

Not Exactly As I Dreamed
Epilogue – Dreams Come True

Rainbow Dash stepped into Princess Celestia's chamber. "Excuse me, Princess," she said. "You wanted to see me?"

"I do," Celestia nodded. "Thank you for meeting with me."

"Did you want to know about what happened to me in the other world?" the pegasus asked, walking closer toward the Princess. As she went, she shut the door behind her.

"Yes, if you want to talk about it," Celestia nodded. "I would like to know what you've experienced there. What was it like?"

Rainbow Dash was silent for a long time. Finally, she said, "I don't know. It was really scary. Instead of ponies, there are these creatures called humans. They look really weird, but I guess they're not horrible. They've done a lot of things to their world, but I guess it's because they don't have magic there. I couldn't feel comfortable there at all, and all I wanted to do was come home." She shrugged. "It wasn't exactly what I expected it to be. Actually, I don't even know what I expected it to be."

Princess Celestia closed her eyes in thought. "I understand. Is there anything else?"

The pegasus hesitated for a while. "Well, there is one thing. This thing called television they have there... It shows us. It shows our lives in Equestria, from the time when we beat Nightmare Moon up to the Grand Galloping Gala. I don't know how it works, and Mason said he couldn't figure it out either."

"Who is Mason? A... human, you called them?"

"Yeah," Rainbow Dash nodded. "He helped me when I was over there. He did his best to keep me safe and stuff. You know... I never really thanked him for that." Her ears and tail drooped.

"I'm sure he knows how you feel," Princess Celestia said soothingly. She paused a moment before saying, "Rainbow Dash. I want to tell you a story that is thousands of years old, that Luna and I have kept secret for most of our lives."

"What kind of story?" Rainbow Dash asked.

"A tale that tells of the creation of Equestria," Celestia explained. "Back in my youth, I was visited by one of these humans in a dream. She didn't appear in her true form, though. She took the shape of an alicorn, like Luna or myself. She told me her name was Lauren, and that she created our land of Equestria.

"You see, on Earth, for that was what she said her world was, there is a magic greater than what you would consider powerful here. Humans can cultivate worlds of their own through their own imagination. They work together to bring these worlds to life, and then they share them with others so they can enjoy them as well. Lauren told me of her desire to share our world with others of her kind to help the magic of friendship grow in their world. For, as I'm sure you know, the power of friendship is weak there. There are many humans who live with love in their hearts, but many more never grow to know of it. Our world was made to help theirs. And, interestingly, from what you told me, their world helped ours."

"How is that?" Rainbow Dash asked, confused.

"The human Mason, who cared for you when you had nowhere to turn... I think he played a major part in ensuring that you returned to our world safely."

"You're right," Rainbow Dash agreed. "It makes me wish I could go back there, just for

a moment, to say thank you.”

“I know how it feels, my little pony,” Princess Celestia lowered her head to nuzzle the pegasus. “I was lonely for much of the millennium that passed after I had to send Luna to the moon. I longed for the company of my sister, though I knew I could not see her. Luckily, ponies like you and your wonderful friends have made it worthwhile. Many ponies have missed you in your absence, Rainbow Dash. Friendship is a treasure that is more valuable than the strongest magic or all the gold in the world. Cherish it closely.”

“I will, Princess,” Rainbow Dash promised as she looked up toward Celestia’s eyes.

“Thank you,” Celestia said. “That is all. You may go.”

Rainbow Dash bowed and walked out of the room, eyes glistening.

After seeing the pegasus leave, Celestia turned and stepped toward the nearby balcony. The moon was low in the western sky. “Luna, our dream was true,” she uttered in a hushed voice.

“You didn’t tell her?” a voice from above asked. Luna dove down next to Celestia on the balcony, landing gracefully. “You didn’t tell her that that was the reason you organized that project to begin with?”

Celestia shut her eyes in contemplation. “I didn’t tell her because I realize that I was selfish. I wanted to see for myself what Lauren’s world was like. But after all this has happened, it is folly to keep pursuing it at the risk of others.”

“You can find a way, Tia,” Luna nudged her sister reassuringly. “I know you can.”

“No, sister,” Celestia sighed. “I cannot continue this project. It is not right for us to be in their world. They are not ready for us, nor we for them. Rainbow Dash was fortunate to find a human with a good heart there. I doubt that anypony else could be so lucky. From what I’ve heard from her, it is a fearsome place. I honestly believe it was for the best that the transdimensional gate was destroyed.”

Luna considered her sister’s words. “We should continue this discussion some other time. As for me, I think I shall retire. The night is just about over. See you in the evening.” With a loving smile, she spread her wings and flew off.

Celestia eyes followed Luna as she returned to her quarters. “See you in the evening,” she whispered as the moon sunk below the horizon. Then, her horn blazing white, she raised her head high. The sky’s colors bloomed and grew brighter. As she had for millennia, the Princess raised the sun, heralding the dawn. It was a new day in Equestria.