

<uSeaGM> ***Group 4 Session 108***

<uSeaGM> The steam train you boarded looks almost brand new. It's certainly been very well decorated and lovingly maintained. There are very few other passengers at this time of morning (especially the day after one of Pinkie's parties) giving the group, and the mane six, almost the entire train to themselves.

<uSeaGM> The landscape outside the windows passes in a blur. The gentle *chug-chug* of the train is quite relaxing. You are on your way to Canterlot. There shouldn't be long to wait.

<uSeaGM> *Session Begins*

* Whisper curls up on one of the seats and watches the landscape pass by.

* Prism presses her nose up against window.

* Watch is keeping his distance...he is trying to recompose himself.

* Artifica mimics Prism. "Wow."

* Jasmine_Mistplume paces back and forth, fidgeting with her talons nervously. "Ooohh dumb dumb DUMB!" she wailed to herself. "Why am I so dumb?!" she was definitely NOT feeling all the relaxation that the train chugging was supposed to provide.

* Artifica holds up Berry so she can enjoy the scenery.

* Artifica wraps her tail around Milia's and ooohs.

* Jasmine_Mistplume wasn't thinking about the train getting attacked by the chryssalids, at least

<Prism> "Wowww....."

* Milia was, like many of her other friends and family she imagines, smooshing her face right up against the window. She happily coils her tail around Artifica's and stares out the passing scenery, entranced. "Y'know, I gotta say? This is a lot better than watching a bunch of inky black darkness full of mutated bug monsters that want to kill you punctuated by the occasional flickering

* Milia tunnel light."

* Artifica nods firmly.

* Milia turns to Artifica. It takes considerable effort to tear her attention away from just... staring. "S-so, hey!... Um... I was thinking about... having Lavender help me remember my birth name. I just talked with her about it back when we were waiting for the train, and... apparently it might be possible."

<uSeaGM> Lavender Dream nods from her perch on Milia's shoulder.

* Prism hugs Whisper.

* Whisper Prism back.

* Artifica blinks. "It's not 'Milia'?"

* Milia shakes her head. "Nope." Wait, that could maybe use some clarification. "Well... it sorta is. Kinda. 'Milia' is what the group of ponies that adopted me named me. But... I don't think that's what I was named originally. You know, when I erupted from my mom's crotch."

* Artifica winces, then chuckles. "Colorful."

<uSeaGM> Lavender lets out a sigh, nodding at Artifica. "She does have a way with words, doesn't she?"

* Milia turns her nose up all fake-snooty like. "Well, it's how it happens!" she insists.

* Watch sighs softly. He feels more under control and he trots out to rejoin the others.

* Artifica blinks. Then slyly says, "Well, since you're the expert, you get to be the one who has the kids."

* Prism looks at everyone. "Haha."

<Watch> "err...what did I walk in on?"

<Prism> "It's like they're already married."

* Milia would do a spit-take, were she drinking something! She instinctively hunches down in her seat, turning a shade of pink and suddenly getting very bashful. "Ahahahaaaa... hah... that's, umm... well..."

* Milia meekly looks over to Artifica. "D-do you... want... foals?... I mean, besides Berry..."

<uSeaGM> Mercy and Lavender burst out giggling.

* Milia pouts over at Prism, and then down at her spirits. This backfired!

* Artifica nuzzles Milia. "I don't think that's how two mares work, love."

* Artifica pauses, "Unless you know some shaman-y thing I don't."

* Milia nuzzles back. "Well... but there's magic and stuff, right?... I mean... is it /impossible/? There's no mega-gay baby-making spell? Or a potion or something?"

<Watch> "Well...my transformation spells I'm told didn't work to allow that but uhh...that is the

last place I have any experience

* Milia just offers a shrug and a headshake to that question. "I'll... ask Zecora, maybe."

* Artifica smiles. "I'm open to the idea if there is a way and you would like to. But I'm not fixated on it."

* Jasmine_Mistplume chews in her talons and finally just sits down in her seat, and stares out the window. Watching the scenery go by would be an adequate distraction. Maybe. Hopefully.

* Milia leans in and kisses Artifica. "Well... one thing at a time, then... let's see how things go."

* Artifica admits, "I think we should first focus on getting married. Maybe officially adopting Berry. And seeing how (or if) our life settles."

* Milia nods. "Totally agree."

<Watch> "You know..." Watch says having worked up the courage while isolated. "I've been thinking...you know you all could stay here in the past...once we save it...It'd be better for Berry...and well Prism and Whisper deserve a shot at happiness too..."

* Prism looks down. Her reactions to Berry made her certain that she was terrible with foals, so that sort of nixed her want to have any. She looks at Whisper. "You doing okay?"

* Artifica glances towards the griffin and asks Milia, "Also, is it just my imagination, or does Jasmine have a crush on one of the Ministry Mares?"

* Milia looks over to Watch Tower. He seemed to be doing better, at least... "We /all/ do."

* Milia then turns to look at Jasmine. She snickers a bit, before leaning into Artifica and whispering, "She is totally in lesbians with Rainbow Dash. The girl-crush was so powerful it /literally/ set me on fire."

<Milia> ((powerful*))

* Whisper nods to Prism. "Yeah. I'm fine."

<Watch> "one of us needs to go back...at the least." he smiles. "I'd need to grab my dad and drag him into the past...maybe Gold to have him meet his doppelganger...,but I've also got things I need to handle..."

