

Moldbreaker

Chapter Four: Prophecy

Morning came around and the colt stretched out as sleep finally let him slip from its grasp. With a bound, Ray hopped up from his bed and onto the floor. The headache from the previous evening as well as the feeling of overwhelming knowledge had faded, and he gave a sigh of relief.

“Good morning, Ray.” a voice from outside his field of vision caught his attention and he turned to see the Princess enter, regal as always, “How are you feeling this morning?”

Grinning a bit too much for somepony who had both collapsed and overslept the previous day, he answered back with some gusto, “Good, I feel great.”

“I’m glad to hear it, I was hoping you’d be feeling better.” with a twist of her head, and a sparkle from her horn, several packages flew in. “It seems you’ve gotten quite a bit of mail and attention since yesterday.” His eyes followed the flying parcels, and he felt some childish anticipation at the thought of his first gifts. “As well as the clothes I ordered for you.”

That comment made Ray smirk, as he was aware that ponies didn’t normally wear clothes. Most likely they were for some formal occasion. Narrowing his eyes and stroking his chin, he gave it some thought, “Something is going to happen today?”

Celestia’s smile came with a calm shake of her head, “Tomorrow is the Summer Sun Celebration, the longest day in Equestria where we celebrate the gift of sunlight.” as she said this, she stepped over to the window, glancing out at it, “I will raise the sun in the morning and that will mark the beginning of the festival. Today will see the preparations finished.”

Ray was halfway through eating the paper off the first package when she looked back at him and she couldn’t hold back a chuckle. He stopped and set it down, giving an embarrassed smile, “I haven’t seen the sun come up, is it like the sunset I saw?”

She nodded gracefully, “It is just as beautiful coming up as it is when the moon comes out at night.”

“You’re in charge of both of them, right?” his attention was half focused on the now open package and on her as he listened.

“Yes, I am.” she reminded him, then quieted down as he let out a gasp at the gift. His eyes lit up as he lifted out two black and gold trimmed hoof cuff links. In no time, he had them on and was proudly displaying them.

“I think they look good on you.” her compliment went nearly unnoticed as he was opening another one. Sitting down to watch his reactions, she smiled when he did and it was pleasing to see him so happy over gifts. By the end, he was wearing all sorts of apparel that clashed unfashionably.

“Hm...” he said, looking at himself in the mirror, “I think that’s a bit too much.” removing piece by piece, he was left with just the two cuffs before he nodded in a conclusion. Returning his attention to the Princess, he gave her a bow, “Thank you very much, Auntie Celeste.”

Her smile didn’t fade as she returned his gesture, “You are most welcome, Ray.”

She stood back up and motioned for him to follow. He immediately went to her side like it was his spot all along, trotting along happily, "It will be a busy day, are you sure you can handle it?"

The colt grinned widely, "Of course, I feel so much better since you helped yesterday. Thank you very much for that as well." He gave her more thanks as they strolled down the hall. "Good morning Airy. Good morning Sky." Greeting the two pegasi with a short bow, he noticed they were no longer oddly colored. They gave him a return scowl as he gave them nicknames.

"Oops, I mean if you are okay with me calling you that." Ray quickly apologized and waited for their response.

"It's fine, your highness." Airy answered, a touch of uncertainty in his voice at calling the new prince by a title.

"I'd prefer not to be called Sky, your highness." Skyward was more than willing to share that, but still tacked on the title of formality.

"Okay." Ray did not have any sort of formality in his voice. "In that case, I would also prefer to not be called 'your highness'. Just Ray is good."

Both guards glanced at each other, not sure how to respond to being told to not address him properly.

"As you wish, Ray."

"I'll keep it in mind."

The red colt beamed with enthusiasm. "I'll start working on a different nickname for you then!"

Skyward let out a soft sigh while Airy gave his guard partner a pat on the back before all four of them laughed.

"What do we have to get done for the Summer Sun Celebration?" Ray asked his aunt, wondering what kind of preparations needed to take place, "Do we get to go outside the castle? What can I do to help?" The questions came at a quick pace and she did her best to keep up with them.

The list of preparations was long and Celestia recited it almost from memory. Unfortunately, the main answer for each of the tasks was that he was not able to help out.

Disappointed, the colt gave a long sigh and lowered his head, "So I'll be tagging along all day without being able to help?" He sounded both defeated and unhappy with the situation, "I wish I could do something."

The princess gave him a concerned smile before a scroll popped up in front of her. "Oh? A letter from Twilight Sparkle."

Ray's ears perked up as he'd heard the princess mention that name when he was asking questions two nights ago. He attempted to stealthily sneak around behind her to read what was written. However, Celestia had finished reading rather quickly and had magicked a pen and paper and was writing a response. He was barely able to pick out a few words from the letter.

