

Through The Eyes Of Another Pony

Chapter Ten: What's That Chapter? Kill Them All? GOOD IDEA!

Go Go Author Page! Form Blazing Commentary! BWOOOOONG~!

So let's start with last chapter and the copious amount of errors you've no doubt spotted. It goes like this: I posted the chapter for the proofies and sent it to Sethisto for posting in the queue. I figured we had plenty of time since it usually takes a thirty-six hours or more for it to appear on EQD~! Imagine my surprise when it posted less than two hours later, courtesy of Sethisto's kindness. Maybe he reads this fic or just had a spontaneous moment to throw it up there. Who knows, right? Anyway~! It was a mad scramble to get it edited and posted. Surely enough, we powerhoused through it and got that shite done in record time.

Then tragedy struck. Google Docs was having technical issues and started reverting to earlier saves... Saves that were sans editing. >.< It hurt right there in my soul. So I edited it again. And again. And again. And even still, it reverted to a save not too long ago where it was in the middle of editing. WierdPlatformer (no typo) suggested that I take it down long enough to get it to stick, but I love my readers more than I love formality, thus I left it up there and took the embarrassment. :(:(

Onto more bad news! Comcast sucks. Badly. While their service was extremely reliable in the Internet department (not so much for cable), we were given a bottom line on our bill which was roughly half of what we were actually getting charged. We dropped them. Unfortunately, I was in the middle of this chapter when we lost our connection, so I've literally been staying after work for hours on end to finish this bad boy up for you guys. Because I love you, remember? :D However, the boss says that's no bueno and that I need to go home. Not because he's a jerk, but he does after hours work from our main station and can't do so with me hogging it up to write pony stuffies. :3 So until internet comes back, I'm going to be stuck unable to write for a bit, which is okay for me because I just uploaded 20,000 words in a single chapter. I need time to recuperate! Badly! XD

Less bad news! Ragnarok222 and Bugsydor have set up a DeviantArt page for all the fan art! <http://firewall-club.deviantart.com/> That's not bad news at all! That's awesome news! :D Yeehaw~! That's the way t'do it! You guys are welcome to upload anything you like fic related, ask whatever questions you want, and comment on anything and everything! Just submit yourself for an invite and you're in!

Even more awesome news!!! Bugsydor, Waffle911, Maenarion, and many more have set up a TVTropes page that is editable by anypony that wants to take part. :D [Link Is Here!](#) This stuff excites me! It makes me happy that there's a small community building within a community! Maybe we'll be a small country within a great empire and go attack the Prussians or something! Waaauuugh!

Oh! FimFlam released episode 10 of Mentally Advanced! :D I love that parody series, it's frigg'n amazing! This episode was such a great one, too! When Twilight made Applebloom cry and she started realizing she was turning into Trollestia, I couldn't stop laughing. Props to that guy for his hard work to make a more snarky/mature themed MLP. *RBD Salute*

Let's see, what else is shaking? That's all? Hmm... Oh well, I've run out of nonsense to feed you.

THEN IN THAT CASE, HAVE SOME EPIC FAN ART! All of these images can be found at deviant art! So if you like them, show the artists some love and comment on their stuff, alright? :D Today's art is brought to you by IceStormBoarder, Wrek, and Sir Cinnamon!

BOOOOYAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!! Over 100,000 words! How is that not mindblowing!?



This will make sense soon enough.



AZURE FLORA! Y U SO ADORABLE?!



Nightmare Moon wishes she was this awesome. Because she isn't.



Holy hell, there's a nyan-cat back there!



Ice Pony is so scary... At least he's protective of the prettiest pony ever! :3

So, you probably know the routine pretty well by this point. The routine being what I do when I wake up. I mean, it was never listed out before, but generally the first ten minutes of every day consist of this:

Step One: Yawn and stretch all over.

Step Two: Pull out a cigarette and light up.

Step Three: ????? Find food while/after burninating the cigarette.

Step Four: Profit.

That's pretty straightforward, isn't it? You know what that doesn't involve? That doesn't involve preceding steps. Meaning I'm supposed to get up... when I want to. But noooo~! That's not good enough for ponies. Do you know why that's not good enough for ponies? ME NEITHER!

"AH SAID WAKE UP!" Applejack hollered, ringing the world's largest triangle next to my head.

I lazily opened an eye before rolling over and smacking my dry lips a few times. She'd been at it for a while. It was like she took it as a personal challenge to wake me up, but it just wasn't happening though. I was enjoying my sleep on this incredibly comfortable log just on the edge of the apple orchard and I had no plans to change this winning strategy. I don't know why I was suddenly opposed to sleeping indoors, but being a pony had certainly changed my perspective on where you went to have a good time (it was rarely inside unless there was a party involved, by the way).

"Ugh," she sighed. I heard her drop the triangle as she groaned in frustration, "Firewall, I've got the biggest headache ever and ya ain't makin' it any easier on me. Now tell me how to git rid'a it!"

"Mmm?" I actually lifted my head in slight confusion, "Mmmhoo told you I'd be able to help with a headache?"

"Luna did!"

Of course she did.

"That little... Ugh, whatever. S'called a hangover," I murmured to her, cursing that indigo alicorn for spoiling a good rest with her trollyery.

"Beg yer pardon?" she asked me as I rolled back over lazily.

"You drank too much cider last night. The stuff that made you act so silly," I yawned again,

wiping at my eyes with a smirk, “And now you’re experiencing the magic of hangovers. S’like the magic of friendship, only less subtle and more painful.”

“I don’t rightly care what it’s called, sugarcube! Oh mah stars,” she gasped, rubbing her head in frustration, “How d’ya make it stop?”

I blinked and sighed before rolling off the log that I had spent the night on. I hit the ground gracefully (meaning like a rock) before yawning one last time and getting to my feet. Hooves. Whatever.

“AJ, I just want you to know, I’m showing lots of love by actually getting up to help you,” I mumbled sleepily before initiating Step Two: Pull out a cigarette.

“All Ah had to do was ask nicely?” she groaned, shaking her head before instantly regretting that, “Ah rang that dumb triangle fer nothin’?”

“Affirmative.” I lit that puppy up before initiating Step Three. “Okay, basically, we gotta get some greasy food. Unfortunately, we don’t have a McDonald’s in Appleloosa, so we’re going to have to go to the expert. Because I really don’t feel like cooking.”

“Have a what now?” she looked at me in confusion.

In my tired haze, I almost said ‘a restaurant that kills and serves chickens, pigs, and cows as food.’ Thankfully, I didn’t let that slip and instead just shook my head.

“Nothing.” I yawned one last time before getting to my feet. “Let’s just go see a pony that can do something about it.”

Five minutes later~

“Cookie!” I cried out, causing Applejack to wince, “Oh... Sorry.”

“S’alright there, darlin’.” She strained to smile at me.

We were back in that food line that had once been the saloon/bar-thingy. Fortunately, only a few ponies seemed to have overindulged during the night (or day, I really wasn’t able to track time anymore thanks to the never ending night (Looks like Nightmare Moon finally got her wish!) and NOT HAVING MY CELL PHONE). Cookie was hard at work, feeding what few ponies were in the line before us with an assortment of salads, baked goods, and the occasional bowl of candied carrots. As always, he was too busy to be bothered and merely waved at us, not even looking our way.

“AJ, use your feminine wiles on him,” I ordered jokingly as the ponies slowly moved along.

“Ah’m sorry, we’ve not met. Ah’m Applejack. Not Rarity. Ah’m not about to shake my tail just’a get a special order,” she griped under her breath.

“Man, you’re mean with your hangover gremlins,” I pointed out, a little surprised at her edgy response. “That was pretty harsh.”

She instantly looked as though she’d just cashed a reality check and was downcast with regret.

“That was an awful thing ta say,” she murmured softly, “Rarity didn’t deserve that a’tall.”

“I should hardly think not.” Rarity surprised us both by stepping alongside Applejack and frowning a tad, “I admit, I’m still in shock from such cruel words, Applejack.”

“Rarity! Ah... Ah didn’t mean it, I s-swear!” Applejack shook her head, regretting that action upon holding a hoof to her head, “Ahhh~...”

Rarity looked to me for an explanation, somewhat nonplussed.

“She’s a little ill from too much partying last night,” I supplied truthfully enough, “and it’s put her in a bad mood.”

“Ah promise, Ah’m just cranky, Rarity,” Applejack risked opening an eye, still looking downtrodden, “Forgive me?”

“Nopony is perfect all the time, there’s nothing to forgive amongst friends,” Rarity said with a smile, now a bit more understanding of the situation. She even gave AJ a friendly nuzzle before looking over to Cookie, “Now, it seems you need something particular supplied by our tireless chef here?”

Okay, Rarity was seriously trying to push Rainbow Dash out of first place in my book. I mean, I’m a really forgiving person, and I’ve been on the receiving end of close personal friends throwing me under the bus behind my back, so I can attest: It’s harder than it looks to simply let it go so quickly.

“Yeah, the quickest way, in my experience, to get rid of what AJ’s got is to eat a lot of greasy food. Don’t ask how, I don’t know why, it was a trade secret passed down by a friend who does a lot of partying.” I really did have no clue as to how it worked. It might have magical properties for all I knew. “So we were going to beseech our good friend Cookie and beg for special treatment.”

“Well, shall I ‘wave my tail’ and see what I can get done?” Rarity winked at Applejack, who in turn blushed shamefully.

“Applejack, I think you just got burned,” I chuckled, nudging her shoulder, “and I consider myself an expert on burning.”

Within a few more moments, we approached the food line and nodded at the yellow and white pony working furiously to fill orders AND cook. The dude had earned his place as the royal chef, it seemed. You don’t often see an Earth Pony with such talent, due to the fact that their magic was limited in certain areas, but Cookie definitely had it.

“Hello, Firewall,” he said with a tired nod, “What can I get you?”

“Hey, Cookie, you alright? C’mon, girls, let’s step to the side while he serves other ponies.” I pulled them along, letting the line continue.

“I’m pretty tired.” He shrugged, letting us know he was still, more or less, good to go.

“You need a break?” I was rather concerned. I didn’t know Cookie that well, but he came off to me as a workaholic kinda pony and would sooner pass out than let a job go unfinished.

“Not at all.” He shook his head, declining my offer to help. “I only just started, after all.”

“Yeah, but you’ve been wor-...” I started to contest his claim before getting an interrupting poke from Rarity’s horn.

“Ahem.” She gave a suggestive cough, reminding me that we were on a mission.

“Oh, right. Hey, Cookie, we need a special order for Applejack.” I put on a pleading pout-face.

Cookie did not look pleased by this concept, but he did not immediately voice an objection. After a few moments, he sighed and ran a hoof through his stark white mane.

“I’m rather busy, so if it’s not important,” he said, making sure to clarify from the start that he wasn’t going to be indulging anypony who didn’t care for what was on the menu.

“Oh, heavens, good sir, nothing along the lines of the whimsical.” Rarity butted in, smiling her blue-ribbon smile. “You see, my friend here is very ill, and she needs to eat a certain kind of food.”

“And sooner rather than later,” Applejack whined with a scowl, “Ah’m not sure just how much more’a this a pony can take.”

“Not to mention it’s likely more ponies are going to be showing up feeling likewise, so this may help make your day easier in the long run?” I suggested whilst smiling helplessly.

“Let’s hear it already,” Cookie served a plateful of candied carrots to the next pony in line before looking to us with a smirk, “And if it’s for the health of some lovely mare, I think I can help.”

Cookie Da Playah~! Applejack blushed before pulling her hat down a bit, smiling a tad despite her unenviable situation. We broke it down for him, and while he was skeptical at first, he took me at my word and surprised us with an awesome funnel cake of great proportions. AJ dug in lazily as Rarity and I chowed down on some candied carrots (which were like candied yams, only superior in every sense of the word! Cookie can cook for me any day he wants to. No more of this “I’m independent, I wanna do it myself~!” nonsense.). She was very disappointed when it didn’t work immediately, but after about fifteen minutes of complaining, she was definitely perking up.

“So, AJ, Cookie dropped a line on you,” I reminded her with a wink, “Whaddya think, Rare, he doesn’t look too bad. Maybe I need a lady’s eye to make a better assumption.”

“Which I can happily supply.” We were both enjoying Applejack’s silent blush. Rarity looked his way with a speculative expression. “Hmmm. Well, one must take into account all the subtle details. Such as how well kept his mane is.”

I gave her a look of askance, not entirely following her line of thinking.

“It ain’t all about looks, Rarity,” AJ pointed out, a little displeased with her supposed line of thinking, “Colts kin look just fine and still be... less than desirable. Not that... Aww... Shoot.”