* Artifica looks to Watch. "Where is your family?"

* Milia gestures down to Mercy. "She can back me up on that."

<Watch> "on the border of the badlands...in that nice little area where the desert starts."

* Artifica whispers conspiratorially back, "Anything off of Rainbow Dash yet?"

* Milia considers. She folds her forelegs and goes 'Hmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.....' for like, 10 seconds. Finally, she whispers back, "...She said 'cute kid'. Not the best sign. But! Also not the worst."

<uSeaGM> Mercy nods at Milia. "Totally in lesbians." Then she turns to Lavender. "What's lesbians?"

<uSeaGM> Lavender explains. Mercy grins.

* Artifica snickers.

* Artifica comments, "I noticed earlier that Apple Bloom still doesn't have her Cutie Mark, so that means it's the Cutie Crusaders era still. Think Sweetie Belle and her friends have tried to play matchmaker yet?"

* Artifica bets, "If not, I'm sure we could enlist them to help."

<Watch> "hey what was apple Bloom's cutie mark anyway? I've personally seen Sweetie's...and I've seen Milia's statuette."

* Milia then frowns at Watch Tower. "We don't know how the time gate works... for all we know, it snapped shut the moment we were all through. Assuming going back is a /choice/... there's no guarantee you can get back." She groans, now reminded of Hope's current status. "**rrrgh*... responsibilities..." Please, brain. Stop thinking about going back to the future. You literally /just/ got

* Milia here.

* Artifica shrugs. "Well, she started out as an architect... so maybe it was something architectural? Although it was her arcanotech inventions that really changed everything."

<Watch> "Milia...if it doesn't work that way...then I won't find peace here...I just ..." He shakes his head. "sorry I guess I just get wrapped up in that kind of thing..."

* Artifica puts a gentle hoof on Watch. "Being wrapped up in family... I can't imagine anything more worthy."

* Artifica points at Applejack. "I think she'd agree."

<Prism> "If it's even possible, and if I have a choice...I don't plan to return."

* Milia is just going to grab a big ol' mental pushbroom and sweep those 'you shouldn't stay' thoughts under a big mental rug. It's a tasteful thing. Expensive looking. With tassles! The zebra then looks over to Watch Tower and nods, affirming Artifica's sentiment.

* Watch nods and looks to applejack going quiet and thinking...hearing that it was...normal to be

worried about his family...despite just how...well extraordinary circumstances are...was a good feeling...one he needed to feel normal.

<Prism> "I spent so much of my life learning about the past...and now I'm here, it's like a dream come true."

<Watch> "I think honestly...a part of me is afraid this is a one time thing..."

<uSeaGM> The mane six had been having their own conversations a polite distance away, not wanting to eavesdrop on their guests. Applejack notices Artifica's hoof point and turns to the group. "What's that you're sayin'?"

<Watch> "And you all have the chance to be happy...and well." he chuckles. "circumstances conspired for me."

* Milia smiles at Prism. "It's a heIIlllck of a thing to have to give up..."

* Watch swallows eep he got their attention and he clams up suddenly

* Artifica points out, "She's part of the Apple family, and her flank has three apples. I don't think it's possible to have a Cutie Mark that says 'family' any clearer unless it was a family photo."

<uSeaGM> AJ smiles. "Darn tootin! Caring about family and friends are the two most important things in a pony's life." She nods. "By my reckonin'."

* Artifica pats Watch. "There. See?"

* Milia listens to Applejack intently. She soaks up the charmingly rustic swearing that seems to be appropriate to this time period...

<Prism> "Darn tootin? I gotta write that one down."

* Milia raises a hoof and glances frantically at Prism. "Make a copy for me, too! I need to learn!"

* Artifica looks between Prism and Milia with an expression of oh-how-this-could-go-wrong.

<Watch> "yeah, but I also worry about our responsibilities...",

* Artifica nods to Watch. "If this trip is successful, we'll have undone the problem... even the potential of the problem."

<uSeaGM> Applejack chuckles. "I'm glad you folks from the future are all friendly! The more I thought about it the more I worried we'd seem backwards n' quaint to y'all."

* Artifica tries to hide how skeptical she is of their mission today.

* Milia comments aloud, "You do." Wow, that sounded rude! She quickly follows up with, "Err!

But, in a real enviable way, I mean!"

* Artifica facehoofs.

* Milia clears her throat awkwardly at orangehorse. "It's... good! Real good... like, yeah!... Way better than where we come from. Totally!"

<Watch> "what if Twi...was right arti and there is a timeline thing...and it's fine AJ...you remind me of my uncle...right down to the hat."

* Artifica waves a hoof at Milia, "Observe: the level of cooth and manners prevelent in our time. To us, you are the height of civilization."

<uSeaGM> Rarity can't help but chuckle. She hides it behind a hoof, though.

* Milia puts on a pouty look. "I'm a product of my environment!..."

<Prism> "I wish we had a mutfruit to show em..."

* Artifica says to Prism, "I'm rather glad we don't."

* Artifica isn't sure who would find the repulsive-looking, mutated fruit more an affront, Rarity or Applejack.

<uSeaGM> Passing around a bend in the mountain brings Canterlot into view at last, in all its mid-morning glory.

* Milia brightens at the mention of mutfruit. "Oh, man, I'd be /dead/ if it wasn't for that stuff. It was always a treat to find some growing in the wild. It was free food!"