"Preci... that something really bad is about to happen?" He read aloud, getting a strange

reaction from the two guards, "Nightmare Moon?"

A flick of her royal head and the Princess had rolled the old scroll back up before he could read more. He pouted, but she finished scribbling her new letter, to which he had just enough time to read the last word, "Friends?"

With another glow from her horn, the piece of paper curled up and was sent away in a puff of smoke.

"Hm..." He went into thought, hoping to unravel this new mystery.

"Ray, it is not polite to read another pony's mail." She gave him a frown and he retreated back to his spot and pawed at the ground.

"Sorry." he apologized, since he hadn't known it was considered wrong, "I'm curious though, there's a mare in the moon? Eternal night?" His eyes got wider as he recalled his nightmare from the previous evening. "Nightmare!" He raised his hooves rather dramatically as she continued to stare at his strange reaction. "Oh, yes! I had a dream last night about that!"

It was Celestia's turn to have her eyes widen, "Would you mind sharing?" She seemed intrigued and Ray began to spout out the pieces he remembered.

"I was... somewhere, and then... it got dark. The moon got dark too, and then everything was dark." He closed his eyes, trying to focus on things. "There was an eerie voice, but I don't remember what she said..." When he opened them, he managed to remember one more piece. "You were there and you said 'Be brave'."

Celestia's eyes were still wide, and she seemed even more lost in thought than Ray had been. "I wonder..." She looked over him with an unusual expression and then gave a small nod. "I have thought of something you can do, Ray."

"Oh! Really?" he bounced in front of her, ready and waiting to hear what possible thing he could do.

The red colt sat on the balcony, waiting for the other pony to arrive. His thoughts were fresh on the task Celestia had given him. He smiled happily at the recent memory playing through his head.

"I have given my most trustworthy student, Twilight Sparkle, a job to do. She is going to be overseeing the preparations for the Summer Sun Celebration in Ponyville. I have also tasked her with making friends." Her voice became a little more focused, "I would like you to accompany her and try to become her friend as well."

Ray could hardly contain his excitement and he stomped the ground. He had never made a friend before, so he hoped he could make this work out. Actually, the more he thought about it he wasn't sure how to make friends, or what friends were exactly other than the definition. Still, he was determined to try and make Auntie Celeste proud.

"I just don't see why she would say that." A voice from afar prompted him to sit back up, as well as making the two pegasi behind him to come to attention as well. They weren't Airy or Skyward, but they were here to escort Twilight and him to Ponyville. His mind raced as to figure out what the first thing to say would be.

"I'm sure Princess Celestia has a good reason." There was another voice coming down the hall. Ray frowned, unsure why there were two voices and he did not know which one was Twilight Sparkle. He pawed at the ground, the anticipation eating him up from the inside as well as the strange jittery feeling in his stomach.

He heard the previous voice groan and from the doorway came a pony and a lizard. The pony was about his size, with a light purple coat and an interesting purple mane with a pink stripe along her left side. She also had a star like cutie mark on her flank. The lizard was green and purple, and was walking upright with short spines running down his back and along his pointed tail. He did not have any cutie mark, so Ray thought that maybe he was also young. Both of them stopped and stared at him for a moment, and the female pony's right eye narrowed.

"Um, who are you?" She asked him and he blinked several times in response.

"Oh! Right!" he bounced up, extending a hoof to shake, "I'm Ray, I'm waiting for Twilight Sparkle to show up." His hoof was extended to the short lizard and it prompted a laugh from it.

"I'm not Twilight, she is." it admitted, but reached out a clawed hand, "I'm Spike, it's nice to meet you Ray."

"Nice to meet you too, Spike, I've never seen a talking lizard before!" he shook the lizard's hand with some gusto, but then Spike's hand retreated.

"Lizard?" The tone showed much disgust with that word, "I'll have you know, I'm a full fledged dragon." He folded his arms up in contempt, looking away from Ray with an angry scowl on his face.

"Oh! Sorry, sorry." Ray bowed low enough that his face was on the ground, "I've never seen a dragon before either." The apology worked, as the dragon appeared pleased to have been so well respected.

Putting his arms behind his head, he replied back, "It's fine then, just be more careful in the future." His expression changed to a more smug one and Ray nodded from the ground.

"I will!"

"Ahem." There was a voice from behind him and both Spike and he turned to see the purple pony waiting on the chariot with the two pegasi ready to go, "Are you two done chatting? We have to go, Spike."

From the way she was talking, she was not impressed by the first meeting and so Ray rotated his entire body, head still on the ground, to face her.

