

“What?” the Doctor gasped, eyeing the impossibility before him.

The thing had the shape of a pony, except for the fact that it was completely encased in metal. Two empty, black pits stared out from where its eyes should have been. Several more of the terrible things were herding the party guests outside. The room itself had been completely trashed. Furniture lay splintered on the ground, the streamers torn from the ceiling and the cake had been toppled, much to the dismay of the guests.

“What?!”

Bright Eyes looked on in terror from behind a table as more of the things moved into the room, their steel hooves clanging against the hard floor while their joints emitted a pneumatic hiss as they moved.

“I’m sorry but *what?! No, no. I refuse to believe this. This is completely out of the question. You cannot exist!*” He approached the nearest monstrosity. “Well you *are* here but... look at you! This is just plain silly! What, just because I regenerate into a pony means that all of my various nemeses have to follow suit? What’s next? Pony Daleks? The Shetland Master? Unicorn Judoon? This is ridiculous!” The Doctor snorted in derision. “Alright, go on then. What do you call yourselves?”

From the “mouth” of one of the invaders came a terrible, croaking voice. “We are the Cyberponies.”

“Well, bonus points for originality, I suppose.” The Doctor contorted his face into an awkward sneer. “You could have gone with Cybermares to keep the consonants consistent, but I suppose the gender neutral is best seeing as...” he frowned. “You *are* genderless, right?”

“Correct.”

“Well at least that much hasn’t changed.”

“Doctor?” Bright Eyes called out from her place behind the table. “What’s going on? What are they?”

The Doctor edged back from the Cyberpony, moving closer to where the frightened pegasus was cowering. “They’re ponies, or at least they were. If they’re anything like their spiritual predecessors then they’ve just had all their messy, gooey innards replaced with gears and springs. All they care about is the mind and shape, all the rest is as good as glue. Er, no offense.”

Bright Eyes briefly had time to wonder exactly what about that may have been offensive before a Cyberpony stepped forward. “You must come with us. You will be upgraded.”

“Yeah, about that...” The Doctor nudged Bright Eyes towards the back door. “I’m terribly sorry but I’ve already made plans for the night; upgrading is going to have to wait. Can I schedule an appointment?”

“You will be upgraded.”

“Is a little flexibility too much to ask?” The Doctor eyed the metal hide of the Cyberpony up and down. “Well in your case I suppose it is. Come along, Miss Bright Eyes! We’ve got a town to save, and I’ll need my screwdriver.” Spinning, he delivered a powerful kick with his hind legs that sent the Cyberpony stumbling back. Using the moment they had gained, the Time Lord and the Pegasus fled from the house and into the garden.

“This new body really does have some nice perks,” The Doctor quipped. “In my younger days, that would have hurt quite a bit.” Nudging the door to the TARDIS open, he looked back and gestured for Bright Eyes to follow. “Come on in, I promise there’s enough room for both of us.”

Bright Eyes hesitantly followed the doctor into the blue box and paused inside the door. “Well I suppose that makes a bit of sense.”

Closing the door behind them, the Doctor gave her a curious look. “That’s it? No shocked expression? No running around the exterior trying to figure out where I put all the interior? I must say you are taking all the fun out of this.”

“Oh really?”

“I happen to like it when people say it’s bigger on the inside.”

Bright Eyes looked about the inside of the TARDIS. “It makes sense to me,” she said as her gaze traversed the alien geometry and strange controls that decorated the central room they occupied. The walls were silver; curving in ways that seemed meant to trick the eye into thinking it was shifting. A circular disk sat in the center of the room, decorated with what appeared to be the controls for all the devices major functions. “Ponies are the same way, you know. Bigger on the inside. Why can’t the same apply to a blue box?”

The Doctor eyed Bright Eyes fondly, a small smile playing across his lips. He had no idea whether to think the young pegasus’ statement was immensely profound or quaintly clever. Perhaps it was a little bit of both.

“So what do we do now?” Bright Eyes glanced at the door nervously. “Those things are still out there, right? Those Cyberponies? Do any of these buttons get us out of here?”

Snapping out of his thoughts, the Doctor leapt towards the control panel, misjudged the amount

of force he needed and ended up sailing straight over the instrument panel. "Don't know my own strength it seems." Getting back up, he trotted over to the array of buttons, leavers and several odd items that looked like they served no purpose at all. "Now how the bloody hell am I supposed to do this without thumbs?"

---

Out of Ponyville and towards the looming, lone mountain, the Cyberponies lead their captives. The wings of the pegasi were bound, the horns of the unicorns covered and the legs of the earth ponies heavily shackled.

Towards the center of the group, the six ponies that bore the elements of harmony eyed their captors warily. The last time they had walked this path was to confront a dragon, but this menace was far more terrifying and far more unreal than anything they had seen before.