<Watch> "well I have about fifty pounds of future snack food...not including berry's share back in the stash..."

* Artifica then asks the ponies, "So on that note, I think we best ask... what is the proper etiquette for meeting with the Goddesses?"

<uSeaGM> "Look everypony, we're nearly at Canterlot!" Twilight points out.

* Whisper looks at the city.

* Artifica turns to look out the window. Her eyes go wide. "Whoa.... It's so /white/!"

* Prism 's eyes widen. Which wasn't really noticeable behind her sunglasses, which she absolutely needed. "Oh my gosh!"

* Watch blinks. "it's...like out of a fantasy boook..." Watch's eyes go wide.

* Jasmine_Mistplume had been staring out the window the entire way ever since she had sit

down to try and calm herself, and she can't help but fix her gaze at the castle on the cliff in awe as it drew ever closer.

* Milia is stunned. Too stunned for manners. "Hoooooooly shit... I've always wondered what it looked like before the Enclave obliterated it... How is it staying connected to the mountain like that?..." she mutters. That was some /crazy/ architecture.

<Watch> "Magic"

* Milia readily accepts that explanation.

<uSeaGM> Twilight clears her throat, sounding official. "When meeting with a princess you must be sure to stop exactly half way down the red carpet and bow, only getting to your hooves when given permission. After that you must remain at a respectable distance!" Twilight coughs. "In less formal settings just the bowing will suffice."

<Watch> "what counts as a respectful distance?"

<Prism> "Not up in their faces, I'm assuming."

* Whisper slowly raises a hoof. "Are you sure you need me there? I could just wait outside the room while the rest of you meet the princesses, or something."

* Artifica nods slowly. Then asks, "Will it cause a problem when my daughter licks them?"

* Jasmine_Mistplume stands up and leans over the back of the seat in front of her and looks down at Milia and pokes her. "Hey! Hey! Milly! Milly! Lookit lookit! Its so cool looking! Are you seeing this? Are you seeing it?!"

* Milia raises a hoof. "To be fair, when Mercy wants you to bow to her, the subsequent act of 'maintaining a respectful distance' usually involves being muzzle to muzzle with her." She shrugs. "Maybe it varies from royalty to royalty..."

* Artifica nods to Whisper. "We are sure we need you."

<Whisper> "Oh. Okay."

* Milia chuckles up at Jasmine. "I am, Jas!" she exclaims, attempting to match the gryphon's enthusiasm. "It's /gorgeous/, isn't it?"

* Whisper goes back to just looking out the window.

<uSeaGM> Twilight blinks, her expression suddenly worried. "I-I don't know! That was never written in the books!" She bites her lip. "What if they quiz us on royal etiquette before they let us see Celestia?! Everypony's counting on me to know! What if I fail the quiz?! We'll won't be able to save the future!" Twilight hyperventilates.

* Prism hugs Whisper. "I'll be there with you."

* Whisper hugs back. "Thanks."

<Prism> "Everything I've heard about Princess Celestia said she was the type not to be overly concerned with etiquette."

<Prism> "So I think there's some leeway there."

<Jasmine_Mistplume> "Why does NOTHING ever look like this ANYWHERE we go? There's gotta be someplace /somewhere/ that looks as amazing as back here in the past!" she laments.

* Watch canters in place Twilight's panic is a little contagious.

* Artifica looks to Twilight's friends. "A... quiz?"

<Watch> "do they do that?"

<uSeaGM> Applejack chuckles. "It'll be fine. Twilight always gets nervous before meeting with Celestia. She'll be right as rain in just a few minutes."

* Milia smiles sadly up at Jasmine. "Ah... well, maybe somewhere, Jas. Just... not in Equestria. Or, if there is... I sure as shoot ain't seen it."

* Milia offers, "Aquaria was white, though. Aquaria was /really/ white."

<uSeaGM> The train whistle blows, and as if on cue, Twilight snaps out of it. "We've arrived!"

* Watch nods and files up at the door

* Milia blinks a few times as Twilights internal 'off' switch flips in an instant. "Woah..."

<uSeaGM> The train pulls up to Canterlot station with a hiss of steam. Soon everyone is out on the platform. The city hustles and bustles with mid-morning activity.

* Artifica counters, "Aquaria was /too/ white. And Canterlot makes white look good." Aquaria didn't.

* Whisper looks around as they exit the train.

* Milia then hops up from her seat. She giggles at Artifica. "No argument here."

* Prism exits the train with her friends.

<uSeaGM> Twilight and friends lead the way through the streets toward the castle. "This way everypony!"

* Whisper follows along.

* Milia follows along as well, and may gradually grow ever so slightly panicked and just a TEENSY bit overwhelmed at being surrounded by so many huge buildings and unfamiliar ponies. Deep breaths, Milly. Deep breaths.

* Watch follows Twilight like a she is a teacher and he's a foal at school.

<uSeaGM> The city is busy and full of ponies, and the group heads past all manner of shops and stores, selling everything from pipe tobacco to quills and sofas...

* Artifica has been in a city before. Granted, a smaller, smellier, more cramped city. Canterlot is... wow.

* Artifica again wraps her tail around Milia's this time to help steady her.

* Prism gasps.

* Milia GLADLY leans in and trots beside her emotional anchor. Her tail eagerly coils around the unicorn's and holds on tight.