Apparently, Cookie looks 'just fine' in Applejack's book.

“Oh, Applejack, there’s so much one can learn about a pony by just watching. Subtle details, darling, just look at him,” she pressed with a knowing smile, “Really, look at his mane and tell me what you see.”

I looked for a bit myself. His white mane was actually surprisingly well kept for a chef. It was long like Twilight’s but not frazzled or matted with sweat in the least.

“Looks fine enough, Ah suppose,” Applejack responded with a raised eyebrow.

“Indeed, but it is clean. Very clean. Note also his expression. How he’s not glaring intensely, but is simply without expression at all,” Rarity further pursued, “Not to mention how he’s not covered in grime or grease.”

“Ah see whatcha mean, but Ah’m not sure where we’re gettin’ at with this,” Applejack began to scrutinize him a bit more intently.

“Just from that, you can tell that he’s exceptionally skilled and dedicated to his trade,” Rarity said with a self-appreciating nod, “and that he has a token amount of appreciation for his appearance. He’s confident, capable, and enduring, you see. Anypony that isn’t so skilled would be sweating in a hot kitchen with their hair pulled back and their eyes scowling in a fierce determination, but Cookie doesn’t seem to be exhibiting any such difficulties in the least, other than a bit of fatigue from working so long. Almost reminds me of you, Applejack.”

Applejack continued to blush as she contemplated how she would respond to the subject. She did try to speak a few times, but she only managed to stutter out a few words before blushing even more. She actually began to frown, obviously not comfortable with our treatment.

“You turn any redder, AJ, and Red Delicious is going to have to think up a new name,” I said with a chuckle before batting at her hat to get her attention, “Hey, don’t sweat it. It ain’t like we’re asking you to go over and see if he’s single. Relax. You feeling any better, at least?”

“Startin’ t’get that way,” she murmured, smiling appreciatively, “Mah head don’t hurt at least. Just’a little queasy.”

“Probably just from so much funnel cake,” I nodded before getting up, “Alright, gals, I’ll leave you two to analyze Cookie s’more. Gotta see if Twilight kin use my help before attempting to go back t’sleep.”

I inwardly winced at how quickly I picked my southern accent back up. Growing up in Florida has that effect on you. It has every kind of accent you could imagine and growing up there simply teaches you how to quickly pick them up. It sounds two-faced, to be sure, but really it’s more along the lines of just respecting a person enough to identify with them. That’s how I always viewed it, anyway.

With a tummy full of candied carrots, I left the saloon/food bar thing and began to look around for Twilight. Looking down the street back towards the Town Square (Where they square dance), I spotted her and Luna on a soap box along with a crowd of ponies that surrounded them. It wasn’t just a handful asking what job they needed to handle next, it was much more. Almost a hundred of them, and I was probably low-balling that. I made my way over to the herd and watched with confusion as they all scampered off the street and out in front of shops. At first, I thought I had caused all the commotion, but as they dispersed, I noticed Storm Wing (sans armor!) and Rainbow Dash standing beside one another, looking up to Twilight and Luna. There were tons of hushed whispers that I couldn’t make out, so I decided to try my usual approach.

“Hey. Whaz everyponeh doin’?” I called out loudly, interrupting likely every train of thought within earshot.

“Hey, Firewall,” Luna smiled upon seeing me approach, “We’re going to have a race.”

“Seems Rainbow Dash can’t keep her big mouth shut.” Twilight further clarified with an amused roll of her eyes.

“Oh, I’m sure Captain Jackpony here didn’t do anything to provoke her,” I walked up and smiled at the two pegasi, “Seriously, though, both of you have the elephant sized egos and a lot of speed to back it up. Keep in mind, you just might hurt the other pony’s feelings if you win.”

“I’m so okay with that.” Dash snorted challengingly.

“I hope she cries,” Storm Wing said as he failed to resist the urge to smirk.

“Oh, we’ll see who cries.” Dash winked.

“I’ve not cried in over nine hundred years,” Storm pointed out with a laugh, “If you do win, which you won’t, I’ll just have to see about making space in the Archons for you.”

I shuddered at the idea. Rainbow Dash, the Sky Archon. Loud, brash, and fast as hell was bad enough without teaching it how to channel lightning or throw tornadoes about.

“Hah! Maybe if you fly half as good as the Wonderbolts!” she countered brazenly.

That’s when I noticed Storm Wing’s Cutie Mark. It WAS a Wonderbolts’ insignia. See, I had seen a few of the Wonderbolts here and there outside of their suits. They have their own cutie marks. I didn’t want to point this out and psyche out Dash in the process, so I simply sat on that knowledge and stepped aside. Twilight drew a starting line in the dirt for them as they braced down for takeoff. Rainbow Dash flapped her wings, smirking proudly as she let a sort of rainbow haze trail off and sparkle fancifully as it faded. Storm Wing, not able to see the details of her trick but able to sense the magic, pawed at the ground a bit before looking Dash’s way. His mane and tail fanning out as he slowly charged the air about him. With a final stomp, the electricity sparked around him brightly, crackling loudly as the audience responded with your typical sounds of awe. Oooo~ Ahhhh~... Whatever. Screw Captain Storm Wing for showing up Dashy in the showpony round.

“Just wait. Any second now they’re going to throw themselves at each other,” Twilight said with an exasperated sigh.

Luna let out a laugh, thoroughly enjoying the competitive air, “Question is, will it be to kiss each other or kill each other?”

“I’m not sure and I’m not sure I want to know,” Twilight answered, which rather perfectly reflected my feelings on the matter.

“So, what’s with the crowd? It’s not like we can watch them fly around in the dead of night, right?” I asked the two of them.

“New spell time!” Luna explained, her visage revealing her enthusiasm, “Are you ready?”

“My body is so ready!” I replied with a big smile, “Are we going to get Pay-Per-View?”

“Not sure what that is, but apparently this is another trick inspired by Luna’s... otherworldly influences,” Twilight said with a one-legged shrug, “So here goes.”

As Twilight began to cast her spell at Rainbow Dash, Luna did likewise at Storm Wing. The two ponies began to glow their respective fur coat colors, white and blue.

“Okay, that’s a step-up.” I nodded, “But what’s that got to do with human culture?”

Then they cast a spell together that created a large glass ball in the air that hovered over Town Square. It was roughly about the size of one of those screens in a sports stadium. Looking back now, after everything that had happened, it didn’t impress me very much in all actuality. I mean, yeah, I was definitely surprised, but you’d be shocked to discover how quickly one becomes numb to the surprises of magic.

“TV?” I gaped, my eyes widening as the glass ball displayed an exact replica of Rainbow Dash and Storm Wing at the starting line.

“TV,” Luna confirmed with a proud smile.

“This is how you... observed us, Firewall?” Twilight stared at the ball skeptically. “Seems highly impractical.”

“Well, the ones on Earth were generally rectangular and could get as small as a hoof or as big as a house,” I clarified a bit, “But that’s the general i-...”

“Today, please!” Rainbow Dash called out, her glaring smile letting us know that she was eager to get this race on the road. (Or Sky, whatever.)

“Oh, hold your horses!” Twilight called back, shaking her head with a sigh, “Let’s get this over with, everypony. ON YOUR MARK!”

They braced themselves down at the line once more.

“GET SET!” Twilight cried enthusiastically.

“This is gonna be good,” I murmured softly.

“GO!”

And they were off! To my shame, I blinked and missed it. Not the entire race, but their take off. I quickly looked at the globe and watched in awe as the two ponies soared like rockets with their own personal sets of afterburners. The ‘track’ was actually a set of waypoints that had to be flown through all around town. There were roughly two dozen of them and they were arranged in an erratic order that forced a few loops, hair pins, and two long straightaways.

“The race is ON, everypony!” I heard Pinkie Pie squeal above the crowd, sitting on top of one of the house’s second story balcony with a megaphone. “It’s Rainbow Dash in the lead around the first curve! Obviously, she has a leg up on maneuverability, but it seems Stormy is able to gain lost ground in the straightaways!”

Pinkie was right. I was constantly looking back and forth between the globe and the pair of lights burning up the sky, and while Storm Wing was gaining a lot of ground during any point in which he wasn’t turning, the first hairpin had definitely slowed him down. As he started to catch up, though, Dash put herself in front of him and kept herself there, able to turn more quickly than he was.

“Dashy’s not giving it up easy! She’s making it hard to get around, but... OH! That’ll teach HER not to underestimate the competition!” Pinkie was bouncing emphatically, looking as though she were about to explode from excitement. Storm Wing’s counter to Rainbow’s block-out was to bite her tail and literally yank her behind him, causing her to lose the lion’s share of her speed and putting her at a disadvantage.

“Not very fair,” I grumped aloud.

“Oh, and blocking Storm Wing is?” Luna countered, “She’s trying to beat a pegasus that’s been flying dangerously for a thousand years. She doesn’t stand a chance, talent or not.”

Then it became clear. Luna and I were NOT friends for the duration of this race. I looked at her and smirked daringly, to which she responded with a sneer of her own.

“If Dashy wins, I get to tape a trollface over your Cutie Mark for an entire day,” I confronted her confidence in Storm Wing.

“If Storm Wing wins, you have to dye your mane pink and let Rarity braid it.” She took my bet with a smile. An all too confident smile. As though she knew who would win already.

“No interference or the game is void!” I didn’t trust her as far as I could throw her!

“You’re no fun.” Her bottom lip poked out. I shouldn’t have been surprised that she had actually

planned to cheat.

“Hush, Woman, I’m watching the game!” I cried, looking back at the globe, “C’MON, DASHY! DADDY DOESN’T NEED A NEW DYE JOB!”

“You guys are so weird,” Twilight chuckled as she stared into the globe.

As the racers came to their first loop, Storm Wing actually twisted his turn to just barely pass through all the way points while losing as little speed as possible. I grimaced a tad but was happy to see that Dash took the inside of the loop at nearly the same speed, gaining quite a bit of distance in the process. They then turned up into the sky as they raced for the highest waypoint, which was definitely the longer of the two straightaways. To my dismay, I watched Rainbow Dash fall further behind as Storm Wing proved the more apt in top speed.

“Oh my gosh, Rainbow’s falling so far behind!” Pinkie gasped as she waved the Megaphone at the globe angrily, “DON’T LET HIM BEAT YOU, DASHY! SHOW’M YER STUFF!”

“Rainbow Dash, you can do it,” Fluttershy timidly waved at the globe, trying to cheer her friend on with the softest voice possible.

Storm Wing passed the sky-high waypoint and took an even greater lead by lightning striking down to the ground in almost an instant. I didn’t need to look at the globe to see the tumultuous explosion he had created upon impact, which put him very close to the next waypoint. As the globe moved back to Rainbow Dash, it became clear that she was smirking confidently still yet. She passed through the sky-high and began a very familiar dive, which immediately sent Fluttershy into a furiously excited cheer. Yes, everypony, it was obviously meant to be. She picked up speed as the Mach cone appeared around her, and before she was even halfway through the straightaway, the Sonic Rainboom erupted, illuminating the night sky as Dash became a beam of light.

“DASH’S SIGNATURE MOVE! THE SONIC RAINBOOM!” Pinkie was doing a fine emulation of Fluttershy’s leaping and screaming.

“YEEEEAAH-YUH, IT’S ON NOW!” I hollered energetically, glancing over to see Luna bite her lip worriedly.

Rainbow Dash was picking up both speed and ground on Storm Wing. Storm glanced over his shoulder as she neared and he kicked it into overdrive, narrowing the difference in speed by quite a margin. The effect was compounded by the fact that Rainbow Dash could not fly directly behind Storm Wing now, due to the fact that he was trailing a line of vicious lightning. Due to this fact, Storm Wing was forcing her to take the outside corners and able to just barely keep her from stealing the lead. It was the final hairpin, though, where him and Dash traded places, for while he had to slow down to keep from flying off course, Dash snapped around the corner at

an amazingly tight angle.

“RAINBOW DASH HAS TAKEN THE LEAD!” Pinkie Pie threw the megaphone into the sky, letting it bounce off some poor pony’s head before pulling out a second one and yelling into it just as fervently, “IS THIS THE END OF THE RACE?!”

“C’mon, Storm,” Luna groaned pitifully, “You can’t let some punk show you up.”

“Punks for the win, Luna,” I teased her happily as Rainbow Dash came around the next curve right over our heads.

