

The Empty Room
Chapter 13
By Wanderer D

The Eclipse cast stark shadows and light. A red hue gave the sky an eerie quality that made everypony nervous. Although most ponies could see just fine in the gloomy ambience, the authorities in Canterlot had decided to light the torches in an attempt to cheer up the citizens.

The sound of trumpets in the Canterlot Plaza drew the attention of all ponies around. A tan earth pony with an open scroll as a cutie mark stepped forth between the trumpeteers.

“Hear ye! Hear ye! Her majesty, Queen Nightmare Flare has declared that all mares of ages twenty to twenty two in the city are to assemble at the castle. Compliance is mandatory. Failure to attend will result in immediate action by the guards, followed by arrest and imprisonment. Posters will be put up for your perusal. If you have family members that fall in this category have them go to the castle gates for further instructions. As of now, all mares that belong in the age group please gather 'round here. You will be taken to the castle.”

The pony stepped back and turned around, leaving bewildered ponies in his wake. After a few seconds the crowd became abuzz with concern.

“What do you think that was about?” Bon-Bon asked Lyra as they watched one of the guards put up a poster.

Lyra shook her head. “I don't know... why would the Prin-... I mean, Queen, do that... and only for mares? And for every mare in Canterlot in our age range? That... doesn't make any sense at all! There's at least a couple of thousand mares here who fall in that group!”

“Ladies.” a voice next to them made them jump.

The guard looked impassive as he indicated they should move to the center of the plaza along with the other mares that were being herded by the guards.

Trading nervous glances, the two acquiesced and trotted to join the other mares.

“Maybe I'll be able to find out something useful.” Lyra whispered to herself.

Bon-Bon bit her lower lip and looked at her worriedly. But kept quiet.

o.O.o

“Dashie... how could you?” Pinkie Pie asked.

Rainbow Dash scratched the floor with her hoof, not looking up. Her thoughts were in turmoil, how could she convince them that Nightmare Moon was not the enemy?

“Some Element of Loyalty you are.” Rarity sniffed, looking at her angrily. “First sign of trouble you join ‘the winning team’ is that it?”

“No!” Rainbow Dash looked up angry, offended and hurt. She locked stares with Rarity. “That’s not how it is!”

“But... well, you are dressed as a Shadowbolt...” Fluttershy said. “I mean... last time you almost joined them...”

Rainbow Dash sighed and looked up at Nightmare Moon for help.

The Mare in the Moon simply raised her eyebrow as if saying *‘you’re kidding, right?’*

“Look, Nightmare Moon is not the bad guy here.” Rainbow Dash started.

“Well, I very much doubt that, dear.” Rarity interrupted ignoring the alicorn’s look. “The fact is that we all know her to be evil and to want an eternal night just so that ponies can look at her stars and love her.”

“Oh! Oh! And there’s also the evil laugh, dragon eyes, gloomy aura and burning, hate-filled glare she’s giving me right now!” Pinkie Pie added.

Rainbow Dash looked up at the black alicorn, who looked back at her. There was something in those eyes, true but... it was not hatred.

The pegasus sighed. “Look, listen to me... things are pretty bad down there...”

“D-down there?” Fluttershy asked. “Where are we? I mean... if you want to tell me, that is okay...”

Rainbow Dash’s smile was shaky. “Um... in the Moon?”

“What?!” Pinkie Pie shouted. “We’re in the Moon?! That is sooooo awesome! I want to go out!”

“I would not recommend it.” Nightmare Moon said. **“There’s no air out there. And the temperature changes are extreme. You would die almost immediately. Although it would still be extremely painful.”**

That stopped Pinkie Pie’s momentum for a bit.

“Rainbow Dash.” Rarity looked at the pegasus sternly. “You better cough up an explanation, dear, or you will be in a lot of trouble.”

“Fine!” the pegasus sighed. “Look, the fact that you three are alive and relatively free, and that I am not a murdering psychopath is thanks to her! She saved you, and she saved me!”

“What do you mean?” Rarity asked a bit more softly when she saw her friend tremble.

“Spitfire... she gave me this medallion... it made everything twisted in my mind.” she looked down. “I... I killed a guard because of it.”

The three friends recoiled from her as if she were a poisonous snake.

“Now,” Nightmare Moon said. “That is not fair, Rainbow Dash. You had no control over that, and even when you brought the guard down, you did not know that Twilight was going to execute them under Nightmare Flare's orders.”

“But...” Rainbow Dash's eyes watered. “I... but... I could have stopped it and...”