* Jasmine_Mistplume takes in the sights as they walk, making note of the busy streets and hustle and bustle. As they walk by she spots a diner called 'Pennys' and suddenly she starts to feel a strange sense of deja vu. She turns to look at Milia as if on instinct. "...I feel like I've been here before..."

* Artifica points out the tobacco store. "Something to look forward to on our way back, love."

* Milia lets out the most excited terrified squeak you've ever heard a scared zebra from the future make. And, I know that sounds kind of specific, but trust me. It was an impressive squeak. "They /do/ smoke here!..."

<uSeaGM> Strange Mercy looks around wide-eyed.

<Prism> "I have never seen so many ponies in one place before..."

* Prism has never been to any sort of major city before.

<uSeaGM> Lavender Dream covers her ears at the noise... plus the loud squeak.

* Watch blinks as they pass the quills. "Hey Twilight...please remind me to come back and buy some quills and parchment..."

<Prism> "Watch, I still got some pencils if you need them."

<Prism> "And clipboards."

<uSeaGM> Twilight smiles at Watch. "We have one of those stores in Ponyville, too. Come on, we're nearly at the castle." Tall, elegant white stone towers and a grand entrance greets you all at Canterlot castle. Royal guards are dotted around but they pay you no notice after they see

Twilight and her friends with you.

<Watch> "oh...have...those been invented yet?" He pauses.

* Watch looks at one of the guards and is internally pleased. He was about their size normally.

<Prism> "Does it matter?"

<Prism> "They're ones that I nicked from Aquaria."

<Watch> "it just occurred to me." he smiles. "It was just one of those things that occurred to me that I didn't have..."

* Artifica thinks aloud, "Even if we fail here, we can still do small things to improve life in the future. First step, buy a safe -- the kind that lasts through everything -- and fill it full of toilet paper."

<Watch> "Safes and bottle caps Arti."

<Prism> "Also I think they have been invented. I'm pretty sure that schools mostly use them. Quills are used for fancy calligraphy and the like."

<Jasmine_Mistplume> "We /wont/ fail..." Jasmine responds to Artifica

* Milia leans over and nuzzles the tiny memory spirit. She looked like she needed the comforting gesture as much as Milia needed Artifica's.

<Watch> "never saw them referenced in books..." He figured Prism was probably right.

<uSeaGM> Lavender gives Milia a thankful smile. It was much quieter near the castle.

<uSeaGM> When inside an aide rushes over and whispers in Twilight's ear. Twilight nods and turns to the group. "We're to head to the throne room at once. Princess Celestia is waiting for us." Again Twilight takes the lead, heading deeper into the castle. Here the guards salute and wave you through.

* Watch is definitely distracted by the decadence of the castle he's never ever seen anything comparable

* Prism looks at the guards, and nods to them, acknowledging them.

* Milia seems most entranced by the stained glass windows they pass by more than anything else. "Duuuuude... those windows are totally boss... they're like... glass pictures..." The way the sun shined through them and cast a multitude of color on the palace floor was something she had to struggle to tear her eyes away from.

* Watch sees the ministry mares on them and then grins. "Hey Milia...do you think we'll get a

window ourself?"

<Watch> selves*

* Milia tiny gasps at the thought. "That... would be... so... radicoool..."

<uSeaGM> Twilight stops in front of a pair of grand wooden doors and pushes them open...

* Jasmine_Mistplume seems to be rather distracted by one of the guards. She walks up to them and blinks. "So.... do you just... stand there all day?"

<uSeaGM> The guard makes no reply.

* Watch stops and watches the doors as they open...his body tensing for what he might see

<uSeaGM> The throne room is long and elegantly decorated with hanging pennants. Its high arched ceiling leaves the onlooker with a sense on awe. On either side are tall stained glass windows in pinks, blues, and yellows. A magnificent red carpet runs the length of the room, all the way to the raised dais and the golden throne.

<uSeaGM> <http://gyazo.com/289da0a748029f6887faf74a6ee80e2e>

<uSeaGM> <http://gyazo.com/02d1c0c772b7cf3bdb3d87382e4a2a9f>

<uSeaGM> Sitting on the throne is Princess Celestia, her graceful mane flowing gently in a cosmic breeze. Princess Luna is seated to her right in a smaller (although still ornate) chair that looks like a temporary addition. Celestia smiles as you enter, while Luna looks more stern. Other than the princesses, the throne room is empty.

* Jasmine_Mistplume starts to poke the guard, blinking when he doesnt respond. She cranes her neck and cups a talon next to her beak "I THINK THIS ONES BROKEN!" she shouts. She turns to leave for the throne room, but looks back one last time, and takes his helmet, examining it as she leaves

* Artifica suddenly gets very nervous.

* Watch finds himself...underwelmed...he was expected to be afraid or scared...he's just blank...huh...and then it hits.

<uSeaGM> Twilight and her friends approach the dais and bow. Twilight gestures for you to do the same.

* Watch bows quickly

* Artifica bows to the carpet.

* Prism feels sick. She hadn't told anyone she was afraid of alicorns and the sight of Princess Celestia made her start shaking. She approaches to half-way and does an extremely nervous

bow.

* Milia instinctively rears back and steps away from the opening doors the /moment/ the doors open. The sight was enough to nearly knock the wind out of her, and the sight of the two mares sitting at the end of the /ridiculously/ foreboding length of carpet was not what she was expecting. This is not what alicorns looked like. These were /goddesses/.