As Dash and Storm came towards the final loop, Rainbow once again took the inside of the turn and was just about to exit the loop right as her opponent was entering it. Being that this brought them rather close to each other, Storm Wing pulled a dirty trick again and turned her way, clapping his hooves together to create a loud and blinding thunderstrike. Frustratingly enough, he got his desired effect and Dash was thrown off course, extremely disoriented by the flashbang. With her Sonic Rainboom momentum gone, she was no longer assured victory, despite the fact that she had brought herself back onto course in good time. As she came around the next turn, she found herself faced with the final straightaway and Storm Wing hot on her heels.

“Best break out the hair dye, Firewall,” Luna reminded me with a trollishly broad grin, “We both know he’s going to take the lead here.”

Predictably, Storm Wing began to overtake Dash. She tried to muscle in front of him again and even bucked him in the face when he got too close, causing him to slow down before catching back up. When she tried again, he dodged, grabbed hold of her tail and yanked. My heart fell as I watched her slow down before the real clincher came into play. She reacted rapidly by grabbing his mane after he released her (That’s why I don’t have long hair) and latched onto his back. For several seconds, she rode him through the straightaway, even taking the time to show off by waving at all of us through the globe.

“Yeeeeeeehaw!” I heard Applejack holler out, “That’s t’way ya do it, cowgirl!”

As they neared the final waypoint, Dash yanked hard on Storm Wing’s mane before reaching over to tilt one of his wings, forcing him to veer up and over the circle as she jumped off and flew backwards through the finish waypoint, holding her hooves behind her head with an easy going smirk.

“DASHY IS THE WINNER!” Pinkie Pie screamed, throwing the second megaphone into the air as the crowd roared in glee. Pranks and cheap tricks aside, they sure as hell put on a great show.

“I’m going to love taping that picture over your mark,” I taunted Luna with my best impression of the troll face.

“I bet you are,” she gave me an irritated smirk, “So, it was all a ploy to get your hooves on my flank, eh?”

“What!?” I was a tad shocked before narrowing my eyes and nodding enthusiastically, “Hells yeah. I saw it all in a vision and knew I had to make it happen! It was this one amazing moment where doves flew by and a heavenly white light was shining down upon your brand new trollface! And I’m gonna take a picture of me coppin’ a feel so that I can remember this day and all its GLORY~! And let’s not forget the final part to my master plan!”

“What’s that?” She rolled her eyes at me, amused, but still a tad bitter.

“LAUGH IN LUNA’S FACE ABOUT IT!” I shouted before hugging her neck and running away, “Later, Princess!”

“You’ll regret that!” she cried out at me as I continued to scamper away like a buffoon (to be clear, I am very much a buffoon. Deal with it. *shades*).

“You’ll regret your face!” I yelled back at her, thinking of the most childish response I could come up with, “Especially the one you’ll wear on your flank!”

I started to make a beeline for Rainbow Dash as she landed, but she was surrounded by friends and fans already, thus making her difficult to get to. Instead, I looked for Storm Wing, who was landing on the far side of town. I decided to give my congratulations to Dashy later and began to make my way over to Storm Wing. No, I wasn’t going to go rub it in his face. Maybe just a smidge, but that’s to be expected. If Luna had lost, I’d have put up a billboard or something, maybe would have resorted to hijacking a satellite to broadcast my glee. I know, that sounds so mean, but chances at trolling Luna back were few and far between whereas I’m not but troll bait a la carte, apparently.

It took me a while to locate the jerk, but eventually I wound up spotting him drawing water out of a well. I cantered up to him as he set a full bucket down, and he nudged a bowl in my direction as a salutation.

“Sup, chief!” I picked up my bowl with a bit of magic and scooped some water out before taking a big gulp. It was colder than I expected, that was for sure, which made me even happier to drink it.

“Hello, Firewall,” he responded in kind, taking his bowl in mouth and scooping his own portion out.

Rather than dive right into it, we spent the next several minutes emptying that bucket of water. I couldn't tell if he was bitter or just contemplative, but one thing was for certain, he seemed to be very thirsty. I considered telling him about Azure Flora, but I didn't know how to approach that. Nothing had changed within the past half hour that made me suddenly believe The Observer about Celestia, thus I held the story about Storm Wing's heritage in similar suspicion. So instead, I settled for finding out what he already knew.

"Hey, Storm Wing. Your old man was supposedly a big hero, right?" I asked in what must have seemed a rather spontaneous fashion.

"You could say that." He gave a small laugh, picking the bucket up and tossing it back down the well.

"What did he do?" I asked, tilting my head curiously.

He blinked, his expression one of incredulity. It was as if I was asking what color the sky was (LIKE HE WOULD KNOW, AMIRITE?! I think cracking these jokes makes me a horrible person. I think I'm okay with this.).

"Huh. Yeah, I guess you wouldn't have heard," he shrugged his wings a bit.

"Woah, wait, hold on. Before we continue," I interrupted him, my jealousy finally leaking out, "Every time you shrug your wings, God kills a kitten. Just saying. Let us continue."

"W... What!?" he took me seriously, facing my general direction immediately, "Are you well?"

"Just don't shrug your wings and you won't have to worry about it," I pointed out, nodding with a serious look on my face, "Think of the kittens, Storm Wing."

"Are you serious?" he didn't look at all pleased by this concept.

"Storm Wing," I set my hoof on his shoulder and looked him straight in the eyes, "I don't want to take the risk to find out. Do you?"

"Okay, you're full of it," he nodded, looking somewhat relieved. I felt so transparent. He reached for the bucket and began to pull out more water.

He spoke after retrieving the second bucket, "My father fell in battle, protecting Princess Celestia from Nightmare Moon. Because of his sacrifice, Celestia was able to exile her to the moon. He was a hero before all of that, too. Being the first Sky Archon, he brought a lot of security to Equestria that wasn't there before. And no, I don't hold it against Luna. She was not in control of her actions and would not have done what she had done if she were thinking clearly. The Nightmare, however, is going to pay for all the harm it's caused."

"Yeah," I agreed with him, nodding. "That we can agree on. So, what about your mom?"

"What about her?" he asked, reaching down to scoop out a bowl of water.

"Well, I doubt you were a plant that your father cultivated in his back yard." I gave a laugh, "What was she like?"

"Never met her," he responded quite simply, "Never met my father, either. Just have the stories to go by. I was raised as... well, as an unofficial prince by Celestia. It used to really bother me when I was much younger, but a thousand years is a long time to deal with your issues. I've come to terms with being an orphan a long time ago."

"Sounds like it," I nodded with a smirk, "So anyway, I wanted to tell you something."

He looked my way, silently acknowledging that he was paying attention. I started to tell him about Azure Flora and Winter Sky, but I stopped. I'd have been digging up a lot of crap for nothing if this all turned out to be a wash. So instead, I banked on the side of safety.

"I'm headed out to Everfree Forest later tonight... Or today... I need to get a watch," I said, coughing nonchalantly, "You should definitely come with."

"Why?"

"Well, the extra firep-..." I started to say before he cut me off.

"Why are you going?" he clarified before taking another drink of water.

"You'll see. I've my suspicions, but I think we're going to learn a lot there," I shrugged a shoulder as best I could, "Don't ask me to explain, it's one big convoluted mess. Just trust me?"

What I would find, I wasn't sure. The old capitol was a thousand years old and any clues there might have been were likely long gone. That didn't mean it wasn't worth trying, though. Sure it was a trick-knee decision, but I wanted some answers and I'm pretty sure I wasn't going to get them from anywhere else.

"Anypony else, and I'd say no," he responded with a smirk, wiping his mouth with a hoof before holding it up to me, "But alright, Firewall. I'll come with."

"Awesome. Thanks man," I brohoofed him and smiled wide, "You're pretty cool. Good race today! Never thought I would enjoy racing, but you two were amazing!"

"Good race, eh? But I lost." He wasn't at all perturbed by this fact, one could tell from the way

he was smiling.

“Well, at least your loss gave me a chance to get back at Luna. I get to cover up her Cutie Mark with a silly picture for a day. We made a bet and Rainbow Dash is mah homegirl, so I bet on her.” I gently punched him in the shoulder, still smiling brightly.

“Good to know I could throw the race for a good cause.” Storm gave a snort, shaking his head. “I can’t wait to see the new Cutie Mark.”

“Whaaaat~?” I gave him a skeptical look.

“Seriously, Firewall, do you think I was giving it my all?” He smirked arrogantly at me, “I mean, yes, she definitely out flew me with that... amazing explosion of magic. I couldn’t sense anything for a few seconds, I’ll admit. I’ve never felt anything like it before. But during that last straightaway, I let her win.”

“What?!” I shook my head in disbelief, “No way, she rode you the entire way in.”

“And I could have done something like... charge up a bit of lightning to zap her off my back. Or simply stopped. Maybe tuck into a diving spin. I could have even flown back to the start of the straightaway and dumped her off there to give me even more time to outdistance her,” he reasoned, “I wasn’t without options. Trust me, I let her win. I wouldn’t lie about it. She’s definitely fast enough to outpace me, she’s just too young to understand just how much potential she has. That’s alright, though. I wanted her to win.”

“Uh-huh. And whys that smart guy?” I stared at him askance, still not buying it.

“Remember that part where I said I would consider her for the Sky Archons?” He gave me a sly smirk, chuckling at my reaction (which involved a double take and a jaw drop.).

“No way.” You could have knocked me over with a slight breeze. Illidan was right. I was not prepared. How could he have known!?

“She’s perfect material. Brave, spirited, strong, competitive.” He nodded with a pondering smile. “And she represents the Element of Loyalty, too. And she’s fast. Amazingly fast. Most of my Sky Archons can’t come near her speed, and she’s not even in her third decade. That’s huge, Firewall. I didn’t get as fast as I am until my third century. I don’t even have as much control as she does, which is even more impressive. She’s got the determination, and she definitely has the skill, but my fear is that she won’t have the will.”

“How long have you been planning this?!” I gave him a shove, which he responded to with a laugh.

“Ever since I went to retrieve Twilight Sparkle and she chased me around for fun,” he gave a wing shrug, “I’m always on the lookout for potential Archons. I only get one or two every generation and besides Silverheart twenty years ago, I’ve not had any new recruits in quite some time.”

“Wow,” I blinked, “You’re serious. Rainbow Dash the Sky Archon.”

“It has a ring to it, doesn’t it?” he chuckled, “It’ll be tough for the first year or so, but if she accepts, I could see her going far.”

“No kidding. Don’t you dare tell Luna,” I begged of him.

“Not even for two Sky Archon recruits,” he agreed with a nod. “She needs a piece of humble pie.”

“A piece? I plan to feed her the whole damn thing! Forcefully.” I nodded back enthusiastically.

“Hah! Well, I’m off to do some rounds and see if Twilight Sparkle needs any more help for the Canterlot citizens coming in,” he said with a casual salute, “Stay frosty, Firewall.”

“Frosty. Cute. Keep it real, Storm.” I returned the gesture before pulling out a cigarette and lighting up. I watched him lazily depart as I began to think about what to do next. I began to walk aimlessly, twisting my face in confusion as I was suddenly approached by a blonde-haired, grey pegasus with bubbles for a Cutie Mark.

“Letter~!” she cried happily at me, giving me a wall-eyed stare with her hoof extended, a letter within its grasp. My mouth hung open as I realized just who it was. I couldn’t respond. I didn’t know what to say. I just kinda gaped at her for a few seconds, wondering how to approach this situation. Unfortunately, I was getting nowhere in that endeavor, and she decided to take the initiative by stuffing the letter in my mouth and flying away.

After the sensation passed (it took quite a few minutes, if you must know), I spat out the letter and looked at the address. It just had those Wing Dings for text, and I rolled my eyes as I opened it up, unsurprised to see more of the same. I remember Twilight’s notes having the same language and set the letter down. With a stomp, I burned the sucker and absorbed the knowledge it held. Rough translation as follows:

The Observer

Dear Firewall,

I think it is time we met face to face at last, or at least as close to that as we can get. I’ve tried to contact you

again, but my attempts have been met with... outside interference. I don't think my identity has been discovered, but my presence is known now and time is running out. I asked you to seek me out when we first met, and thankfully I did not have the time to give you more information as I have discovered much between now and then. Come find me at the Everfree Forest at the tallest tower (It's never the shortest tower, is it.) in the old capital. I should be able to reveal myself by now, having recovered somewhat.

There is much I have seen and much I have yet to see, but before you, I have been unable to act upon what I know. Perhaps with your help, I can be freed, and even if that proves to be impossible, I can still aid you.

Once again, I know you've no reason to trust me, but while all may not be lost without my help, I truly believe that you will not regret putting a bit of faith in me.

You friend,

The Observer

P.S. Bring Luna and Twilight Sparkle. Though I would rather not reveal to them the harsh truths of the past, times have become dire, and it is best they know before they learn from some other source.