"I apologize to you as well, Miss Twilight Sparkle." he decided to add the 'Miss' in front because it seemed more appropriate to make up for his earlier mistake.

"Oh, don't worry about it. But we must really get going." she motioned for Spike to come with her head and he ran around to board the chariot too.

"Yeah, I guess we do!" Ray's enthusiasm was not taken down, even by this strange setback. He hopped aboard too, taking a seat right between the two of them, much to the dismay of Twilight.

"Excuse me, but who did you say you were again?" A twinge of annoyance in her voice went unnoticed.

"Ah! Sorry, forgot that didn't I?" he turned to face her and bowed again, though not nearly as low, "My name is Ray, and I was sent by the Princess to help you get your duties

done! And also to be your friend!”

She smirked at that last part, shaking her head, “Really? Then why didn’t she send me a message?”

Spike let out a burp and both ponies turned their attention to him. From the green flames, with which Ray was very impressed as he clapped with his two front hooves, there appeared a little scroll. The dragon caught it and unrolled it, “P.S. I am sending my nephew along. He is new to Equestria, so please be kind to him.”

With a sigh, Twilight slumped over the side of the chariot. “Fine... But I guess we can get the job done faster and I can go back to proving that I’m right.” She waved a hoof at the pegasi and they lifted off.

Ray froze up as they took off, glancing over the side as the ground moved away from them. Uneasiness set in his stomach and he backed away and towards the center of the chariot. If there was one thing he knew now, it was that he was definitely afraid of heights.

Spike sat down next to him, looking up at the now shivering pony, “Is this your first time flying?” The dragon asked with incredulity.

“Y-yeah...” Ray shakily said, looking over at his new companion. “Also pretty nervous, I don’t want to disappoint Auntie Celeste.”

“She lets you call her that!?” Twilight immediately shot up and glared at him with some pretty intense eyes. Or rather she was staring at the very thought of someone being more attached to her mentor than she was. “Ugh... I apologize for my rudeness.” she immediately changed her tone, giving him a nod, “I had something I wanted to work on more than this, but it is the Princess’s request.”

“What did you want to work on?” Ray wanted to keep talking, as it was keeping his mind off the increasingly distant ground he was sure was moving away from him.

“Oh, just proving some ancient prophecy.” she reluctantly spoke, leaning back over the side of the chariot in defeat at not being able to do her goal.

Ray was instantly intrigued, “Oh, can I hear it? I haven’t gotten to hear any stories like that since I arrived.” once more, his curiosity kicked in and he completely forgot about where he was, instead he started to focus on listening to her.

“Uh...” Twilight hesitated then gave a sigh as he and Spike were both eagerly awaiting her next words, “Very well.” her tone changed into a storytelling one.

“Once upon a time, there were two regal sisters who ruled together and created harmony for all the land. To do this, the eldest used her unicorn powers to raise the sun at dawn. The younger brought out the moon to begin the night. Thus, the two sisters maintained balance for their kingdom and their subjects, all the different types of ponies.”

Ray listened to the tale, learning many new words he had never heard and immediately interrupted Twilight as she was telling the story. The glare she gave him, made him lower himself and apologize before she moved on.

“--And harmony has been maintained in Equestria ever since.” Ray’s hoof immediately shot up. Another sigh from Twilight as she asked him, “Yes, Ray?”

“So.. what was the prophecy?”

“I haven’t gotten there yet.” She sounded annoyed again, and he slunk back down.

“Well, Twilight seems to think that Nightmare Moon will come back.” Spike was the one to speak next, and he stood up raising his hands up to dramatically pose, while impersonating her, “In the longest day of the thousandth year, the stars will aid in her escape and she will bring about night time eternal.” It was a fairly good impression, and Ray gave him another hoof clap. “But it’s just an old mare’s tale.”

“It is not just an old mare’s tale.” Twilight was less than impressed at that rendition of her, “And if I didn’t have to check on the preparations, I could prove that we need to do something about it!”

“And making friends,” Spike interceded with what he considered to be the most important piece of the letter. “Look on the bright side, at least she arranged to let you stay in a library, doesn’t that make you happy?”

“Yes, yes it does. You know why? Because I’ll be able to get more studying done and prove that I’m right.” she was very determined. “And since she sent her nephew to help us, we can finish the work in no time at all.” Her gaze moved over to Ray who was sitting strangely still. “Um.. you okay there?”

“Stars... aiding her escape?” He muttered, looking up at the sky.

“Um, Ray?” The dragon poked him. “I’m telling you, it’s just a myth. Don’t get too worried over it.”

The red colt had a heavy frown on his face, his thoughts on the dream and this prophecy. He could only hope they were just an old mare’s tale, but he had a desire to talk with Auntie Celeste about this as soon as he could.