The three friends watched amazed as Nightmare Moon wrapped the sobbing pegasus with a wing.

“You regretted it immediately. Even with the medallion's influence. And that triggered your Element to set you free.” the alicorn said soothingly.

Rainbow Dash didn't look up, but nodded weakly until she felt another wing drape across her shoulders and the hoofs of her three friends as they hugged her.

“It's okay Dashie.” Pinkie Pie whispered.

“I'm sorry you had to go through that alone, darling.” Rarity said, tears in her eyes.

“We're here for you.” Fluttershy added.

Slowly Nightmare Moon stepped back, leaving the friends together. Her objective was complete. The four elements would stand by her side. That left only the Element of Honesty... and Twilight Spark.

She turned around to give Rainbow Dash and her friends some privacy to talk, but she had taken only two steps when the cyan pegasus' voice floated up to her.

“Please... stay with us, Luna.”

Nightmare Moon didn't look back, although she could feel the eyes of all four mares on her. She remained still for a few seconds longer before turning to face them.

"I'm Nightmare Moon." she said with a cynical smile. **"I am a dictator, a powerful being that will go to any lengths to achieve her goal. Don't call me Luna."**

But she stayed as the friends talked and comforted each other. They didn't notice when the alicorn looked up towards Equestria in surprise. A small smile appearing on her face. **"You're welcome, Scootaloo."** she whispered.

o.O.o

"Are you sure this is a good idea, Scootaloo?" Apple Bloom asked for what felt the seventeenth time.

"Yes." the pegasus replied.

"It just looks so weird." Sweetie Belle said, looking up at the red and black sky. "It makes me think that the whole world is like the Everfree forest."

The three friends walked in silence. They had left Ponyville three hours ago. Without their sisters, Apple Bloom and Sweetie Belle had had no pony to stop them from gathering their crusader cloaks, some apples and leaving. Scootaloo had found out her mother had been one of the many pegasi chasing after Rainbow Dash, and thus was unconscious in the hospital. The doctor had assured her that her mother was otherwise fine, as were all the pegasi that had the misfortune of encountering a Sonic Rainboom head on.

Scootaloo had found herself in the unusual position of thanking *Nightmare Moon* for catching her mother and saving her from her idol. She looked up at the moon. "Thank you for catching my mom and all the pegasi this morning, Nightmare Moon." she grudgingly acknowledged the the dark deity.

"You're welcome, Scootaloo."

She had the weirdest feeling that the moon had replied to her somehow, but kept it to herself. It probably wouldn't do for the others to know she had prayed to Nightmare Moon of all ponies... and the fact that she was pretty sure she got an answer.

She glanced at Sweetie Belle, who despite trudging along loyally, had a look of worry in her face, her eyebrows locked in a small frown. For the most part of the trip she had been quiet, lost in her thoughts.

And it made Scootaloo wonder... just how the hay did Sweetie Belle know Nightmare Moon's minion? She had to stop interrogating her friend... not that she enjoyed it, Sweetie Belle had seemed to be really suffering through the questions. The unicorn had clearly wanted to tell them, but couldn't. And that just made it worse.

Apple Bloom was clearly worried about her sister and her brother. When she had gone home to gather her things, only Granny Smith and Caramel Apple had been around. She had found out that Big Macintosh had left the night before and had yet to return.

It must be difficult to not know. At least she knew her mom was okay, and that she would wake up soon... but Sweetie Belle and Apple Bloom didn't know where their families were.

She suddenly felt very guilty about interrogating her friend. The little unicorn must be worried sick about her sister too.

She sighed. Why were things getting so complicated?

"Hey! I can see the castle!" said unicorn suddenly piped in.

Scootaloo snapped out of her thoughts and looked up towards the mountainside. Yes, there it was in all its glory, waterfalls and all. Canterlot Castle.

The pegasus smiled, dark thoughts forgotten. "Well done crusaders! We're almost there!"

o.O.o

Applejack's ear twitched. There was a sound... but...

There it was again. A door? Opening?

Her eyes slowly opened and she stared in complete confusion at the mattress and pillows piled around her.

"What...?" memories then started to flood in. Nightmare Moon. Nightmare Flare. Rainbow Dash... Twilight Spark.

She tried to stand up, but her body seemed so heavy! She was probably still tired, even if it was the afternoon if the light from the window was any indication.

She heard a gasp. "W-what happened here?!" a voice she didn't recognize asked. She pushed a pillow aside and stared at the maid that had walked into the room.