Great. Now I get to tell Luna about the voices in my head. That'll go over so well. I mean, the trolling opportunity alone would just thrill her to no end, I was sure. Then I remembered this would involve telling her about the past. I didn't know whether or not to believe it, but Luna was definitely an emotional creature. It would probably break her heart to hear that her sister had lied to her (If Celestia did even lie, that was.).

"Hoo boy," I murmured to myself as I trotted around. I had no idea where Luna stayed during her down time, but I did know that I was prepared to find out through a series of deductive techniques that would lead me straight to her. These techniques involved scratching my chin, wandering around aimlessly, SMOKING THE HELL OUT OF SOME CIGARETTES, and asking other ponies if they had seen her. Intense, eh? Yeah, I'm incredible, I know.

Eventually, I bumped into Fluttershy, who was looking positively peachy. She seemed happier than usual. Also, it was more of the lines where she bumped into me, so yeah. Flutterklutz.

"Hey, Flutter," I smiled down at her, "Whatcha doin'?"

"Oh! Hello, Firewall," she squeak-smiled at me (RAAAAAAAAAAAGE!!!!!!), "I am just... walking."

I blinked and noted the blush along her nose before rolling my eyes, "Who gave you that funny tasting apple juice and how much of a beating can they take?"

“Oh, well, ummm... It was Rainbow Dash,” she pointed out, happily swaying from side to side. In all honesty, I’ve not seen her so relaxed and content before. She normally had this worried look on her face, but today she just seemed... happy and carefree.

“She didn’t give you a bunch, did she?”

“Oh, goodness, no. Applejack was very... very adamant that I only have a glass or two,” she swayed right into me, giggling at her mistake, “I’m sorry~!”

“It’s cool. Just... don’t drink anymore. You’re at like that perfect area where you are having a good time and won’t suffer the repercussions,” I chuckled, helping to steady her with a hoof, “Better?”

“Very very much,” she leaned over to nuzzle my neck, which was kinda awkward, but I didn’t jerk away or anything to make it seem like an outright rejection, “Thank you, Firewall. I think I’m going to go take a nap now.”

“That’s probably a good idea. You wouldn’t have happened to see Luna around, would you?” I asked, smiling at her happily.

“Oh, no,” she shook her head, smiling up at me before blinking, “Oh, Luna, you said. Well, I think I saw her at the town hall with Twilight.”

“Awesome! Thanks, Fluttershy,” I said with an appreciative wink, “Go take that nap and be sure to drink lots of water before you do. That’ll help you sleep better.”

“Oh, thank you for the advice,” She replied with a long cute yawn, “But I don’t think getting to sleep will be a problem. Not a problem at all.”

With that, she passed out in front of me, completely sold to unconsciousness. I stared at her for several seconds, dumbfounded by the turn of events. I decided to take a moment to ponder this by lighting a cigarette and take a ponderous drag off of it.

“Flootershai?” I murmured, poking at her with a hoof. When she didn’t move, I gave a sigh and magicked her onto my back, “Lightweight.”

This was becoming a tiresome habit I was developing. I slowly made my way to Town Hall, careful not to shake today’s heavier, yet equally adorable cargo. At least she didn’t drool, I mentioned to myself inwardly. I know I was a terrible drunken sleep drooler and so was everyone else I knew. I bet AJ drooled last night, even. As I eventually made my way there, I spotted Twilight exiting the Town Hall and cantering happily my way until she spotted Fluttershy on my back. She teleported right up to me, concern splayed on her face.

“Oh my gosh! Is she okay?!” Twilight circled around to look at Fluttershy more closely, “Is she... asleep?”

“Yup. She had some of that cider that Luna made for us and... Well, it seems her tolerance is about as powerful as her pimp hoof. Which isn’t very strong at all,” I said, mostly for my own benefit. Gotta keep myself laughin, yo!

“Her what?” Twilight (you guessed it!) stared at me as though I had lost it, “Nevermind, where are you taking her? You don’t know where her apartment is?”

“Well, I was going to make a fashion statement. Before you know it, everypony will be wearing other ponies in an effort to keep up with the times!” Here’s your sign.

“Uh-huh. Why don’t I just lighten your load and take her to bed,” Twilight magicked her off my back and snickered as she shook her head, “Great. Now, I’m visualizing everypony putting little fillies on their heads for accessories.”

“Good idea! I know what to do with Sweetie Belle next time I see her!” I gasped, clapping my hooves in faux excitement, “Twilight, you’re a genius. Anyway, where’s Luna?”

“She’s actually just on the other side of the Hall, last I saw,” Twilight smirked at me, “Go get’r, Casanova.”

“Does everypony know about this?” I lowered my head, sighing wistfully.

“Well, you’re a big oddity, and she’s quite a celebrity, so yeah. Get used to it,” Twilight reminded me with a wink.

“Wunderbar,” I murmured, “Take care, Pretty Purple Pony of Profound Perception.”

“You, too, Gargantuan Grey Giant of Great Gelastic Goals.” She countered, proving to be the better at the game. As she walked off, I turned to flick my cigarette and walked inside the Town Hall, aiming for the entrance on the other side. Luna was actually just inside, staring out the exit as though the meaning of life were out there.

“Hey, girl!” I said during my approach, “Who wants a trollface?!”

“Shhh~!” She glanced back at me, flapping a wing in my direction in an effort to get me to shut up.

Curiosity took over and I moved beside her, peering over her shorter frame to see what was so freaking important. Turns out, it was the meaning of life. Or three little fillies setting up a small

race track in Town Square, so your mileage may vary on that.

"Oh, this oughta be rich," I whispered.

"No kidding," she replied with a giggle, her eyes never leaving the crusaders.

"Wanna place a bet here, too?" I teased.

"Not a chance," she playfully slapped at me with one of her wings.

Just so you all know, I have an ever growing list of things-to-do should I ever get a pair of those stupid wings. Number one: Shrug until it hurts. Number Two: Shrug some more! Number Three: Bat Luna in the face with wings. Those are the main priorities so far, but trust me, the list is much longer than that.

"Oh man," I watched helplessly as the three silly fillies all lined up, ready to go, "Brace for epic, Luna."

"If I die from a cute-overload, tell Twilight I was most often shipped with her," she jokingly asked of me.

"Not going to happen." I vetoed that nonsense right away.

I watched as they took off, zipping along as fast as they could. As they came around their first 'waypoint,' Scootaloo began to take the lead, only to trip over a small rock and become an obstacle for Sweetie Belle, who failed to jump over her and instead, crashed on top of the orange filly. Applebloom, having paid more attention to dodging Scootaloo, tripped over the same rock that her friend had and crashed into the pile, causing the three of them to tumble forward for a few seconds.

I won't lie, if I wasn't so worried about them, I would have had to get some insulin to treat my newly developed case of diabetes. Luna sighed and shook her head, smirking softly at the cute trio as they began to pick themselves up and brush off the dust.

"Ow, ow!" Scootaloo whimpered as she pulled herself from the mass of tangled pony manes, tails, and legs, "This is stupid! We're never going to get our Cutie Marks!"

"Ah," Sweetie Belle whined as she tended a brand new scuff, "Yes, we w-Ow! ... Yes, we will. Right, Bloom?"

Applebloom had fared the best and stood up with a sigh, "Ah'm not sure, girls. We've been workin' at it fer... how long now? An' we just ain't gettin' any closer."

“Exactly!” Scootaloo walked over to the rock that had tripped her and kicked it angrily, only to discover that it was unmoving when it hurt her hoof. She gasped and immediately fell over, clutching her poor hurting hoof as her eyes began to well up.

“Oh dear, I can’t watch,” I had to look away. Remember during Winter Wrap Up where Twilight ran away crying? Yeah, I was so upset that there just aren’t words for it. Having to witness a little filly cry just might have killed me. I didn’t want to test the theory. I mean, if I was wrong, okay... If I was right, I wouldn’t get to gloat over being right so often.

“You are such a softie,” Luna chuckled as she stepped out to tend to Scootaloo, who actually did break out into tears, despite her best efforts.

I couldn’t help myself and had to look as Applebloom and Sweetie Belle ran over to instantly embrace their friend in an effort to comfort her. She tried to push them away, her pride stung and temper excited, but they simply held on and she was forced to eventually hug them back and have somepony to cry onto. I kid you not; the entire idea of a young pony crying alone bothers me. Having to watch it in person/pony made me stick my bottom lip out as the sad, adorable scene took place. Looking back, I think Luna was totally understating my being a softie. (Sometimes, I think I’m just a little girl deep down, but then I play some violent video games, and it’s all better.)

“Poor Scoots. Did you hurt your hoof?” Luna consoled as she approached them. It was obvious how horrified Scootaloo was when she realized she was crying in front of the princess. She hid her face behind Applebloom, “Here, let me see it.”

I walked out as Sweetie Belle and Applebloom stepped aside. Scootaloo was reluctant at first, but eventually showed her the aching hoof. Luna used a bit of magic to help ease the pain and Scootaloo sniffled a bit, wiping at her eyes.

“T-Thanks,” she coughed, smiling a tad even though she was still in a dour mood.

“So, you guys decided to give racing a try, eh?” I asked, reaching over and muzzing Scootaloo’s hair.

“Hey!” She shoved my hoof away irritably.

“Yes, that’s the idea, anyway,” Sweetie Belle nodded eagerly before looking deflated almost instantly, “But that didn’t get us our Cutie Marks either.”

“What I don’t get is why you’re all trying to get the same Cutie Mark,” Luna remarked, tapping her chin with a pensive hoof, “I haven’t ever heard of three ponies having the same talent within the same generation, and certainly not within the same town.”

“Well, we uh... at this point we’re just hopin’ for one Cutie Mark,” Applebloom confessed with a pouting frown.

“In that case, why don’t you try and focus on one of you at a time,” Luna suggested with a wink, “Any strategy is probably better than this one, don’t you think?”

They all gaped up at her for a few seconds before looking at one another.

“But... Who goes first?” Scootaloo tilted her head, voicing their collective question.

“I’d say try paper, rock, scissors, but uh... No fingers,” I chuckled before mimicking the motion, “Paper, Rock, Hoof! Doh, we tied again~! But no, here’s a better idea.”

They all gazed up at me, their attention focused from the motivation of possibly getting a Cutie Mark.

“The first one to hug Fluttershy wins and gets to go first,” I announced before holding up a hoof, “OnetwothreeGO~!”

I swung it down and it was like firing a gun, you’d have thought from how fast they took off. As they swung around the corner, I began to laugh and look Luna’s way.

“They have no idea where Fluttershy is, do they?” Luna asked me.

“Not a clue,” I confirmed.

“Ah, to be young.”

“You are quite the relic, aren’t you?” I teased.

“Would you like me to petrify you and give you an idea what a relic really feels like?” she asked with a sly smile aimed at me.

“Negative on that, O Ancient One! Anyway, now that the munchkins are gone, we need to talk,” I explained, still chuckling from the crusaders’ silly antics.

“Oh?” she said, still looking towards where the little ponies had vanished. “What about? The intricate details of my Cutie Mark and how you’re going to cover it with a meme? Seems pretty straightforward, if you ask me.”

“No, about the voices in my head, of course,” I said, chuckling at how ridiculous it sounded.

“Well, in that case, we’d best get you a comfy couch for you to lay on as I diagnose you with the

crazy,” she remarked.

“You’re such a riot.” I stuck my tongue at her.

“Well, you can blame yourself for that.” She stuck hers out right back.

“Right, because I *made* you come steal my phone in the middle of the night,” I said with a roll of my eyes.

“That’ll teach you to leave your valuable electronics out around ancient princesses.” She winked at me before snickering.

“Oh, trust me. It won’t happen again.” I gave her a promising nod.

“I bet it won’t.” She smirked at me before sighing. “So, really. What is it you wanted to talk about?”

I told her everything. From the voice having seen others like me before, down to the hidden history. I gave her my thoughts on every subject, how I wasn’t sure if I trusted it, but that I didn’t know what to make of the entire debacle. She thought I was just kidding at first, but I soon made it clear that there wasn’t anything funny about the situation.

“It... It actually makes sense,” she murmured with a chuckle, setting her jaw a tad, “Tia would do anything to protect Equestria. Even lie to us. Even lie to me. I can’t believe she... ..”

“Luna, she may have had plans to tell you,” I pointed out hopefully, “In fact, her plan was to tell us everything that happened when we got back from the negotiations. Or... Whatever you would call that, there certainly wasn’t much negotiating.”