* Jasmine_Mistplume tries to fit the helmet on her head, as she looks up at the princess duo. She glances over towards Twilight, and then to the others as they bowed. Jasmine did no such thing. Instead, she waved at the pair, wiggling her talons as she did so. "...Hi!"

* Milia nervously shuffles forward. "A-ah! Right! Bowing!... err... crap!..." She awkwardly mimics the gesture the rest of her group was performing.

<Watch> "/me pulls up quickly

* Whisper bows.

* Watch pulls up quickly*

* Watch whispers to Twilight. "so uhh...what are we supposed to do?"

<uSeaGM> "Please rise," bids Celestia. "Twilight said in her letter that you had something every important to tell us, and that we may be able to avoid a great catastrophe."

* Artifica swallows hard and stands up, her legs feeling very shaky. She was really doing this.

<Watch> "Did...she not go into detail?" He asks suddenly afraid that they'd recap and not be believed

* Milia finds her tail, for the third time in the last couple hours, coiling around Artifica's. "Or... at least where we're from?"

<uSeaGM> The princess nods gently, mother to a whole nation. "We wish to hear it from you. You are from the future, is that correct?"

* Whisper rises when prompted.

* Artifica nods slowly and hates herself for nodding.

* Watch swallows. "Yes. We are from the future...well our present...that is this is the past...well it might be a version of the past." He babbles semantics

<uSeaGM> Celestia frowns slightly, looking at Watch, but her expression softens in the space of a moment.

<Prism> "Y-y-y-yes." She shakily rises.

* Jasmine_Mistplume stares at Celestia and Lunas manes. "Woah, your manes are gorgeous, did anyone ever tell you that?" She looks astonished, and then stares at her friends, whos manes were comparatively ordinary. She approaches them ((much to the chagrin of Twilight)) and attempts to feel them "How do you get it all... misty like that?"

* Milia specifies, "T-two hundred years."

* Milia hisses, "Jasmine!..."

* Watch grows deeply tense as Celestia frowns...something about that put him on guard...,but she relaxed...and he forced himself calm.

* Watch finds his attention drawn to their manes...and he thought HIS flowed...his mane unconsciously tries to find a middle ground between theirs moving in a quiet rhythm.

* Artifica forces herself to step forward, "Yes, Goddess Celestia. We come from a future marred by horrific tragedy. Finding ourselves in the past, we cannot rightfully /not/ make an attempt to change history for the better. But I-I must admit, I am at a loss for how."

<uSeaGM> Luna scowls at Jasmine's approach and moves to stand, but Twilight was already magically tugging the griffin back to the group. "Ahahaha!" Twilight laughs nervously. "From the future and /very/ friendly!"

* Artifica looks at Twilight hauling back Jasmine, and then quickly checks around herself. Where's Berry?

* Milia leans into Artifica. "Maybe... Littlehorn might be a good place to start, do you think?... Wasn't that a big turning point?... What if the school didn't get built in that spot?..." She may have currently thinking a bit too small scale, considering the scope of the war.

<Milia> ((leans into Artifica and whispers*))

<Watch> "umm...how about we tell them the details...leading up to the war?"

* Prism keeps looking behind her, she looked ready to bolt.

<Watch> "maybe prevent it from ever happening at all?"

<uSeaGM> Celestia chuckles lightly. "Please call me Princess, or Celestia. This is my sister, Princess Luna." She nods to the alicorn beside her. "Perhaps we should start with introductions and then you may tell your tale."

<Jasmine_Mistplume> *HUNF* Jasmine is suddenly jerked back by a tingly magical force, as she trips over and her talons start to drag across the carpet. She turns around and sees Twilight's horn magic enveloping her tail. As she gets pulled back to the group, she frowns and lets out a dissapointed "Awww... I was just curious!"

* Artifica shakes her head and whispers, "We don't really /know/ the events leading up to the war. I've been thinking about it all night, but... the best I can come up with is either trying to stop progress (which I can't see being acceptable) or try to stop the use of coal (but we don't have a viable alternative)."

* Milia swallows nervously. Crap, introductions! "O-oh! Um... sorry! M-my name's... umm... errr..." What was her name? HOW DO YOU FORGET THAT. "Ahhh... oh! M-Milia! My name's... my name's Milia."

* Artifica bows again, "Artifica, at your service."

<Prism> "Ahh..ah...P-p-p-p-prism."

<Watch> "Well Arti...I think that is is a good place to start...oh! introductions...I am Watch Tower...and uhh apparently you go to war with the Zebra lands over Coal...so umm try and make sure to watch out on that front...be kind to your neighbors?"

* Milia will then introduce the two spirits hanging about her. "And, this is Strange Mercy... and this is Lavender Dream. They're... umm... spirits."

<uSeaGM> Mercy waves. "I'm Strange Mercy! Can we kiss now?"

* Milia meekly offers, "She's... really affectionate."

* Artifica buries her face in the carpet but has to love Mercy.

<uSeaGM> Lavender just sighs, letting Milia do her for her introduction.

* Jasmine_Mistplume grins, and poses for the monarchs. "I am Jasmine! In the future I fight for what is right and good! I protect the defenseless! Take down tyrants! I strive to make the wasteland a better place!"

