

Sitting in a chair, a small filly squirmed, not knowing what was going to happen next, fearful, afraid, and worried about the unknown. The Royal Pony Sisters' School for Gifted Unicorns was supposed to be an exciting place; a happy place where a little unicorn's dreams came true.

The filly had no dreams of greatness, but her parents had those dreams for her. She was a small, almost unremarkable sort. She was a bit smaller than most fillies her age. Her pelt was a humdrum shade of light blue. Her mane and tail were not quite curly, nor were they straight, but a compromise of the two, wavy. Both her mane as well as her tail were a darker shade of blue, night blue, streaked with a soft pastel shade of pink. Her only defining characteristic, the only thing that made her special, the only thing that made her stand out for any reason, was her left front leg. Instead of being blue, she had a pink sock. One pink hoof and a pink pelt that went halfway up her leg.

She wore glasses, thick glasses, thick glasses with ugly black frames. She could not see without them. Behind her lenses, her blue eyes were unremarkable and average.

And yet, the filly had one thing about herself that she could not bear.

"Princess Celestia will see you now," a nice pony named Raven said to the nervous filly sitting in the foal sized chair, squirming while she waited. "Do try to relax. Princess Celestia is very kind and very good. You have nothing to fear."

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The alicorn behind the low desk was enormous. The filly had never seen Princess Celestia up close before. Overcome with awe, the little filly forgot her manners and stared, her blue eyes wide. She stood there, unmoving, almost unblinking, in awe of the living embodiment of the sun.

"Hello... would you like to take a seat so that we might get started? There are cushions for you on the floor." Lifting her hoof, Princess Celestia made a gesture that the filly was welcome to sit down anywhere that she would like. A gentle smile lurked upon Celestia's muzzle.

Wide eyed, the filly sat down upon the floor, not bothering with a cushion. The desk was low upon the floor, and she could see that Princess Celestia was sitting upon a shocking orange with pink polka dots cushion. She reached up, adjusted her glasses, and then took a deep breath.

"To start with, would you like to tell me your name?" Princess Celestia asked.

[i]Oh no![/i] The filly tensed up. That was always how it started. Her name. Her awful, awful name. She shook her head no, made an awkward croaking sound, became embarrassed, gave up, and then fell silent.

“Now now, there is no need to be shy. I am positive that you have a lovely name.” Princess Celestia leaned forwards over her desk. Using her telekinesis, she adjusted a vaseful of flowers as she smiled.

The filly shook her head; more than anything else, she wanted to run out of the room. This was [i]too[/i] embarrassing. She could not say her awful name in front of Princess Celestia.

“I have in front of me a detailed portfolio about you. It says that you are very shy and that you do not like speaking. It also tells me your name. Now, please, can you say your name?” Princess Celestia’s brows furrowed and her nasal bridge crinkled with worry as she tilted her head off to one side.

Sitting back on her haunches, the filly lifted up her two front hooves, one blue, one pink, and began to tap them together. She took a deep breath, tried to swallow the lump in her throat, and then screwed her courage to the sticking place. “My name is Midnight Darkness.”

“You have a lovely name.” Princess Celestia gave the filly a smile.

Feeling anger, feeling shame, the filly forgot her manners. “I have a horrible name! I have a horrible, no good, awful, dorky name and I don’t want it to be said in public!”

“Oh, now now, it is not that [i]bad[/i],” Princess Celestia said in a soft, reassuring voice.

Hot tears began to spill down the filly’s cheeks. “I hate it... I hate it! It’s so embarrassing and I hate it!”

“Is there any meaning behind it?” Princess Celestia asked as she slid a box of tissues forwards to the edge of her desk.

The filly sniffled and stared at the box of tissues, but did not take one. “My mother wanted to name me after great unicorns like Twilight Sparkle and Sunset Shimmer.” The little filly sniffled and snorted, and then wiped her eyes with her pink foreleg. “But everypony else is also naming their foals after Twilight Sparkle and Sunset Shimmer... so my mama had to try and be different. And now I’m saddled with a stupid name!”

“It sounds as though your mother loves you. She wanted you to be special. It sounds as though your mother has hopes and dreams for you... that she wanted you to be as great as Princess Twilight Sparkle or Sunset Shimmer. But she also wanted you to stand out from all the other foals whose mothers also want them to be as great as Princess Twilight Sparkle or Sunset

Shimmer.” Princess Celestia blinked and then looked the filly in the eye. “I must confess, your name caught my attention. Today, I have met dozens of little fillies, with you being the last. It shames me to admit this, but the names have all jumbled together. I met with Sunrises, Sundowners, little Evenings galore, and I am having trouble remembering all of these names... but you... you, Midnight Darkness, I saw your name and it stuck in my memory right away.”

The filly, silent, did not know how to respond. Her head bowed and she stared down at the floor. Feeling sullen, the foal arrived at a conclusion. “You only remembered it because it is such a dorky name. It is so awful that it can’t be forgotten.” The filly closed her eyes, drew in a deep breath, and then shuddered from pent up emotion. Behind her, she heard the door open.

“Ah, here we go, the much needed attitude adjustment is about to happen—”

“WHERE IS THE ADORABLE FILLY WITH THE MOST COMELY NAME OF MIDNIGHT DARKNESS?”

The filly froze, only her eyes moving as they opened. [i]That voice.[/i] In the small office, it was almost deafening. Princess Celestia had a sister, one seldom seen in public.

“OH! OH! I FIND THIS ONE MOST PLEASING TO MINE EYE! HUZZAH! SORRY SISTER, BUT THIS ONE IS TO BE MINE, YOU MAY KEEP YOUR END OF DAY RELATED VARIATIONS!”

Gasping, the filly felt herself being lifted in the warm fuzzy tingle of magic. She was turned around and then she saw Princess Luna’s manic grin and wide, wild looking eyes. Princess Luna’s [i]terrifying[/i] manic grin and wide, wild looking eyes.

“OH, THIS IS MOST WONDERFUL, SHE HAS THE MOST MARVELOUS LITTLE PINK SOCK! WERE I NOT A PRINCESS, I WOULDST BE SQUEALING WITH DELIGHT!”

“Ah, there, I do believe everything is now sorted out.” Princess Celestia grinned, showing teeth. “No matter how silly it might be, your name makes you special. Dearest sister, see that she becomes comfortable with her name. Do try to make her a unicorn worthy of the memorable name of Midnight Darkness.”

“INDEED SISTER, I SHALL!” Princess Luna’s smile widened. “COME WITH ME, LITTLE ONE! THOU ART MINE STUDENT NOW, AND THERE IS MUCH I EXPECT FROM YOU, MIDNIGHT DARKNESS!”