“Just... Just go, Firewall, I... I need to be alone right now,” she asked of me, not at all cheered up by my poor attempt at humor.

I gotta say, it was definitely an unfamiliar feeling, Luna telling me to get lost. It really hit me where it hurt the most, and I found myself more upset about it than I would have expected. I always wanted to be there to help people in general, and though I had not been around Luna for long, I felt that she was already one of the closest friends I would ever have. Her having told me that she didn’t want me around was like your favorite brother/sister/aunt/uncle/etc telling you that you weren’t family for the moment. I didn’t get angry; I try really hard to not be that guy. I just felt all of my exuberance and joy slowly flow out of me.

“Well, I’m going to go see this ‘Observer’ tonight,” I informed her, keeping my voice calm and level, “It wants you and Twilight to come with, but I’ll leave that up to you. And I’ll leave you alone until then.”

As I began to canter away, I did my best to keep it straight and not hang my head. I didn't want her to feel bad that she made me feel bad, especially since she had a damn good reason to feel bad in the first place. I swallowed the lump in my throat and took a deep calming breath.

"Firewall?" I heard her call out, causing me to look back at her with a fake yet likely convincing smile.

"I'm not upset with you," she said with a slight, yet encouraging smile.

"Oh." I nodded, feeling a bit better at least, "Cool, just uh... Let me know if I can help."

I watched as she looked down and nodded a bit, "I w-will. Just go f... for now."

Argh. More tears. She was torn up about her sister's deception. It was probably a world-shattering revelation. They had likely been very close and kept no secrets from one another but toss in a human with good intentions, and suddenly everything is flying in your face. Without stability in one's life, a person or pony can quickly lose a lot of faith in a lot of things.

"You sure you don't want me to... y'know... stick around?" I asked helpfully, "If you need an excuse, it might make me feel a little better."

Luna shook her head a tad before looking up, "No, I just... I'm not sad, Firewall."

Her eyes were certainly rimmed with water, but her expression was not of remorse or sorrow. It was angry. That was the last thing I expected.

"I'm furious," she grit her teeth, "I gave a thousand years of my life... and she... she couldn't give me the truth."

"Oh," I felt a cold sweat begin to bead on my forehead, "Luna, I'm sure s-..."

"No! There is no excuse!" she stamped her hoof, causing a tiny indigo shockwave to rush along the ground, "She lied to me! After all this time! I never held anything from her! Not a thing!"

"Luna, I'm sure it's a tad more nuanced t-..." I got interrupted, yet again.

"No, it isn't! The simple fact is that she lied and what's worse; she manipulated the minds of our people!" she shouted, "There's nothing nuanced about stealing the memories of others! It's wrong!"

"Keep it down, girl, we don't know all the facts yet, it could all be a lie!" I rushed over to her and shook my head, "Stop jumping to conclusions!"

“No! Remember when she wanted to talk after we left the Everfree Forest? I actually caught a hole in her cover-up story when she brought up the past! But I gave her the benefit of the doubt!” She stamped her hoof again, grunting in frustration. “I said, ‘No, Tia wouldn’t lie to me! Maybe she just forgot or something! A thousand years is a long time to forget a few details.’”

“Luna, just stop,” I begged, reaching out to her with a hoof, only to get it smacked away by one of hers.

“It wasn’t like this before humans came along!” she shouted at me accusingly.

I blinked, now suddenly irritated, “Yeah, well, you give a little, you take a little. One big lie traded for Equestria being a much safer place doesn’t sound so bad.”

“Look around us, Firewall!” She yelled, glaring at me angrily, “We’re on the precipice of becoming a *dystopia* now! We wouldn’t even have The Nightmare if your kind had just stayed where it belongs!”

Lines were being crossed and stupid things were being said. Not either of our best moments, to be sure.

“My kind,” I echoed, “So, I guess I’m guilty by association. Damn them one and damn them all, eh? I can’t actually buy that you’re so stupid as to actually believe that, Luna.”

She hesitated before looking away, her voice lowered but still seething with rage, “Go away, Firewall. We’re already saying things we’re going to regret later.”

“Ya think?” I gave a hollow laugh, “Why are you so angry? People lie all the time, Luna.”

“Not US!” she turned back on me, hollering in my face, “We don’t steal, kill, lie, abuse, and mistreat others! At least I didn’t THINK we did!”

“Really? Well, forgive me if I upset that argument by feeling a little mistreated,” I spat furiously.

“Just... I SAID GO AWAY!” she reared back to shove me away. I moved to evade, somewhat surprised by her actions, only to make things worse by causing her to hit me right in the eye.

I stumbled back, entirely shocked by what she had done. Yeah, she had kicked me in the face before, but she wasn’t exactly stable then. This, however, was just plain old fashioned lost-my-temper-and-dishing-it-out-on-you childish anger. I wasn’t the only one stunned by what she had done, judging by her own reaction. Her face was already losing its malice and replacing it with chagrin. It hurt like hell, getting bucked right in the eye, as you might have guessed. What made it worse was that it was her that did it and out of rage, nonetheless. I’ve

never actually been hit by someone so close to me. Not once. It's never happened. Came close a few times, but I've never actually been on either side of such an exchange of abuse between friends.

"Fire... I'm... I didn't mean to..." she stammered, cautiously stepping closer.

I could feel it swelling already as I raised a hoof to rub at the mark. I didn't say anything, I simply turned away and started walking, pausing occasionally to rub at it a bit more. I didn't say anything I'd regret later, I didn't go try to make amends, and I didn't even look back at her. I just left. I do remember that she tried to get me to stop by moving in front of me, I just can't recall what she was saying. Rather than yell at her, though, I responded by walking around her. I was angry, and a bad sort of angry. I don't talk when it gets this bad because it's like tossing an already huge snowball down a hill. It would have only gotten worse. So, I just left.

I walked around town, up the streets, and through the alleys. Hell, I was walking just to walk. I vaguely remember ponies trying to ask if I was okay. I ignored them, one and all. Even Rarity, when she approached me, concern splayed on her face. I was not okay. To be perfectly honest, Lafter and Stoic were waging a war on what I should do, but I was suppressing all ideas, impulses, and urges. I simply continued to walk. I took myself out to the apple orchard on the edge of town and just walked amongst the trees. About half an hour had passed, and all I had done was walk around and stay angry. It takes a lot to shake me up so bad, but this was definitely something I wasn't ready to have to swallow.

It was made worse by the arrival of ponies, "Firewall."

Through my anger, I was able to manage to put a voice to a name and then to a face. Twilight Sparkle. Of course, she's a go-getter. We're not too different in that aspect. Something that needs to be dealt with is going to get dealt with.

"Twilight, I don't want to be an ass, but you really don't need to be here." My voice was not kind, not even just impassive. No attempt was made to mask my emotional upset.

"Luna told me what happened," she said with a sigh, looking to me imploringly.

"That's great, so now that you know, you can see why I'm angry," I seethed, somewhat surprised at how little I had cooled off. "Seriously, Twilight. Humans can do really stupid things while angry, so just... Go elsewhere."

"You're not an angry pony," she pointed out, smiling a bit to show she was trying to be humorous. That would have worked if I wasn't seeing red.

"Funny thing about that," I said as I turned away, "I'm not a pony."

"This isn't like you. Please calm down," she begged of me, stepping closer.

"That's what I want to do, so please, leave me in peace." I began walking away from her, not wanting to take it out on an innocent.

"Isn't there... anything a friend can do?" her voice was hurt. It was so ironic, actually. Looking back, I can say I was definitely doing the very same thing to Twilight that Luna had done to me.

"You can not kick me in my goddamn face!" I shouted, stomping a hoof down and snorting a bit of flame as I glanced back at her, "Think you can manage that?!"

"Please don't yell at me," she murmured as her eyes began tearing up.

"Ju... Aggh!! %@#\$!!!" I felt my conscience overpower my anger long enough for me to regain a modicum of composure, "Please! Twilight. No, there isn't anything you can do. I need time to blow off steam."

That's when Storm Wing descended from the treetops with a thunderous crash.

"Or you can get it beaten out of you!" he shouted, his entire frame sparking with energy, "What happened!? Luna's in tears and can barely string a sentence together! What did you do to her!?"

Turns out Twilight got the truth out of Luna after Storm Wing had left. She just had a head start with her OP teleport powers. You know, for those of you wondering how Twilight knew and Storm didn't. For a simpler answer, Twilight is just that overpowered.

"Get lost, Storm Wing, I swear, I am not in the mood to play with ponies right now." Getting yelled at was not improving my day. In fact, I was starting to get excited all over again.

"Both of you need to calm down!" Twilight tried to shout above us.

"Miss Twilight, you should leave," he warned her gently. "Turn around, Firewall!"

He unfurled his wings and crouched down, ready to leap at me. Storm was quite confrontational like that. Still, I wasn't putting up with it. If he wanted to become a focus for my frustrations, then so be it. To be honest, though, I was just looking for any justification to hit something. Hey, I never claimed to be perfect.

"Twilight, he's right. Go somewhere else," I turned back around and slowly wreathed myself in flame, "I'm done giving warnings."

"No! No, this is stupid!" she teleported in between us, forcibly keeping us from going at it for

now, "Tensions are high and you're both acting irrationally!"

"You tell me what happened this instant, Firewall, or I'm going to drag another patient to Nurse Tendercare," Storm Wing growled, his eyes glowing as he tensed up again.

"TRY IT, STORM!" I screamed at him as I reared up and slammed down onto the ground, spurting gouts of flame in all directions. "I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES!"

He actually took a step back, surprisingly enough, not expecting such a hateful response, no doubt. I don't think he was afraid in the slightest, but rather, I think he was hesitant to get into a serious fight for my sake. I mean, yeah, I was definitely packing more heat than when we had first tangled, but I'm fairly certain Storm could have still beat whatever he damn well pleased out of me. So, y'know, screw him for that.

"I can tell you!" Twilight ran up to Storm Wing, pretty much acknowledging that I was beyond reason and to be fair, I so very much was, "Firewall and Luna got into an argument! It happens! She hit him and he walked away! Luna's crying over her own actions, not from what Firewall did!"

"She... Then... Why's he acting so..." He looked at me as I panted heavily, still secretly hoping he'd come at me (because I'm a glutton for punishment, apparently. Let's be honest, we all remember what happened when me and Storm went at it during my last tantrum.), "What's wrong with him?"

"Luna says humans have really bad tempers!" She tried to explain, glancing back at me, "She says she's got a... Firewall, come back!"

I had turned to gallop away, still covered in an assortment of red and blue flames. I didn't want to hurt anypony, I really didn't. They were just making it harder. Luna felt bad, I felt bad, Twilight felt bad, Storm Wing felt bad. We all felt bad! I just wanted to get away from the feel bad! I wanted to go swimming, or run at ninety miles an hour, or just fly away! Anything but be around somepony!

"I'm leaving! Do NOT follow me! Just let me GET SOME TIME ALONE!" I yelled back at them as I departed, leaving them in the orchard.

Since walking didn't seem to help (not to mention it allowed ponies to find me more easily), I ran. I ran as hard as I could, as fast as I could and I ran as far as I could. I didn't even think to smoke a cigarette or something. I charged through every branch in my way and never felt a thing. I didn't even feel the tree that I brushed up against, other than the slight pressure of touch. I just put one hoof in front of the other as fast as I could and forced myself to keep going faster. I tripped more than once, but as I got the rhythm, I began accelerating. That's when I learned my final Unicorn trick. If I had to give it a name or something, I'd call it blazing speed,

but that sounds kinda lame, if you ask me. Because that's what it was. The faster I ran, the more aware I became of my surroundings. Eventually, my anger had dissipated and was temporarily replaced by wonder. I had to be going at least seventy miles-per-hour.

I stopped and let the fire die out around me. It was so liberating and I wasn't enjoying like I should have been. Thus, I took a deep breath and let the cold night air breeze brush against me before letting it out. In... and out... For the next five minutes I simply chilled, letting my anger flow out. After finally getting to state of some form of mental clarity, I began to run again. It was hard to recreate. I kept getting tired at first before trying to figure out what was different. It didn't take long however. It was the fire. I hadn't covered myself in it, but rather, I had become fire. I shut my eyes and focused, recreating the spell that I had used in my anger before opening them again, ready for a real attempt.

