tomorrow was.

It took a few seconds for Fluttershy to realize that she had. She had been so focused on figuring out her feelings that she had lost all track of what the date was. “I..I suppose I did.”

“BAHAHAHAHA,” Dash fell back onto the cloud couch trying to catch her breath “and here I thought Pinkie was the scatterbrained one. Must have been something really big on your mind for you to forget your own birthday”

Fluttershy was barely paying attention to what Dash was saying anymore. The fact that Dash had gotten her a gift, a birthday gift no less, specifically for her was beyond anything she could hope for. Not only that but it was a symbol of how she had helped Rainbow earn her cutie-mark, as well as Fluttershy earning hers at the same time. Her heart was soaring thanks to such a simple act of friendship for her fellow mare. Fluttershy’s mind locked up in a daze and refused to do anything but gaze at the object of her affections. Fluttershy wanted to say something, anything, to express her gratitude to Dash. All she managed was tiny squeak, quiet even by her standards.

Fluttershy finally managed to tear her eyes away from Dash, focusing back onto the pendant. “Um...Dash...” she mumbled pressing the pendant a few more times trying to find the courage to speak again “I...think...I....love you” Fluttershy’s voice growing quieter and quieter as she tried to speak some of the most important words of her life.

Dash, finally coming down from her laughing spree, wiped her eyes and looked at Fluttershy. “I didn’t quite catch that Fluttershy. Could you say it again?” Dash leaned in closer, not wanting Fluttershy to have to repeat the same thing too many times.

Fluttershy took one more deep breath, steadying herself “I love you” she squeaked.

This time Dash heard it. “Well, why wouldn’t you? I mean I am awesome and I got you that awesome gift and...” Dash paused, realization flowing over her face. Now Rainbow Dash was not the cleverest of ponies, but she was not completely oblivious either. Dash leaned back on the couch, running a hoof through her mane as she tried to process everything. Fluttershy watched as Dash’s face quickly changed. Going from a look of deep thought, to understanding, to concern, and finally a sort of calm acceptance.

Silence fell over the living room. Fluttershy hated it, as every second that ticked by filled her with dread. She desperately wanted Dash to say something, anything. Even if it was rejection, Fluttershy would have welcomed any end to this all encompassing silence.

"Is this why you have been avoiding me recently?" Dash asked finally filling the calm, her voice carrying neither anger nor even mild dislike.

Fluttershy hung her head, squeezing her eyes closed, fearing that Dash was about to reject her. "Yes."

"Did you really think me, of all ponies, would hate you for something like that?" Dash almost chuckled a bit at even the possibility over abandoning a friend.

Fluttershy looked up to Dash, the rainbow pony sitting mere inches away. Dash's eyes were filled with kindness and happiness, no hint that Fluttershy declaration would hold any negative sway over her. Fluttershy began to cry, not tears of sadness, but ones of joy. Fluttershy tackled Dash, holding as tight as she could to the cyan pony, sobbing her eyes out in happiness.

"Hey easy there Fluttershy, you wouldn't want to hurt the pony you love right?" Dash chuckled holding Fluttershy close as her yellow friend released years worth of pent up repressed emotion. Dash attempted to do her best to calm her friend down, not quite knowing what to do other than just be there for her. Dash patted Fluttershy on her head "There...there, um you gonna be alright?"

Slowly Fluttershy pulled herself off Dash, she wipes at her eyes smiling happily at the rainbow pegasus. "Yes, I think so. I am sorry for all of this Dash."

Dash pulled herself up "Heh, no problem."

Silence seemed to spread out between the two once again, this time the silence carried with it a strange peace. Almost as if a hidden weight had been released from both of their soldiers. Dash rubbed the back of her head "So," Dash looked Shy over getting a slightly mischievous smile "wanna go out sometime?"

Fluttershy's eyes went wide "You...you mean go out, out?"

"Well yeah, why not? I mean we have been friends forever so why not give it a shot?"

"Oh...um...yes...I...oh my," Fluttershy felt her face grow hot as the idea of going on a date with Dash attempted to find its way into her mind.

"The only problem," Dash rubs her chin "is what our friends would think about all of this,"

"Oh well I sort of...talked with everyone, well everyone but Pinkie, before I came up here. They all seemed very supportive, of well who I like." Fluttershy was practically beaming by this point, her cares having melted away.

“Well that settles it then.” Dash clopped her hooves together, a look of odd determination crossing over her face. “For your birthday tomorrow, we’re going out on a date. It’s gonna be awesome!”

Fluttershy remained in Dash’s living room for what felt like an eternity. She could barely remember what they had discussed. She was almost certain that Dash had passed some ideas for their date to Fluttershy, but the pegasus was not paying much attention. With a hug, a warm goodbye, and promises of more ‘awesome’ things to come tomorrow night the two fliers parted ways. With that the yellow pegasus found herself staring out over Ponyville from the air, the sun having just set and a full moon rising over the horizon.

Fluttershy sailed from one cloud to another, practically leaping off of one and onto the other not quite flying. Her heart was soaring so high that she could have sworn she wouldn’t have to even beat her wings to fly. She had confessed, and not only were her feelings not rejected but she had secured a date with the mare she loved. On her birthday of all days too!

I have a date with Rainbow Dash. I have a Date with Rainbow Dash. I have a date With Rainbow Dash! The phrase tumbled around and around in her head, never seeming quite real despite it all happening just an hour or so ago.

With a gentle shove Fluttershy practically skipped into her cottage home. It felt like it had been years since she had last set hoof within the peaceful structure. She felt like the familiar scents and sights of her abode had been replaced with something entirely new and fresh. Fluttershy practically glided up to her bedroom, snuggling into the sheets eagerly awaiting very pleasant dreams.