The unicorn stared back at her.

"Don't ask, sugarcube." Applejack finally said. "You really don't want to know."

"Oh," the unicorn seemed to think about it. "Lady Applejack..."

The earth pony snorted. "Don't 'Lady' me, please." she shook her head. "Trust me, there's nothing 'Lady'-like about me. I'm like you, a hard worker earning an honest living." She finally felt strong enough to stand up and did so, albeit a bit shakily.

The unicorn smiled. "Miss Apple, Lady Twilight has requested your presence for a late lunch with her and some friends."

Applejack noticed that the smile slipped when she had said the purple unicorn's name. It was understandable. Then something hit her. "Lunch?" she blinked. "But... isn't it late afternoon?"

The unicorn grimaced and shook her head.

Applejack made her way to the window and looked out. Then she remembered. The gloom came from the eclipse that Nightmare Moon had caused. She sighed. "How long was I asleep?"

The unicorn looked thoughtful. "I believe you last saw Lady Spark around six hours ago."

"Oh." no wonder she still felt tired, but now that she was up, she was not falling asleep anytime soon. That's how she worked. She sometimes envied Rainbow Dash for her ability to take naps anytime.

Her thoughts about the pegasus soon turned dark as she remembered their conversation outside the door and her betrayal.

"Lady... I mean, Miss Apple?" the unicorn prodded. She looked down sheepishly. "I... would appreciate it if you would join Lady Twilight... she... was very graphic about what would happen to me if you were late... I didn't understand half the words but it sounded..." she blushed. "Intense."

Applejack stared at her. "Oh, you poor girl." she sighed. "Fine! I'll join her. But I need a shower first."

The maid smiled. "Thank you..."

"No need, sugarcube." Applejack said, stretching her legs. They felt sore. "I know what it is like to be on the other end of her... creativity." she shuddered. "I've kept her in line so far, I reckon I can do it again." she sounded more sure of herself than she actually was.

The unicorn nodded and used her magic to set up the bath for the earth pony. Once it was ready, she excused herself and went off to presumably talk to Twilight Spark.

Fortunately she was not disturbed by anypony while she relaxed in the bath. Although her muscles began to relax, her mind was working full-time. She had sealed her fate by promising to go have dinner with Twilight... but maybe, just maybe, the fact that the purple unicorn was willing to let her relax and was being less aggressive was a good sign. Maybe Twilight had stopped to think about what she had told her. Maybe she had regained her senses...

Applejack sighed. Too many 'maybes'.

But Twilight was her friend and... Rainbow Dash was too. And the only way to figure out what happened to them and bring them back to normal would be to be with them and find out.

She eventually (and regretfully) got out of the hot bath and dried herself with the towels that had survived Twilight's blitzkrieg from earlier that day.

When she was ready, she opened the door and looked outside. A guard pony stood impassively waiting for her. He nodded when he saw her. "This way... Miss Apple."

Apparently the unicorn had passed the word. Good. It seemed most ponies here knew that she was not a part of Twilight Spark's entourage, despite the unicorn's insistence on being with her.

She followed the guard in silence as they made the way down to the place where she would meet with Twilight. She took advantage to gauge how everypony was taking the whole Nightmare Moon/Flare thing.

Fear. That's what she saw in the ponies eyes around her. Fear. Confusion. They walked like they were stepping on eggshells, but the castle's staff performed their jobs regardless. The guards more tense if even possible. But then again, she had had a chance to meet some of them in a less formal situation, like yesterday.

Had it really only been a day and a half? She shuddered. It felt like a lifetime. The whole situation was overwhelming, to say the least.

Ponies would look at her worriedly, possibly wondering if she, like Twilight and Dash, was an agent of Nightmare Moon or Flare. Some would even risk small encouraging smiles if they somehow recognized her.

But overall, the long walk did nothing to appease her.

When they arrived to their destination, she looked uncomfortably at the double doors. She could hear several voices behind behind them, even laughs. Twilight Spark's unmistakable chuckles

prominent among them.

“We're here.” The guard said unnecessarily.

Applejack nodded and gulped. When she took a step forward the guard touched her shoulder, making her look at him.

“Good luck.” he let her go.

The earth pony nodded and walked into the room.

o.0.o

The first thing that caught her attention was the table. It was full of food and she was noisily reminded by her stomach that she hadn't eaten a bite since the day before.

“Hey! It's Applejack!”

The apple farmer blinked. “Spike?! Weren't you in Ponyville?”