"Let's do this," I murmured before slamming down my hooves and breaking into a wild dash. Without fail, I kept going and faster and faster. The chilled air buffeted me as I accelerated through it, but I didn't get cold. Soon, I wasn't even touching the ground, I was just a line of fire rocketing along the ground. I didn't have a speedometer on me to tell me how fast I was going, but if there were any cops around, they'd have tried to pull me over. Not that they would have ever caught me, but they would have tried. I hit a hill and launched myself some hundred feet, shouting in release as I felt all the tension slowly pour out of me. I spotted a desert butte and dashed up its side, rocketing straight up its vertical surface, launching myself into open sky. It wasn't flying, but it was so close to it; I just didn't care. For fifteen seconds, almost, I was amongst the clouds on my own merit. I hit the ground without even slowing down, laughing in glorious revelation. It was so amazing; I'd never felt anything like it before. Words will never be able to describe the sensation, as silly as that sounds. Try running on a treadmill while a fan blows a hundred mile-per-hour winds at you or something. You might get a taste of it, then. But it will only be a hint of a shadow of the real thing.

I finally slowed down and let the fire die out as I came to a stop. I took one final deep breath and let it out, dispelling the last of my anger. It was good to be sensible again. I missed it. What I missed more was making people and ponies laugh. Not making them cry.

"Hey, tough guy," I heard Rainbow Dash's voice above me.

I looked up and smiled, "Hey, Dash. Good race earlier today. Grats on your win."

"Thanks. Y'know, Twilight said you were pretty angry," she said with a laugh, spinning into a loop before landing beside me, "You don't seem so bad off, though. Don't know why she thought I needed to come get you."

"I'm great now," I nodded with a somewhat pained sigh, "Ten minutes ago? Not so cool. Ran it out of me, though. Still, I managed to do some stupid things before I calmed down."

“Yeah, Twilight said you and Storm almost got in a fight,” she seemed rather serious all of a sudden, “Now, I know all about bad tempers and all, but friends don’t need to fight for any reason, y’know?”

“Yeah,” I shook my head sorrowfully, “I even yelled at Twilight.”

“Well, stop being such a jerk, jerk!” She flicked her tail at me, causing me to snap my head back to avoid getting popped in the nose. She laughed at my surprised expression, which in turn infected me with a chuckle of my own.

“Ponies do stupid stuff when they’re angry, too,” she reminded me with a smile, “Don’t let it getcha down.”

“Yeah,” I murmured dourly before perking up in a rather sudden fashion, “Hey, did you see how fast I was going?!”

“Yeah, you were bookin’ it!” she laughed before brohoofing my shoulder, “You should look into professional hoof racing!”

“No kidding,” Dash brohoofing me was an awesome-sauce-cherry on top of my not-angry-anymore-sundae. Om nom nom nom~!

“So, whaddya say we get on back to Aaaaappleloooooosa~ and see about makin’ everypony stop worryin’ about ya?” she said with a wink, causing my ears to droop with a drop of guilt.

“Yeah, that’s probably a good idea,” I replied with a chastised smirk.

“Hey, it’s not so bad. Here.” She actually gave me a hug, before letting go abruptly. “Don’t tell anypony I did that. I got this... image to keep up, y’know?”

“Lips are sealed,” I chuckled my reply to her, feeling considerably uplifted.

“Good. Race ya!”

Of course, I didn’t even come close to winning, but it wasn’t really a race so much as a fun dash back to Appleloosa. Naturally, I just followed Dash to wherever she was taking me. We parked just outside Rarity’s home (Screeeeech~!), kicking up a huge cloud of dust with our rapid braking. As the dust cleared, Rainbow knocked on the door with me staring over her back. I had a knot in my stomach and I didn’t like it being there one bit.

“Now’s not a good time!” Rarity’s voice called out from inside. “Please understand, I’m quite busy at the moment~!”

“Oh, sure,” Rainbow Dash yelled back, “I’ll just take Firewall an-...”

The door opened instantly, Rarity standing in its frame. She didn’t look happy. Luckily, she didn’t look angry, either. See, this was one of those situations where the guy and the girl are having rough times and showing favor to one or the other could cause complications. I know, drama, right? Needs less.

“Firewall, go-WAHahaha~!” Rarity took notice of the bruise as she looked closer. I should mention by now, it’s pretty much swollen shut. No doubt I looked smashing. She shook her head and beckoned me closer with a hoof before whispering, “Sorry! Oh, dear, that was incredibly insensitive. A~hem. As I was saying, don’t worry, this is quite par for your typical celebrity romance. It could have been much worse.”

I think I threw up in my mouth a little. I don’t want a celebrity romance~! I see those god awful magazines at the checkout aisle at Wal-Mart, where every word, action, and heartbeat made by Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt is analyzed by EVERYONE BUT THEM! What is wrong with everyone that they need to give a damn about someone of general importance’s love life!? And why do I have to be in this position! We haven’t even held hooves! We may never hold hooves! Do ponies even hold hooves!?

“Thanks, Rarity,” I whispered back before gently nudging her aside and walking in, chuckling at how ridiculous this whole fiasco was.

I entered the living room, which had Storm Wing, Twilight, Luna, Applejack, and surprisingly enough, Starlight all sitting around in various moods. They had all been chatting idly, but as soon as I was noticed, it was like the movie had just started and everypony had become deathly silent.

“Woah,” I murmured, no doubt confusing them all, “That was impressive. We didn’t even choreograph that fade-to-silence. Here, let me see if it works twice.”

I backed out of the room and walked back in, acting just as surprised the second time.

“Oh, grow up, Firewall,” Rarity huffed at me as she and Dashy walked past.

“That’s asking a lot,” Storm Wing murmured.

“I didn’t say you could talk, loser!” Rainbow Dash berated him.

“I didn’t ask, little girl,” he countered.

The two of them took off from there and I stopped listening. I stared around the room for a few seconds before looking at Luna, who was staring intently back at me. It was quite clear that

both of us wanted to be elsewhere right now. With or away from each other, it didn't matter. We just didn't want to be around everypony else that was making this their business, good intentions or not.

"Ya'll need ta hush, both'a ya!" Applejack hollered at them, bringing silence back to the room.

"So, yeah, everypony beat it," Starlight ordered as she got up and started to leave, "These two don't need an audience around."

Applejack winked at Starlight as she got up and passed, probably thinking the same thing.

When everypony hesitated, she looked back and snapped her tail loudly, "Out!"

Storm Wing did not like being ordered by his subordinate, but it was obvious that she was right and thus, he didn't make a scene about it. Rainbow Dash and Rarity were quick to bolt out, quite intimidated by the edgy Starlight.

"Storm," I called out to him as I held out a hoof to halt Twilight's departure.

"What?" He turned to look back at me from the door.

"Sorry about earlier," I said before looking to Twilight, "Friends shouldn't fight."

"Forget about it," he turned back for the door, "Friends fight all the time. Letting it come between them is when they stop being friends."

Screw Captain Storm Wing for being so awesome and profound. I continued to stare down at Twilight (I may be very big, but I feel so very little~!) before taking a long deep breath.

"Right. And I'm sorry for yelling at you, Twilight," I said to her with a chagrined frown, "You deserve a lot more than somepony that says he's a friend to mistreat you."

Twilight smiled up at me. She didn't say anything; she just gave me a hug and walked out. Really, that was all that I needed to know that everything was going to be okay. Until I looked to Luna, curled up on Rarity's couch, still watching me. I did likewise from across the room and for a good minute or two, nothing happened.

Finally, she stuck her tongue out at me. As childish as that was, it decreased the tension so much, you just don't know.

"Awesome," I nodded in appreciation, "Well done."

"You're such a jerk," she said with a pouting frown.

"I'll try to do better next time," I chuckled, "Maybe some applause and a bunch of confetti. And streamers."

"Why'd you let me say those things?" She was still pouting.

"I'm obviously the one to blame here," I performed a low sweeping bow, "I apologize for not knocking you the hell out. I'll be better about that next time."

"Would have been better than me hitting you," she looked down, shaking her head, "I'm sorry, Firewall, I was just angry and... Why didn't you leave when I told you to!?"

I gave a snicker, reaching up to rub at my poor bruised eye, "Probably the same reason Twilight wouldn't leave when I was angry."

She hopped up from the couch and cantered over. One spell later, and I was suddenly able to perceive depth again. We shared a smile and once again, Equestria was all perfect again. Except for, you know, The Nightmare, Azure Flora, and Giant Ice Pony. Oh, and eternal night. And Canterlot being taken over by shadow ponies. And then there were voices in my head. But you know, just small things like that.

"Thanks for that." I blinked a few times, testing it out.

"Mhmm," she nuzzled at me, smiling happily, "Next time I start to say such stupid things, just knock me out, mmkay?"

"I... I..." I was all flustered from the affectionate display, "Yeah! Knock ya... right out... Can do."

"Don't agree so quickly," she laughed before looking up at me, "Lean down here."

"I'm scared." I pouted fearfully.

"Do it, filly!" she ordered.

I leaned a little.

"Closer."

Little more.

"Clooooooser~!" She sing-songed.

Hesitantly, I complied. I really wish I hadn't, though. Because this is where you think AMAGAD

THUR GONNA KISS NAO and that's not a bad assumption because that's what I thought, too. But no. That's just what she wanted me to think. That little (Pony Censor~!) turned my (More Pony Censor~!) hair bright bubblegum pink and ran out of the (So Much Pony Censor~!) house while I stood there in shock. She didn't get away with it, though. I ran outside after her, seething in indignant rage. They had all been waiting out there, wondering why Luna had just run outside, cackling like a candidate for the loony bin, however, not one of them were dumb enough to ask me why my hair was pink.

"Twilight!" I shouted as I burned a trollface image into the ground. I grabbed her and pointed at the image, "I need a fireproof picture of this and FIREPROOF TAPE, QUICK! LIKE FIVE MINUTES AGO!"

Long Story Short: I used my new speedy fire trick, caught her immature butt just outside of town, held her sorry plot down as I taped that damn thing to her (which she laughed maniacally through, taking the majority of the fun out of it), and immediately began wondering how to change my mane and tail back to their appropriate colors.

"You're such a troll," I huffed as I tried magicking my hair which availed me no results.

"You love it!" She was still on the ground, laughing at me as though I had just told that joke that kills people from Monty Python.

"You just shut up and lay on that there ground," I ordered, rolling my eyes irritably, "Of all my crimes, leaving my phone out has got to be the worst one, yet."

"Awww~!" she got up and gave me a big trollish hug. "Is somepony sore?"

"Damn right, I am." I stood up, pulling away from her. "Trolls hurt. You hurt me. Feel bad, Luna. Feel bad."

"But it's so much *fun!*" she declared as she held onto me with a snuggle to my cheek. "Don't you think?"

"Nope." I denied such a ludicrous notion, still pulling away from her. "You get off me before I get a rolled up newspaper and pummel you with it."

"Oh hush," She said before planting a kiss of my cheek. "Don't be such a baby."

I blushed brightly as she mussed my pink hair, still happily leaning against me. We kept like that for a good long while, standing around in the middle of nowhere. Me trying not to look happy so as to discourage further antagonizing, her with a stupid grin plastered on her face. Even through all my annoyance, I was still able to enjoy it. I knew, however, that this carefree time was running out and this very well might have been the last time we would get to do this.

“Mmmm,” she hummed as she looked up at the stars, “So, we need to go see your friend soon.”

“Yeah,” I mumbled, sighing softly and remorsefully, “Things are probably going to get rough when we do.”

“Well, we can’t stay like this forever,” she replied.

“Not really,” I agreed, pulling out a cigarette.

“Not right now,” she took it away from me, provoking my ire somewhat, “You can wait until after we’re done.”

“Pony cuddling. Serious business,” I said in a dramatic voice.

“Very serious,” she nodded, giggling a tad, “You know, I bet Earth would be a much nicer place if there were more humans like you.”

“Earth’s great. It’s not perfect, but go to any pony-fan circle and you’ll see a bunch more people just like me,” I reminded her, smirking up at the stars along with her.

“I like to pretend you’re special,” she said with a laugh.

“Mom always said I was.” True story, bro.

“You don’t know how to talk without being silly, do you.” Her sigh was wistful. I think I had finally squeezed every last laugh out of her. It sure had taken a long time.

“Wut r serious? Can you eat it?” I said in that overly dramatic tone.

“I’m serious,” she said as she looked up at me.

“Well, I don’t want to devour you,” I said after having considered that.

“Firewall.”

It was obvious she wanted me to be serious, too. My current mindset of serious was worried, and I didn’t want to spoil the mood by being that way. However, she was bound and determined to get it out of me, so I was forced to give her what she wanted.

“Fiiine~... Listen, Luna, I may not be able to stay here,” I murmured softly before turning to face her somewhat, “and while that may not be the case, either, the last thing I want to do is hurt you.”

"I'm not going to worry about it." She looked down as she laid her head against my shoulder.