<Watch> "oh! the sleeping filly hiding in my mane is Berry." His Mane shifts uncovering the filly who managed to hide fairly well because of her grey donkey coat

* Watch blinks. "oh wow I am suddenly VERY thankful that killing joke sample was burned before we came here..."

* Milia has /been/ very thankful she burned that disaster just waiting to happen.

<uSeaGM> Celestia blinks in surprise at the two spirits. This is made even worse by Mercy's request. Luna scowls at the fire spirit, but the frown goes away when Jasmine introduces herself. Luna looks at the griffin appraisingly.

<Watch> "anyway uhh...do you want our story or the one of our time?"

* Prism looks at Artifica. "Y-y-y-y-you c-could alw-always show her the b-b-b-book."

<Watch> "That would be the best place to start"

* Artifica cringes at the idea. "I really, really don't want to. That's the utter definition of Too Much Information."

<uSeaGM> Celestia bows her head. "We are both pleased to meet you. We would like to hear whatever you would tell us."

* Artifica adds for Mercy's benefit, "And not in the good way."

<Prism> "I-it is a b-b-bit p-profane."

<Watch> "the worst there is is some colorful swearing involving the princess"

<uSeaGM> Mercy still looks hopeful. She hadn't actually heard a 'no' yet...

<Watch> ",but Arti the details of that book might be important."

<Watch> "I guess...while...they sort that out..." Watch swallows and takes a breath. "I can't speak of before I met them, but I met them in the town of new hope...I don't know if there is a city yet that corresponds to it, but I had arrived there following a caravan from a Town named the Crossroads from outside of Dodge...When I met them they'd recently dealt with a

* Artifica steps forward, "Goddesses.... er, Celestia and Luna... much of the details of what started the world on its dark and tragic path has been lost to us." She's been running these thoughts through her head the entire walk here. Once she's started, each next word becomes easier. "But we can surmise a few things with fairly high certainty..."

* Watch swallows and lets Arti take the floor.

* Milia is happy to listen to Artifica as she takes point. It gives her a nice chance to calm down.

<uSeaGM> Celestia nods.

* Prism takes off her sunglasses...she just realized that it might be rude to have them on. In doing so she makes eye contact with Luna, and then immediately turns her gaze to the floor.

* Artifica tells the Princesses, "...in the very near future, the industriousness and innovation of ponies is going to push magical and technological progress past a threshold, beyond which things begin to change rapidly."

* Jasmine_Mistplume looks at Luna, as she seems to examine Jasmine. She continues. "Where we're from, there are lots of bad guys! They attack the innocent and prey upon the weak! There aren't a lot of people that can or will stand up to them and fight back! Its hellhound eat hellhound. We are all trying to make the world a better place, but there are only so many of us."

* Milia can't help but let her gaze settle on Luna, especially. The icy countenance that she seemed to maintain... she can imagine why the zebras might not be so keen on her, especially

when you consider the traditional beliefs about the sky.

* Artifica continues, "The advance of technology and industry will outstrip Equestria's power resources. This will lead to increased trade with... other countries, as Equestria exports resources it has in abundance in return for resources necessary to power the kingdom's advancing infrastructure."

* Artifica pauses a moment for thought.

* Artifica looks to the Princess (and takes a moment to remind herself to think of them as Princesses, not Goddesses -- she's let that slip twice now).

<uSeaGM> Celestia and Luna exchange a look, before turning back to the group.

* Artifica continues, "This is, unfortunately, where our records get sparse. But there is apparently a shortage, or a fear of a shortage... and a series of events that lead to the breakdown of international diplomacy and the beginnings of an actual war."

* Artifica says reluctantly, "I... I only know details about one of those events. And I don't know how trustworthy the information is. But if you wish, I could relay that to you to the best of my knowledge."

<uSeaGM> Celestia's face darkens. She was not liking this news, but it was something she had to hear. She nods. "Please, continue."

* Artifica looks to the others for support. She swallows, then continues. "Goods imported and exported had to travel long distances, usually overseas. And this made them prey for pirates. From one of the few records we have of that time, we know that a group of pirates capture an Equestrian ship, taking those aboard hostage..."

* Prism apologizes silently. She had a history of this all floating around in her head, but she was nervous to even speak.

* Milia nods at Artifica, doing her best to let the unicorn know she was there for her.

<uSeaGM> Mercy and Lavender listen with great interest.

* Artifica says, "...and Princess Celestia had intelligence saying that the pirates were held up in a based just inside sovereign zebra waters. The zebra Caesar had conflicting information, and refused to allow Equestria to intrude militarily into zebra waters." She looks at Celestia. "You sent in the Wonderbolts anyway, covertly, to save Your ponies."

* Artifica concludes, "And You were right. The pirates were there. The Wonderbolts saved the hostages and brought them home safely... but not before a bloody fight. Not all of the Wonderbolts made it."

* Artifica looks down and feels herself about to cry.

* Milia reaches over a hoof and lays it gently on Artifica. "You're doing great, love... just take it as slow as you need to..."

<uSeaGM> Celestia nods slowly, processing the news. "I see. What happened?" The princess blinks, and then speaks more softly. "In your own time, Artifica. Take as long as you need to."

* Artifica shakes her head. "I... don't really know. But it's not hard to understand why diplomatic relations deteriorated... I can only imagine how upset both sides got with each other over that." She looks up, "It wasn't the only event that lead to the war. It wasn't even the first or the last one. But... eventually, fighting started."