“Nah, Twilight packed me into her saddle bags and forgot I was there. It has happened before.” Applejack shook her head and looked at the other ponies in the room. Twilight Spark was giving her a very... intense... look. The farmer blushed when the unicorn licked her lips and quickly looked at the other ponies. When she saw Rainbow Dash dressed in a Shadowbolt uniform she felt her heart break.

“A Shadowbolt, Dash?” she whispered.

Rainbow Dash looked at her and something crossed her eyes. For a fleeting moment she seemed... pained. But the look was gone in less than a second, and the pegasus nodded. There was no smile, no boasting or gloating. It was surreal. This... could not be her friend.

“Nightmare Moon asked her to be the Shadowbolt captain and she agreed,” Spitfire said, drawing the farmer's attention to her. The Wonderbolt smiled at the rainbow-maned pegasus and touched her hoof. “We're all proud of her.”

“I bet.” Applejack's reply was dry. Her eyes were drawn to the last pony in the room, who was studiously not looking at her.

Applejack took a step back. Those eyes. That green mane... the uniform with the dagger 'cutie mark' on the flank... “J-Jade?”

All conversation died at the table as the two mares stared at each other. Jade's azure eyes

looked down and away quickly, then returned to look straight at Applejack. With a slight inclination of the head she nodded.

“You two know each other?” Rainbow Dash asked.

“Yes,” the earth pony confirmed. “Jade saved my life about four years ago. She was on her way somewhere for an important mission, but she heard me calling for help when I was trapped in a collapsed bridge... but, what in the name of all apples are you doing here?” Applejack asked, her tone desperate. “Did they capture you?”

Jade looked down. She sighed and her hoofs came up, doing slow motions accompanied by clops and taps as she used the table and the floor to communicate.

The others were unsure of what to do, since none of them knew any hoof-language. They just traded awkward looks.

“What do you mean you joined Nightmare Moon?!” Applejack growled walking up to the deadly assassin. “You can’t!”

Tap-tap, clop -tap, hoof to the chest, clap, swift motion across the neck.

“I know you are an assassin.” Applejack said, frowning.

Tap, clop, hoof-movements, clop clop tap, head shake and shrug.

“I expect you to say no! Even if you're an assassin, this is Nightmare Moon we're talking about! She's a ruthless, merciless killer that will betray you at the first chance!”

“Hey! You take that back!” Rainbow Dash cried, standing up. “Nightmare Moon is *nothing* like that!”

“You would say that, traitor.” Applejack snapped.

“What did you call me?!” Rainbow Dash growled suddenly in Applejack's face.

“I called you a traitor! That's what ponies like you who betray their friends and everyone that trusts them are called!” Applejack shouted. “I don't know what your problem is, Rainbow Dash, but if you think I can remain friends with murderers and betrayers you have another thing coming!”

The pegasus was about to punch Applejack when she felt Silent Jade touch her shoulder. Looking back at the assassin, she gritted her teeth as the green-maned unicorn shook her head.

“What? Backing down already?” the farmer taunted, bitterness clear in every syllable. “Figures that a good-for-nothing lazy coward like you would be the one to join the pony that killed her best friends!”

The hurt in Rainbow Dash's eyes was almost enough to make her regret her words. But all it took was a look at the uniform the pegasus was wearing for her contempt and hatred to boil again.

She watched as Rainbow Dash turned away from her and walked out of the room, slamming the door behind her.

“Dash!” Spitfire quickly galloped past her, also leaving the room.

“Oh, dear.” Twilight Sparkle sighed. “And she didn't even finish her sandwich. Grab a plate, Applejack! Tell us how your day went. Tea?”

“Who did Nightmare Moon kill?” Spike asked, ignoring Twilight and looking at Applejack.

Looking at the baby dragon, the earth pony felt a huge weight on her shoulders as she took a deep breath and told him.

o.o.o

There were probably around five hundred ponies in the room. All mares.

While this might have been paradise for somepony with Lyra's disposition, it actually felt like hell. She was trapped. Not only that, but her grand plan of getting information would not work at all!

They had all been gathered in a large, two leveled room. Above her was an empty balcony, and several columns decorated the room. Although there were at least three doors in the room, all of them were blocked by guards. They had all had to sign documents with their information on them and told that once they were done here, they wouldn't be called for again.

There had been a slight disturbance earlier when a couple of pegasi had been unceremoniously thrown into the room. They had argued with the guards and attempted to get out to no avail. Pegasi guards stood at attention on the balcony, and whenever a pegasus would fly up, they would quickly encourage them down.