"Luna." I didn't like such emotional lines. It was like jinxing it, or something. Kinda like how 'hey yaw watch th'eus~!' was a death sentence.

"Shush," she demanded as she batted a wing at me, "I'm the oldest one here. Listen to your elders."

"I forget just how freakin' old you really are sometimes." I gave a slight chuckle

"I can make the rest of you pink, as well."

"Nooo~!" I took that threat seriously. "I'll be good!"

"You bet your haunch you are."

"Just... I'm worried about you, is all."

"I know," she looked up at me, smiling, "It's why I like you."

"Then can I ask you a favor?" I smiled back down at her.

"Of course," she tilted her head, curious as to what was on my mind.

"Well, I'd really like it iiiif~..." I leaned down, slowly.

"Yes?" Her smile grew a bit.

"If you could..." Still leaning in. INORITE?

"Yes?"

"Change my hair back before we do anything else." I TOTALLY GOT HER! Cheap shot, but I don't fight fair in the least, remember?

"I hate you," she grumped before hoofing me right in the ribs.

"Ow!" I curled up a bit to nurse the sudden pain.

"Seriously. I know you're worried about me," she murmured as she looked back down, "I know the risks, I'm not stupid."

"I never said you were," I sat back up straight, gently kicking at the ground.

"I know, you might have to go and that might be tomorrow, that might be a week from now, that might be a year from now," she hung her head a bit, "One of us might not make it through all this. I know. And there's the fact that you're not really a pony."

Mmmm... Those elephants in the room. Damn them. One and all.

"That does make it a bit awkward." I concurred with a slight nod.

"A little." she nodded before looking up. "But... No pony else will ever understand me now. And, I know that's my fault, more than anything. Not that I'm desperate by... you know... liking you, and stuff. "

"That's... nice of you?" So silly.

"I'm just... Even if you leave. Tomorrow." She looked up at me, tears in her eyes, "I'll still have had some pony there for me and for once, I won't feel lonely. Even if just for a little bit."

"I..." I didn't know what to say, is what was really going on.

"So just... stop being smart and stupid at the same time," she turned away to cough a bit.

"Okay." Then came the most epic mind battle I've ever had to fight. Me against Laffer and Stoic. Reason after reason popped up as to why I shouldn't do what I was contemplating doing. They seemed so silly, though. They weren't voicing actual reason as much as they were voicing reasons for their fear. My fear. Acknowledging these fears was sensible, sure. But being cowed by my fears was stupid, as Luna had said. Still, ignoring these fears was even worse.

"Okay?" She turned back to me.

"Okay, I admit it," I confirmed with a smirk, "I'm scared and stupid. But it's not for stupid reasons."

"Right," she deflated a bit, but nodded, "Then, I guess... after it's all said and done. That's probably for the best. We'll just... wait for that day."

"Then we can try. And possibly stop dancing around it fearfully."

"Right. Waiting until that day," she said, "right after this."

"Right after what, now?" I looked down at her in confusion.

“This,” she whispered before wrapping her hooves around my neck and pulling me down into a kiss.

No, I’m not going into details on what it was like. Suffer if you must, but some things are just sacred and this was definitely one of them. It was simply a placeholder in a book we were closing until we were certain that we could finish it. It was a very nice placeholder, to be sure, but it was a placeholder nonetheless.

“That...” I murmured after we... separated, “That was so not waiting.”

“Suffer,” she said with a laugh, tapping my forehead with her horn, “And I’m a princess, I’ll wait when it so pleases me.”

“Of course,” I smirked as I glanced up to see my mane change back to its original colors, “Let’s get back to the others before grand assumptions are made about us running off together, alone. You keep that stupid Trollface on, though. You earned it.”

And so we trotted back to Appleloosa, cherishing the big mushy moment we shared for as long as we could. As bad as this sounds, I was starting to forget about ever going home, content to just... live out my days in the fun and adventurous land of Equestria. Living the dream, mackin’ out on the princess, and generally be envy of all bronies everywhere. At the same time though, I knew I had to take it seriously. If I wanted to stay, I had to help fix the damage caused by myself and other humans. Otherwise this Equestria would become a tragic tale of caution, used to warn others just how badly good intentions can go.

When we arrived back at Appleloosa, we headed straight for the Town Hall. We weren’t surprised to find Storm Wing and Twilight inside. We were, however surprised to see Whirlwind and Silverheart along with them. It didn’t take long for the dire mood to settle in. Play time was over.

“Silverheart, glad you’re okay. Thought you were going to be ground bound for longer than that.” I nodded as we entered the room.

“I ordered Tendercare to... expedite the process.” She gave a ghost of a smirk. “We’ve got big problems on our hooves, though.”

“Nightmare Sol and the Shadow Ponies are following the train,” Storm Wing explained.

“Guess she’s willing to find out if Celestia can handle fighting away from the sun,” Luna growled with a glare.

“We’ll be able to fight them off. This won’t be an ambush like before,” Twilight said with a nod.

“Well, we’re gonna be playing for keeps,” Whirlwind said with a nod, “We lost Blue Rain, Aurora, and Dusty to the Shadow Ponies, so with Hot Shot, they’ve four Sky Archons with them.”

“Looks like our little trip is going to be put on h-...!” I started to say before I was quite rudely interrupted.

Remember when I said it hurt when The Observer first contacted me? Yeah. I just didn’t know what real pain felt like. I fell to the ground as I seized up, rife with pain that came from every last part of me. I tried crying out, but no sound came forth. At least, no sound that I was trying to give out. The sound I was going for would have been a pitiful scream. Instead, out of my mouth came this:

“I am The Observer! You must hurry to me!” That was my mouth, but that wasn’t my voice. ***“Time is short!”***

Awesome. I’m a puppet now. That thrills me to no end. Cross something else off on the list of things I wish I’d never done.

“Stop! You’re hurting him!” Twilight cried out as everypony gathered around my prone self.

“His pain is momentary and necessary for me to deliver this message! You must come to me in the Everfree Forest at the Old Capitol! Without fail!”

“We’re soon to be under attack, Observer,” Luna said calmly, staring down at me angrily, “We’ll get to you as soon as we’ve repelled them. Now, release Firewall at once!”

“It will not matter if I am taken before you are victorious! We’ve a few scant hours and I am cutting into that time by speaking to you! There is no alternative for either of us!”

“I’ve no reason to trust a pony that refuses to show himself,” Storm Wing snarled angrily, “We’ll get to you when we can and not a moment sooner.”

“Trust me or do not. Disregard me, though, and Equestria and Earth will be burned to ashes. I must go. Make your choiaaaggggh! N... Never again!”

Luna knelt down to help nudge me up. I was sweating all over from such an ordeal, panting in shock at what had just happened. It was so intense that I didn’t even have the capacity to think, much less do something about it. Even still, I was aching all over, as though I had just been pieced back together, bit by bit.

“We... We need to get to him... Now,” I said between every other gasp, reaching a hoof up to wipe my brow, “This isn’t... Something we can... just ignore.”

“We’ve got a town to defend and innocents living in it. We can’t just pack up and leave on a field trip,” Whirlwind protested.

“Not to mention many more to come,” Silverheart reminded us, “The citizens from Canterlot are going to be arriving soon. The Sky Archons are with them, but this isn’t just a few monsters we’re going up against. It’s an army.”

Even I was up against a wall with that argument. I knew, deep down, that The Observer was our chance to stop this now but I couldn’t easily justify risking so many ponies on the whim of my intuition.

“This is the voice you told me about, Firewall?” Luna asked me, to which I confirmed with a nod, “Alright then. We’re going. You, me, and Twilight, right?”

“And Storm Wing,” I confirmed with a nod.

“I’m not going anywhere.” He shook his head. “I’ve lost four Sky Archons to Nightmare Sol and I’m going to get them back, even if I have to beat it out of her.”

“You’re coming, Storm. You especially. This concerns you more than it concerns Twilight, and even me,” I shuddered as the last bit of the aching pain slowly drained out of me.

“How so?” He didn’t seem happy, but his curiosity was definitely peaked.

“I think this has something to do with your parents,” I responded with a sigh, “I think this... Observer is the human that visited Equestria a thousand years ago. And the one that made the first Sky Archon. Your father.”

Everypony stood there in silence for several seconds. Surprisingly enough, Twilight was the first to respond.

“Wow,” she uttered sardonically, “It’s time for a recap, I’m obviously very far behind.”

“On our way. I’ll explain the entire thing, but the four of us need to roll,” I compromised, “I think he’s in danger and I’m even more certain he can help. Storm, are you coming?”

“I just...” He was definitely conflicted on the matter. “What if you’re wrong, Firewall? What if it’s a trap? Hay, what if this Observer is wrong? It doesn’t even have to be an enemy for us to lose everything.”

I hung my head and gave a shrug, “I don’t know, Storm. But right now, this is a losing situation. We’re not going to thrive like this. It’s going to get a lot worse before it gets better. Assuming it ever does. If we’re right, we might pull this out like a buncha champs. If we’re wrong, it’s

probably going to be over really quick, rather than really slowly.”

“You don’t know that!” Whirlwind shoved a hoof at me accusingly. “There are always options. You always told me that, Captain.”

“Storm Wing?” Silverheart stepped over to Storm Wing, who had shut his eyes, trying to think of another argument.

“I... I don’t like to be pessimistic,” Twilight offered with a grimace, “But if their numbers grow for every pony they take and ours diminish... It... It would just be a matter of attrition. I know this is a bad analogy, but... if the game doesn’t let you win... change the rules.”

“I can’t believe I’m hearing this,” Whirlwind shook his head before looking to Storm Wing, “You’re the Captain, Storm. If you want to give this a shot, you know I’ve faith in you, mate. I don’t have all the answers but... It can’t be so simple as ‘when do we lose,’ can it?”

“I’m going to go get the Carriage,” Luna slowly turned to leave, “Make up your mind, Storm. I’m not going to order you, but we are going. With or without you.”

“With,” he responded before she was out the door, “I’m going. Firewall, you had better be right, I swear, we are betting so much on this and... We lost so much on our last gamble. Lieutenant Silverheart, Lieutenant Whirlwind: Follow Luna to where she’s set up her Rhyme of Eternal Night. I want you both guarding it. If that falls, it’s over. Starlight’s in command. Don’t fail me.”

“Sir!” they both replied and rushed out the door. Whirlwind didn’t look happy, but he wasn’t going to question his orders. Sky Archons. You just don’t know reliability until you meet one.

“Thanks, Storm,” is all I said as we left Town Hall.

It was all pretty much quiet from there. The alarm had been sounded, all the ponies went into hiding, and those few brave enough to fight were gathered at the Square. As you might have guessed, all of the six were there, ready to do their part. Storm Wing pulled Rainbow Dash to the side to give her a bit of combat coaching, particularly worried for her sake. Me? I was scared to death and couldn’t laugh it off for once. There must have been less than a hundred ponies ready to fight. What was it all coming to, I kept asking myself. Ponies fighting war? What sick mind was twisting these events.

As we prepared to leave on the Sky Carriage, I found myself wondering what would happen if the spell was broken. Or if the Sky Archons all became Shadow Archons. Then I saw Fluttershy huddling up to Pinkie Pie for comfort and it tore me up to see it. I kept fearing that one of the Mane Six might get shadowed and we wouldn’t be able to free Celestia from The Nightmare.

That's when it hit me.

"The Elements of Harmony," I mouthed silently before turning to Luna, "Luna, where are the Elements of Harmony?"

She looked at me in shock before hanging her head a bit, sighing, "I had to use them to power the Rhyme of Eternal Night. I couldn't hold up the moon while I rested, so Twilight and I channeled their power into the spell."

"But they're okay," I nodded fearfully.

"They are, but... Once the spell is broken, I won't be able to control the moon again for a long time," she replied as Twilight approached.

"We... planned on using them as a last ditch effort. The Archons should be able to hold back the Shadow Ponies and even Nightmare Sol, but if they can't, we were going to break the spell and use the Elements," she explained before nodding, "So if the sun rises, I'll teleport back to the others and we'll do what we can with what we have."

"I've already explained to them that they're to remain on the back lines," Storm Wing hopped onto the Carriage and nodded, "Trust me, Firewall, we're as prepared as we're going to get. You're not the only one that can think on the fly."

"Thank god for that," I nodded, a tad relieved, "I'm just... I'm just worried."

"We all are." Luna smiled, her eyes a tad downcast with fear of her own. "We've got what it takes, though. Let's... save Equestria."

"Right on." I nodded as I hopped beside Storm Wing.