* Artifica takes a deep breath, then suggests, "No matter what happened /after/ the fighting started, I really believe the only way to avoid the end of this world is to find a way to stop the war from ever happening."

<uSeaGM> Princess Celestia smiles. "That is our wish as well. But before that, could you tell us about the future you come from?"

<Prism> "It's d-dangerous. B-before certain events happened, Equestria was d-dying, touched with magical r-radiation and very little could grow. The c-creatures became mutated and dangerous, as did many of the ponies. Plus relics from t-the war that remained made things even more dangerous."

* Milia thinks for a moment. After seeing this present... how would she describe the future? She finally settles on, "...It's a burnt corpse."

<Prism> "What little ponies remain survive on 200 year old food and tainted water."

* Jasmine_Mistplume looks at Luna, as she seems to examine Jasmine. She continues. "Where we're from, there are lots of bad guys! They attack the innocent and prey upon the weak! There are a lot of people that can or will stand up to them and fight back! Its hellhound eat hellhound. We are all trying to make the world a better place, but there are only so many of us."

<Prism> "Before certain events happened, we did not even get to see the sun or moon...the sky was blocked in an impenetrable cloud layer."

<uSeaGM> Celestia looks curious. "What are the 'certain events'? You mentioned them twice."

<Jasmine_Mistplume> "I used to be a slave. I woulda broke free, but the slavers kept me in line with a bomb collar. If it werent for Milly, and Arti, and... everypony here, I would never have been able to escape." Jasmine delves into her origins, to better let them understand exactly what kind of place the future is.

<Prism> "The first was the story of a mare who managed to....remove the cause of the cloud layer and saved everypony from certain doom many times. Artifica knows the story better than I

do..."

<Prism> "The second, was that something was uncovered that allowed the wasteland to recover, allowing at least some livability. It didn't completely remove many of the dangers though."

<Prism> "The specifics I am rather unclear on, as I lived in an underground bunker as a scribe during this, but Artifica probably knows everything a lot better than I do."

<Prism> "And as of when we were brought back here, the world was in danger yet again."

<Watch> "in multiple ways...."

* Milia sighs. "A good deal of the ponies are still just as rotten as they used to be, from what I heard of how it used to be like..." She adds onto Jasmine's comment, looking sadly to the monarchs. "Violence and slavery are... common. Especially if you're not fortunate enough to live in the more secure settlements. I must have taken at least... ugh, it has to be more than two dozen lives

* Milia at this point."

<uSeaGM> Celestia nods. She had started to cry as the stories were told. "Even so, there were still lights in the darkness," she says softly, listening to Prism.

* Milia frowns and quietly mutters, "I've stopped counting..."

<Watch> "it...is not all bad however...there are places of order starting to appear..."

* Artifica nods. "Yes, Your Majesty. There are always lights in the darkness. And while they may be few, they burn all the brighter for it."

* Prism still couldn't make eye contact!

* Artifica nods to Watch's statement, "And ever since the cloud curtain was pulled back, things have been getting better. It's slow, but it's happening."

<uSeaGM> Celestia wipes her eyes. "Thank you."

* Watch swallows. "I think...it might be important to tell her of more recent events too...maybe get help looking into...stuff happening to new hope."

* Milia nods at Watch Tower. "Yeah, I wanted to head out east to check that out while we were here. If at all possible, at least."

<uSeaGM> The princess takes a few moments to gather her thoughts, and then continues. "Can you tell us how you were able to travel back to the present? Twilight's letter mentioned some kind of Gate?"

* Watch nods. "it's all kind of related...,but there was a time gate in a place called aquaria..."

<Prism> "We found the time gate after stopping one of the things threatening the world, a terrifying weapon called the Lunar Finale. We found the gate, and before any of us could appraise the situation, Berry, the curious filly, flew into it, and then Watch followed her."

<Prism> "So we all went in."

<Prism> "Aquaria was filled with all sorts of out-of-place, horrifying and wondrous objects."

<Watch> "This kind of isn't my first time going back...,but I've never been this far back...either...We found our way back to handle the lunar finale."

* Milia meekly adds, "We're... not sure how the actual time travel part works. Err, like... how long we're here for."

<Watch> "we've not been yanked back yet...and the last time I went back...I was barely there...and I kinda appeared moving forward..."

* Watch closes his eyes and recomposes himself. Start at new...how the hell is she supposed to explain robot Rarity to the Princess?

<Watch> "I think it is important to tell my bit as It is a little bit seperate and kind of key to a bit of things going on...and come to think of it...it might be a good idea to look into while we are back here."

<uSeaGM> Celestia nods. "Then it was not some form of spell, but an artifact, perhaps?"

<Prism> "That's what I believe, yes."

* Watch nods. "It didn't look of equestrian origin."

<Prism> "It took a long time to activate and then open, according to what I read about it."

<uSeaGM> The princess looks deep in thought. "There have been occasions throughout Equestrian history where ponies have appeared out of their own time. Never in groups and never so far." She smiles at Twilight's astonishment. "You will not find their mention in books outside of my personal library."

* Jasmine_Mistplume blinks, and then turns towards the group, and then back to the princesses "Ooh, did they come to bring you important information too? Were they able to change what happens?"

* Milia goes wide eyed. "W-wait... there've been others? How... how long were they around for?"

<Watch> "You've got a personal library?"