All the mares were nervous. Discussions and arguments sprung out constantly.

“Lyra! Lyra!” a voice called making her cringe. She looked towards the approaching unicorn with

dread.

“Glitter Horn.” she forced a smile.

The other unicorn carefully made her way to Lyra, doing her best to avoid touching any other pony.

“Can you believe it? We have to share a room with this rabble.” she sniffed. “Nobles should not mix with...” she glared in contempt at the ponies around her. “... commoners.”

Lyra lowered her head. Besides her she could feel Bon-Bon seething in anger. “I don't think this is the time to complain about that, Glitter Horn.”

“I suppose you are right.” the unicorn sighed. “Nothing to be done.” she leaned forward. “Did you see what Twilight Sparkle did this morning?”

Lyra nodded nervously, looking at Bon-Bon.

Glitter Horn arched an eyebrow at the earth pony but decided to ignore her.

“I never thought she had it in her.” Glitter Horn frowned. “I had heard of course of those ridiculous claims that she had defeated an Ursa Minor with her magic...”

“It's true...” Bon-Bon interrupted.

“What?”

“I um... we were there.” Lyra admitted.

“Oh.” Glitter Horn blinked. “Well, regardless of that, I never thought she would punish a pony so... thoroughly.” she leaned in. “I heard that they are looking for more rebels.”

Lyra and Bon-Bon exchanged glances. The musician was already paranoid, but Bon-Bon looked downright terrified. The unicorn gave her lover a hesitant smile.

“You see those two pegasi over there, with the guards?” Glitter Horn continued, ignorant of the exchange.

The couple looked. The pretentious unicorn was talking about the pegasi pair from earlier. She hadn't noticed that they had an escort.

“They're both Wonderbolts.” Glitter Horn said. “Since the other one attacked Nightmare Moon, they have been under suspicion and are all under house arrest.”

“Isn't that a bit much?” Lyra whispered, thinking of Soarin' “Just because one of them did that doesn't mean that all of them are like that!”

“Oh, no dear.” Glitter Horn shook her head. “They have it easy. If you suspect someone of being a rebel and you don't inform the guard, you can be thrown into the dungeons, along with family and friends.” Each word made Bon-Bon cringe.

“If you consort with rebels it stands to reason your closest acquaintances might too. I have heard of entire families being thrown into the dungeon... tortured... even killed.”

The earth pony gasped.

Lyra shook her head. “I don't believe it! It's too much! Are you sure you're not exaggerating?”

Glitter Horn shook her head. “I heard it from my daddy who heard it from a friend of a friend of Minty Top, who is dating Sharp Trot, who is in the guard.”

Lyra blinked. “Oh.”

“Ooh... is that Sparkling Crown? I must talk to her. Ta.”

The overwhelmed musician watched the pretentious unicorn walk away, calling at her friend.

She had developed a cold sweat through the whole conversation and couldn't stop scratching the floor nervously.

“Deep breaths. Deep breaths.” she intoned to herself. “Everything will be fine. No pony knows.” when her heart had stopped beating four times as fast as normal, she finally turned around.

“T-that was pretty crazy, don't you think... Bon-Bon?” she looked around, but her fillyfriend was not there. “Bon-Bon?”

She looked around worriedly. Where had she gone?

“Mares of Canterlot!” a voice from the balcony called, drawing all the attention there, where the herald had stepped up. “I am honored to announce Queen Nightmare Flare!”

Everypony in the room bowed as the dark queen entered the balcony followed by several guards.

“My faithful subjects.” the Queen said, looking down at the mares below her. **“Thank you for coming here today. I will not take too much more of your time. Although you don't know**

the reason you are here today, know that you are providing an important duty. Now, let us begin.”

Her horn started slowly building up energy. With each pulse of magic that made it glow brighter, each unicorn felt their own horn react, each pegasus felt their wings tingle and each earth pony felt their hearts beat harder. After a few seconds the glow diminished and Nightmare Flare shook her head.

“You are free to go.”

There was an audible relieved sigh from the gathered group as the doors started to open, but Lyra noticed that a guard had walked up to the Queen and whispered something to her ear.

“Stop!”

The doors immediately closed and the gathered ponies looked up at the Queen in confusion. **“Something has been brought to my attention.”** Nightmare Flare said, her voice gaining an angry tone. **“A pony here has been conspiring against the unquestionable rule of myself and my sister.”** she said as she approached the edge of the balcony and glared down at the ponies. **“A traitor. A rebel.”** she spat.