"They're a bunch of cowards, sneaking up on us like that," Rainbow Dash muttered angrily, flexing her wings to test the strength of her bonds. "I bet if they had come at us head on, I could have taken them."

"Quiet down now, Dash," Applejack growled out of the side of her mouth. "These ain't the friendliest of ponies and you're hooves probably wouldn't dent their cold metal keisters anyhow."

"Well we have to do something, girls," Twilight sparkle called from the head of the group. "We got to find some way out of this or else all of Equestria may be at stake!"

Pinkie Pie somehow managed to bounce up alongside twilight, despite her heavy manacles. "Oh! I know, I could-"

"Somehow I don't they're interested in parties, dear," Rarity said, shaking her head. "I *do* wish we would arrive already. The weather seems to be taking a turn for the worse and I would *hate* to be caught out in the rain."

Fluttershy gave the clouds a worried look before returning her gaze to the path before her feet. She hadn't spoken a word since they had been captured.

"There has got to be some way out of this," Twilight whispered. "Celestia help us, there's just got to be."

---

The TARDIS lurched about as the Doctor attempted to manage the controls whilst keeping them on course. "Oh come on, old girl. Pull yourself together! We can do better than this!" With a final shudder, the TARDIS halted its erratic movements. "Ah, there we are. Funny thing about

Cybermen or Cyberponies or whatever they are is that they all emit a signal. Simply find the biggest concentration of that signal in an area and whiz, bang, vroom! Your right on top of them!" Off to the side of the control panel, a small microwave oven emitted a soft ding and the door popped open. Removing the item inside, the Doctor fitted the harness to his head, his sonic screwdriver sliding neatly into place at his eye level. "Shouldn't have any more trouble using *that*. Come on, Bright Eyes. We've not a moment to lose."

Stepping outside the box, Bright eyes was surprised to see that the entire landscape around them had changed. Squinting off down the mountain side, she could make out the glowing lights of Ponyville. "Amazing. It's like we squished two places together and chose which one to stay in."

"Yes, yes. Now keep your voice down." Peeking out from behind a rock, the Doctor and Bright Eyes watched silently as the Cyberponies lead the captives into the nearby cavern. By the dim light it seemed like a gaping maw, swallowing whole those who crossed its threshold. It had been a simple task to discover where the Cyberponies had gone. One can hardly move a herd of ponies across this large a distance without leaving some traces.

"Come on, while they aren't looking." The Doctor nudged Bright Eyes forward. "Let's see if we can slip into the crowd. I should be able to free several of them before they start catching on. Getting them all out will be an entirely different matter, however."

Slipping into the crowd, the unlikely pair did their absolute best to appear terrified and defeated. It wasn't that far of a stretch for Bright Eyes, who was beginning to wonder just what she had gotten herself into. *Clearly any sane pony would have made for Canterlot to alert Princess Celestia. She'd be able to deal with this, no problem.* But then what kind of sane pony travels around in a peculiar blue box that can change locations in an instant? Truly the Doctor had to be at least a bit eccentric, she couldn't help but grin.

"Where are the ones you were telling me about?" The Doctor scanned the crowd. "You know, the ones who are already sort of in the adventuring and world saving business."

Bright Eyes gestured to the six ponies walking together in the center of the group. Even at this distance, they had a distinct air of desperation and determination to them as opposed to the defeated demeanor adopted by the rest of the townsfolk.

"The pink one too? Really?"

The group of captives suddenly came to a halt and the Cyberponies parted to either side of the large hollow within the mountain. The Doctor edged up close to the six ponies, motioning for them to keep quite while he undid their shackles. It was then that the Cyberponies began to speak.

Their monotonous voices blended into a single, powerful voice.

“We are the Cyberponies. We are the ultimate existence. We experience no hate. We experience no anger. We experience no grief. Our existence consists only of harmony and love. Our directive is to spread harmony and love across the world. The directive now comes one step closer to completion.” In unison, they turned to face the rear of the cave. “Behold the Cyber Leader. Behold the Robot Unicorn.”

A light flared in the back of the cave, bathing the assembled ponies of Ponyville in a rainbow of hues and colors. Standing tall and proud, a mighty metal steed stepped onto an outcropping of rock. Its long, flowing mane flowed with a life of its own in the same manner as the ones sported by the holy Princesses. Raising a single, silver hoof it slammed it down into the ground and cracks appeared in the outcropping. Opening its mouth, its voice came as a flowing melody of sounds far different from the harsh tones of the other Cyberponies. “Love from Harmony. Harmony from Conformity. Conformity from salvation. Through me, Equestria will be saved. We are the Cyberponies. We are the future.”