Twilight and Luna boarded, and we were given a sad sendoff by all the ponies watching us fly away. We promised to be back. I will say one thing did cheer me up a bit as I looked down at all the ponies waving up at us. That of Prince Blueblood standing amongst them. There might be some hope for that pony after all.

As we flew, I recapped everything I knew about the situation to both Twilight and Storm Wing. Twilight was particularly interested in the parts about Inmanipulon (I know, I used the word. Blargh.) and how it was a focusing of magic that left magicless spaces in its wake. Storm, actually, didn't speak. Not even when I told him that Azure Flora was probably his mother. He just sat and listened through the whole thing and kept it all bottled up. You'd think there'd have been a huge DUN DUN DUN gasp moment, but no, not Storm Wing. As strange as that was, though, I wasn't entirely surprised.

The trip took a while, as you might expect, but after Storm Wing took the reins, we began to rocket like never before. He was pushing himself to get this done so quickly, we could all tell. Still, the results could not be argued with. Twilight projected a windshield in front of us even and in just a couple of hours, we caught sight of the Everfree Forest off in the distance. That was when our first obstacle appeared.

"We've got company," Luna was staring off to the side, specifically a large cloud billowing our way from Canterlot. It was moving fast. As in, Sky Archon fast.

"Do you think it's Hot Shot?" Twilight asked.

"No," Storm shook his head, "Hot Shot's a Sword Archon. He's not very talented at weather manipulation."

"Probably that Ice Pony," I nodded at Storm Wing, sighing softly. "Nothing's ever easy."

"Nothing worth it ever was," he countered with a similar nod.

"TREMBLE, FOALS!" a very particular voice boomed from the cloud as it approached.

"Not her." Luna facehoofed.

I won't lie, the voice of Trixie still kinda... pepped me up just a tad. I know, that's bad. It's very bad. I should probably get that checked, maybe there's something wrong with me. Like that would be a huge stretch, right?

"They won't catch us." Storm Wing snapped angrily before kicking the overdrive into overdrive overdrive. So much overdrive!

"Ack!" I fell back against Luna, who was gracious enough to catch me (The first and only time a pony caught me. I get choked up just thinking about it!). I looked up at her with wry grin and chuckled, "Y'know, ponies are going to talk if stuff like this keeps happening."

"Like they aren't already," Twilight rolled her eyes as she looked back out at the cloud, "We're losing them and... Woah... Storm Wing, S... Slow down!"

Storm Wing is a crazy mother buckler. He dove right into the Everfree Forest at top speed, weaving amongst those trees like a champ. I glanced at how close we were getting and immediately opted to not look beyond the confines of the A.S.C.A. afterwards. I'll put it this way. We were going so fast that and getting so close that the trees were losing their leaves and bending with the drag. I failed to resist the urge to look beyond the looking outside of my ride as I got back up and immediately grabbed Twilight, shaking in fear. She grabbed me right back as we began screaming incoherently. I remember just hoping my death would be swift. Luna just

looked at her hoof and gave it a casual breath polishing, not worried in the slightest. Troll.

“OHHHHH MYYYYYY GOOOOOOOOOOOOD!!!!” I screamed as we blazed through the foliage. This was not good for my heart. Or anypony else’s heart for that matter. I was this close to wetting myself. Compare it to flying a much more maneuverable F-16 through an extra-tight canyon, if you must.

Like a champ, he made a wide swinging break that you’d see in a Burnout game or something, stopping us just a few feet away from the ruins of the old capitol. Twilight and I were shaking like rattles, still. When it finally registered that we had stopped moving, I hopped off that Carriage as fast as I could and shoved a hoof at Storm Wing.

“NEVER AGAIN!” I swore, “NOT EVEN TO SAVE MY LIFE!”

“Ha~... Agreed,” Twilight’s legs shook as she stepped off, her voice even shakier, “F-For... Forbidden, Storm.”

“You’re such a pair of fillies,” Storm Wing commented as he and Luna flapped their way off the ride.

“Indeed. Pony up, kids,” Luna smirked as she landed beside him. She looked up at the ruins and gave a serious scowl, “Let’s find this guy, pony, whatever, and get back to Appleloosa.”

With that, we began to scour the old city, trying to find this ‘tallest tower’ when in fact; the city was actually quite big. Thanks to Twilight’s OP self, we were able to get a magic map of the surrounding area and pinpointed it on the far side, away from the castle itself. What sucked though? Ice Pony. We knew we had wasted too much time when the fog began to roll in and sure enough, there he was at the entrance to the tower with Trixie and Azure Flora seemingly working to try and get the entrance open.

“The Anti-Magic isn’t working!” Azure Flora cried angrily, standing just behind her big frost bodyguard.

“Trixie told you to let her try first!” She snapped back, even angrier, “Now, The Great and Powerful Trixie can’t blast the stupid door down because your stupid dust is in the way!”

“They’re here,” Ice Pony announced as we stared at them.

“SUPPLIES!” I cried out happily, “Hey, let’s work together to get the door open! We wanna see what’s inside, too!”

“Shut up, Firewall,” Luna hit me in the shoulder for my nonsense. You’d think everypony would come to expect it by now, but I guess not. Twilight giggled at least.

Hey, I can dream.

“No, no!” Azure Flora grabbed her mane in frustration, “Please! Hold them back until we can get inside.”

I tried, at least.

“I will,” he nodded before suddenly dashing at us.

“You’re mine,” I heard Storm Wing say before rushing to meet him head on. I went to stop him, remembering Hot Shot but Storm’s kinda fast so uh... I ended up just having to chase after him. Even as I covered myself in fire, I knew I wasn’t going to catch him. Like I said. Kinda fast.

Funny thing about Storm Wing, he’s a lot stronger than Hot Shot. I expected it to go Ice Pony’s way when they hit, but Storm Wing actually flipped backwards midflight and bucked him hard. Like... You could feel it through the ground, hard. Ice Pony ain’t no pushover, though, and simply halted his backwards ricochet before rocketing back towards us.

While him and Storm tangled, Twilight teleported next to Azure Flora before giving her a buck straight to the face. Trixie moved to cast but suddenly got shot straight up into the sky thanks to a spell from Luna, who immediately took flight to chase after her.

“Help!” Flora cried out, stumbling back from Twilight whom was taking a physical approach to the anti-magic pony.

I grinned as the Ice Pony suddenly broke away from Storm Wing. He flew straight for Twilight to blindside her, but I actually got to contribute by blazing up to intercept, catching the giant pony by his tail and using his momentum to swing him around and sling him against a nearby building. I chased him to it and helped him pick up a little more speed by air tackling him into it, yelling out in triumph as I finally got to hit my first pony that wasn’t Blueblood.

“Firewall, down!” Storm called out as flew in behind me. I didn’t question, I just hit the ground as flatly as I could and he punched Ice pony straight through the building’s newly-damaged wall.

“Give it up, Azure!” Twilight demanded, kicking at her again.

“I can’t!” she cried out as she backed away.

“Look around us, you stupid girl!” I yelled out, getting back up and snorting a bit of fire, “How is this any better than what I could possibly do!? You and The Nightmare are killing Equestria more than I ever could!”

“Eeeep~!” Luna suddenly flew past me as Trixie came in behind her with a pair of magical purple starry wings, blasting lightning at her.

“The Great and Powerful Trixie is better than some dumb princess!” she declared as she started to rocket past me, too preoccupied to bother with anything else.

So, I clotheslined her with an outstretched hoof. Simple as that. I wish I could say that was the end of that, but Trixie glared at me after reorienting herself and sent me flying with an extra hateful bolt of lightning of disdain. And here I was her biggest fan. I crashed into a nearby crumbling shed, only to cause it to collapse on me loudly but painlessly, surprisingly enough. I bolted out from under all the debris almost immediately, wondering how I could take such a hit and not be out of it before remembering my fiery aura. It was obviously playing multiple roles here. How handy, don't you think? I know I did.

“Just... go... AWAY!” Flora yelled, her frustration finally peaking before manifesting a myriad of metal bars that grabbed Twilight and slammed her into the closest building, bending around her legs and neck to pin her there non-lethally.

“Ergh!” Twilight struggled against her bonds to no avail before looking back at me as I paused to catch up on the situation, “Firewall, look out!”

Trixie had caught me with my pants down and was about to give me more of the same when I got my plot saved. Luna took Trixie's distraction towards me as an opportunity to blast her against Azure Flora, knocking the showpony out.

Ice Pony came soaring back to her aid. I decided to interrupt his rescue mission a second time by speedily dashing up the tower's wall and stopped halfway up to jump off of it and collide into him. I bounced off of him harmlessly like a pinball, but the crash hit him much harder and his dive was pushed straight towards the ground. Storm Wing caught him mid fall and expedited the process, brutally driving him right into the dirt. I landed with a grunt and immediately dashed straight for him, knowing he wouldn't stay down, just yet. Sure enough, just as he started to not-so-quickly get up, he was lined up for me to run him back over. Storm Wing finished it all off by flying into the sky and crashing down onto him with a large bolt of lightning in his wake.

“No!” Azure Flora shrieked in horror as she shoved Trixie off of her to help her protector.

I let the fire die out around me, amazingly winded from having used all that magic and energy. Even Storm Wing was breathing hard as he got off the huge Ice Pony and stepped away, still crackling with electricity.

“It's over, Azure Flora,” Luna called out, landing behind Flora with her horn threateningly bared towards her.

She hung her head in defeat, and we all breathed a sigh of relief. That wasn't so bad, right?

"Not... Over...!"

The Ice Pony swung a hoof at Storm Wing, who jumped back in time, landing near me with an annoyed sigh.

"He's the Jugga'nawt~!" I laughed sadly, shaking my head as I turned the heat back up around me. (Yo weapon have no effect on me, I'm the Ice Pony, B@#\$&!!)

"If he doesn't stay down on his own," Storm Wing growled, "Then we'll make him stay down."

We started to charge at him as he began to slowly work his way back up, only to be interrupted by Azure Flora throwing herself in our path and embracing the Icy Freak protectively.

"We give up, we give up!" she cried, causing us to hit the brakes, "P-Please! D... Don't hurt him anymore! We surrender!"

The anti-magic bars holding up Twilight suddenly evaporated, freeing her from her uncomfortable constriction.

"What a relief," I said with a sigh, putting my fire back out.

"Amen." Storm Wing nodded.

She began to sob as she pulled his helmet and nuzzled against his face. His mane was steel blue and his fur was grey as a cloudy sky. Fortunately, he looked exhausted and mostly out of it. He tried to get back up, but she forced him back down, her tears turning to ice upon touching his face.

"Stop," she ordered him, "Just stop."

"Glad that's over," Twilight sighed as she and Luna approached.

"Indeed, I... Wait... It's impossible," Luna stared at towards Azure and her protector with a bewildered look in her eyes. After nearing them, she gently nudged Azure Flora aside as she looked upon the Ice Pony's face in shock, "Winter Sky!? But you're dead!"

"Not dead." The voice came from the tower as the doors slowly swung open, emitting a blinding blue light.

For several seconds, we all had to look away before the light finally began to fade. When everything became visible again, we all watched in awe as a large blue spectral pegasus. His

wings were just as abnormally large as the Ice Pony's were, though his eyes were much softer and kind. He was somewhat transparent, but there was no mistaking that he and the pony in Azure's embrace were almost completely identical. He stared at each and every one of us before looking to Azure Flora and smiling somewhat. Flora's eyes were wide with disbelief, as though what she was seeing were only a cruel trick.

"Merely forgotten." It's voice was distant and echoing as though it's source was somewhere else altogether, ***"But no longer. I remember my name again, at last. I remember everything."***

The armored Ice Pony began to glow a soft grey light before suddenly vanishing, leaving only the light in its wake. Flora gasped in shock as her hooves were suddenly empty before watching the light flow towards the spectre, and we were all forced to look away again as another great flash of light flickered out from him. As we all looked back, we saw a new pegasus standing there in white armor with a long, wild steel blue mane and tail. Hair just like Storm Wing's.

"My name is Winter Sky, The Shield of Equestria," he said, his voice and form now corporeal, "And after a thousand years, I have returned."

[Chapter Nine](#)

[Chapter Eleven](#)

Next time on "**Through The Eyes Of Another Pony!**"

"Oh no!"

"What?! What's happening?!"

"Can you not see?!"

"Firewall..."

"Friggin'... ... You're not blind, Storm. Okay? When I can make faces at you and you can't see them, you're blind. Until then, you can't say you are. Just... visually impaired."

"Just shut up and tell me what's going on!"

"The sun is rising!"

~

"NO! IMPOSSIBLE! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD!"

"Keep telling yourself that as I tear you out of her."

Final Word Count: 20,786 @.@