Lyra felt two hooves hold her roughly by the shoulders. She looked at the guards on both sides of her in horror. In the periphery of her vision she caught a glance of Glitter Horn melodramatically fainting.

“Apparently today’s demonstration was not clear enough.” Nightmare Flare said as her eyes bore into Lyra’s. **“However I am not without mercy. If you confess, the names of your fellow rebels I will grant you a pardon, and have you in house arrest until they are detained. This is your one chance, Lyra.”**

Lyra’s world was crumbling around her. Why? How? Who could have known? The only other pony that knew was... her eyes scanned the crowd until they settled on Bon-Bon, who was flanked by two guards. The earth pony wouldn’t meet her gaze.

The musician unicorn felt her heart crumbling. Tears fell unheeded to the floor as she stared at her lover.

“Well, Lyra?” Nightmare Flare prodded. **“Your answer?”**

She felt cold, she felt like this was happening to somepony else. Her head slowly turned towards the dark monarch.

She couldn’t see the Princess Celestia that she knew in there. The Princess that her friends and

fellow 'rebels' were trying to bring back.

"Your majesty, I will never betray the rightful rulers of this land." she finally spoke up, making Nightmare Flare smile and Bon-Bon look up hopefully. "Therefore I will keep quiet so that both, Princess Celestia and Princess Luna can be reinstated."

Bon-Bon paled and tried to walk to her, opening her mouth to say something, but the guards stopped her.

"Not only that!" Lyra shouted amongst the gasps and murmurs from the crowd. "I can tell you right now, Nightmare Flare, that you will never stop our Rebel Alliance! No matter how much power you have..." she looked towards Bon-Bon, their eyes meeting, all the hurt and fear in her eyes making the earth pony cringe and look down in guilt. "Or how many traitors and betrayers you surround yourself with."

Bon-Bon tore herself free of the guards and hugged Lyra. "Lyra! Please! Tell them! Please!"

"Why?" Lyra whispered. "Are you part of the council?"

"What council? No..." Bon-Bon whispered back, but then stopped and looked at Lyra in the eyes. "I can't risk my family, Lyra... my sister, my mom and dad... they would have been all captured with me if I hadn't reported you! What about our friends in Ponyville? Do you want them tortured and killed? But you still have a chance! Don't waste your life? What about your dream of performing for the Pr... Queens?"

If anything the answer made it hurt worse. Bon-Bon was not being controlled.

A laugh made their way to them. "**Your family? Your friends?**" Nightmare Flare chuckled. "**You have been listening to gossip, little pony. I am not a monster. If someone is found to be a rebel their family would naturally be asked some questions. But unless they were guilty, they would not be thrown into a dungeon. Much less killed.**"

Bon-Bon's heart almost stopped. All color drained from her face, her hoofs fell to the side, no longer having the strength to keep them up as she realized just what she'd done in the spur of the moment.

Lyra closed her eyes as the guards removed the limp earth pony.

"**Very well, Lyra.**" Nightmare Flare spoke again. "**You leave me no choice. I will crush your Rebel Alliance. But you will not live to see it.**" she reared her head up. "**You shall be executed tomorrow at dawn.**"

Two guards took hold of Lyra, who did not struggle. With a smirk of satisfaction, Nightmare Flare

turned around, but stopped when the unicorn's voice floated up in the completely silent room.

“How?”

The Nightmare frowned. **“How are you going to be executed?”**

“No.” Lyra looked up an unusual smile on her face. “How will you tell the time? You see, there's been a moon stuck in front of the sun at noon-time since... dawn today.”

Nightmare Flare roared as her horn shone with magic. There was a crack as the air was displaced and Lyra was sent flying to crash against the wall. **“Heal her.”** she ordered the guards that had rushed up to the battered and unconscious unicorn. **“It wouldn't do for her not to be at her best for her last day on Equestria.”**

In the corner of the room, watching everything in horror from behind a guard, Bon-Bon sank to her knees, her eyes never straying from Lyra's form as she was picked up and carried out.

“What have I done...”

o.0.o End Chapter 13 o.0.o

I would like to thank my pre-reader, Stephen Cawking, for all his help and prompt responses! There definitely has been an improvement in quality since you started helping my friend, thank you again! Comments, questions, concerns, or if you found a mistake that should be corrected, feel free to leave a comment. I do read them and answer pretty often!

Liked the story? Why not add to its Tropes page?

<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/FanFic/TheEmptyRoom>