<uSeaGM> Celestia continues. "All were temporal accidents, but they show that such a thing

may be possible. An old friend of mine did much research on the subject, but was only able to create a stable time loop."

<uSeaGM> She nods at Jasmine and Milia. "As I said, there have been occasions. Almost all were simply left confused and out of place, but one mare did evacuate a village before an avalanche struck." She smiles at the group. "I believe, with your help, we may be able to save Equestria as well."

<Jack_Rascal> Artifica nods. "That spell is known to us. One reason I am unsure what can be done is that we cannot be certain /this/ isn't a stable time loop."

<Watch> "I think...that that more or less confirms it..."

<Prism> "I don't believe in predestination."

<Watch> "though now I have to ask...."

* Milia blinks. It sinks in. "We can really do it... we can really change the future..."

<Watch> "Celestia." He says with a serious tone...a small fearful undertone. "if we change the future...what happens to where we came from"

* Jasmine_Mistplume gives Milia a joyous smile. "We can make things better..! For everyone! No one will ever have to be afraid, or have to struggle to survive... We can! We CAN really do this!" She scoops up the Zebra in a back crushing bearhug and spins around, getting caught up in the moment.

<Jack_Rascal> Artifica has worries of her own, and they mirror Watch's question, but for different reasons.

<uSeaGM> "We cannot be certain," Celestia replies. "However, there was another spell which Starswirl developed. A spell which could restore a pony to their correct place in time." She smiles. "He made sure to create that spell before attempting time travel himself. Starswirl said that for such a spell to exist, that pony's original timeline must also exist. It is, of course, a theory."

* Milia goes *hrrrk* and is spun around like a striped ragdoll. "Y-yeah!... We can... *agh!*..."

* Watch listens and his own mind processed that and parsed with his understanding and he staggers a bit...a weight lifted from him. "oh thank Cel...thank L..." fuck it. "Thank the princesses..." he lets his breath out relieved.

* Prism thwacks Watch with a wing lightly. "No profanity...even Milia is putting a cap on it."

* Watch was prepared to save the world...,but not to live with himself after if he wiped his family out.

* Watch didn't swear that was out of quotes...

<Jack_Rascal> Artifica frowns. "If it is permissible, Princesses, I would rather my family stay here if we manage to change things." She then adds, "Or even if we don't."

<Watch> "I truly wish I could stay...,but I'd like to bring a few ponies back with me...after I set things right where I am from." He stands taller for the relief.

* Jasmine_Mistplume puts Milia down after a moment of celebration. She rubs the back of her head and grins at Milia sheepishly. "Haha... sorry. Got a bit caught up in the moment."

<Prism> "I have no intention of returning...and neither does my fiance."

* Milia 's eyes were bulging slightly as Jasmine releases her. She shares the laugh. "...No worries... I'm used to it."

<uSeaGM> Celestia smiles at Artifica. "Of course. You are all welcome to stay." She chuckles. "If it was your wish to return we would have to find that spell again first."

* Milia takes a deep breath to make sure nothing was broken. No? Perfect. Her heart soars as Celestia confirms that they'll be allowed to stay.

<Watch> "would...such a spell allow...a pony to return here?"

<uSeaGM> Celestia shakes her head. "Only if the pony were from this time to begin with."

Artifica voices her other concern. "Princesses, if Equestria's future does change, is there any cause to worry that /we/ might change as a result, even if we stay here in this time?"

* Watch sighs softly. "well..." he frowns and then shakes his head this wasn't the time to lose hope He puts on a brave face. "it sounds like I'll have to try and find my way back through aquaria if I go back." He looks to his friends. "because. Friends and Family...are that important."

<Prism> "My family is right here with me, as are my friends." She nods.

* Prism hugs Whisper, without raising her gaze.

Artifica nods solemnly to Watch. "They are the most important of all things."

<uSeaGM> The princess thinks to herself. "I do not remember any such changes happening to the other ponies who were out of their time. I believe you should be fine."

* Whisper hugs Prism back.

<uSeaGM> Celestia draws herself up to her full regal height. "Now... how can we fix the present to save the future?"

* Watch nods and waits for the answer to Artifica's question...he isn't too worried about us

changing. Celestia did say original timeline after all.

* Watch nods and waits for the answer to Artifica's question...he isn't too worried about us changing. Celestia did say original timeline after all.

* Milia appears to be deep in thought as the topic turns to returning to their future. From the sound of it, their timeline would continue existing, even if they changed this current one. Which brings her to... "Ahh, Princesses, can I actually ask about something sorta weird?..."

<Jack_Rascal> Artifica looks relieved. But she wouldn't be Artifica if she wasn't overly cautious about such things anyway. "That is wonderful to hear, Your Majesty. Still... Should a clear point of divergence come, it might be wise for us... or at least my family... to voluntarily quarantine ourselves for a short period just in case changes do ripple back."

<uSeaGM> Celestia nods at Milia. "Yes?"

* Milia bites her lip. This might be a... somewhat sensitive subject. "Err... what can you tell me about the..." What did Grandpa call it? "...Equestrian Company, I think it was?... Or was it /East/ Equestrian?..."

Artifica frowns. "If... if the original timeline still remains, then does changing things really save anybody?"

<Prism> "I don't think it's a good thing to worry about things like that. With every choice, a new timeline is created....there's probably an infinite number of them."

<uSeaGM> *End of Session for Group 4*

<uSeaGM> Next week, continued princess talks!