

Lyra stared at the door to her home. It was already past sundown, so there was no pony around to ask why the unicorn hovered outside her own front door. She knew what waited for her inside; Bon-Bon would be at the stove, keeping dinner warm, and her little Tootsie Flute would be playing in the middle of the living room floor. Both would ask her about how her auditions went and she'd have to watch the smiles on their faces fall and be replaced by forced cheer after she told them that she'd been turned away. Again.

Lyra knew she couldn't just wait there all night, so she took a deep breath and pushed open the door. She was relieved to see that Tootsie *wasn't* lying in wait as she had thought, but she did glimpse Bon-Bon's tail through the doorway to the kitchen. Thankful for the additional time before she had to report on her latest failure, her horn glowed as she magically unhitched her saddlebags. The face of the Conductor flashed in her mind and, before she even knew what she was doing, she flung her bag at the far wall with as much force as her magic could muster.

Lyra only had time to gasp, realizing that her delicate lyre would doubtlessly be smashed by the impact, when the bag was snatched out of the air by the able mouth of the cream coloured earth pony that she called "wife". Bon-Bon gently sat the bag against the wall before nuzzling open the flap and removing the lyre within. She sat the instrument upon its stand on the small table in the middle of the room, before looking up at Lyra. "That bad, huh?"

Lyra's cheeks burned with shame at the outburst, but she couldn't help but smile at the care she'd shown for instrument and the speed at which she'd saved it. Lyra nodded, not ready to talk about it yet. She flopped down on the couch, her neck and shoulders against the back while her legs dangled off the front. From this position, her eyes were level with the middle of the strings of her lyre. This, for some reason, was the only way she felt comfortable playing and it had become a habit. Her horn lit up and she idly plucked at the strings.

Bon-Bon disappeared back into the kitchen and returned moments later with a large plate of cookies on a mounted tray atop her back. "Look what I made for you," she sing-songed, badly.

Lyra cocked an eyebrow, "For celebration?" Her voice heavy with disappointment.

Bon-Bon gave a crooked smile as she knelt down and slid the tray on the table by the lyre. "Well, yes," she admitted. "But now they're comfort food," she added brightly. She took a cookie in her mouth and settled on the couch next to Lyra, tucking her legs beneath her. She held the cookie out proudly.

Lyra looked from the cookie to her wife's face and let out a sigh, "I'm not really hungry." Bon-Bon's eyes drooped and she munched down the cookie in two bites. "They said my musical stylings were just too *individual* for their orchestra," Lyra said staring hard at her instrument. "For a *school* orchestra," she added. The glow from her horn dissipated and the lyre went silent.

"I'm the best lyre player in all of Ponyville and I can't get a job playing for little foals' plays," she said looking at Bon-Bon. She felt the hot tears fighting their way out, "It's a little disappointing." Her voice cracked as she spoke.

Bon-Bon immediately shushed her with a quick peppering of kisses on the lips and nose. "It's okay sweetie, it's okay," she said in barely a whisper. "So long as the ponies in this town keep eating sweets, Sugar Cube Corner will keep on paying all our bills in exchange for my

delicious goodies.”

“I’m sorry,” Lyra choked, feeling a rush of disgust with herself, she hated being all “poor me”, but Bon-Bon’s coos and kisses just made her that much more emotional. “I just feel so useless around here, like I’m just a big foal you have to take care of.”

Bon-Bon tucked her head underneath Lyra’s chin, nuzzling her neck. “It’s never easy for an artist to find work, even the really good ones.” Lyra took a moment to breathe in the scent of her mane, it *always* smelled of baked goods. Bon-Bon popped her head back up, “Hey, did you ever hear back from your sister?”

‘Octavia, the *successful* one,’ Lyra thought with just a trace of bitterness before her thoughts turned to the letter she’d gotten earlier in the week, the letter she’d been keeping a secret. “Yes, she wrote me back,” Lyra said evenly.

“And,” Bon-Bon demanded impatiently, giving her a small shove.

“She said she’d help me find work,” Lyra tried not to notice how much Bon-Bon’s face lit up before she finished, “in Canterlot.” Lyra stared hard at her belly, “I’m not going to drag you or Tootsie away from your lives just because I’m having trouble, so don’t worry about it.”

Neither of them spoke or moved for several long seconds, when a thought struck Lyra, “Speaking of Little Toot, where is she?”

“She’s at Minty and Berry’s, spending the night with Cherry,” Bon-Bon said distractedly.

“Do you think something might come from that,” Lyra chided, a wicked grin on her face.

Bon-Bon bolted into an upright sitting position. “Don’t even joke about that,” she said breathlessly. “The moment our foal shows an interest in dating, I’m locking her in her room until she’s thirty!”

“Afraid she’ll get into the same mischief we got into,” Lyra asked. Thinking back to those wild days made her smile deeper and brought a warmth to her heart.

Bon-Bon bit her lip and blushed, “Oh Celestia, that first time at the dance.”

Lyra’s face grew hot at *that* memory, the rest of her was following suit. “You could have warned me how *loud* you were,” she laughed.

Bon-Bon held her forehooves in front of her face, “I *swear* I didn’t know!”

Lyra pulled Bon-Bon hooves down and pushed her nosed against hers, “I *liked* the surprise. My little screamer.” Lyra kissed her, a quick smooch. When she saw herself reflected in Bon-Bon’s eyes, she knew that wasn’t quite enough. She went in slower this time, opening her mouth. Their tongues slid against one another in greeting before they went into their familiar dance. Even after all these years, these kisses still made her feel like a randy teenager.

Lyra pulled back slowly, letting her tongue trace along the underside of her wife’s. A strand of saliva hung in the air, connecting the two tongues that hovered in the air. She *loved* it when that happened and waited for it to break before running her tongue over her lips and settling it back in her mouth. “So we got the house to ourselves tonight,” she stared hungrily into Bon-Bon’s eyes as she said it.

Lyra crawled forward across the bed and kissed Bon-Bon’s neck. More teasing than anything, her love was very much a “one show a night” kind of filly.

Lyra finished her crawl and came to a rest staring at her Bon-Bon’s sweat glistened face. “Hi,” she whispered.

Bon-Bon smiled, but it didn't quite make it to her weary eyes. "I've been thinking,"
"Really," Lyra laughed, interrupting her. "I must be losing my touch."

Bon-Bon brought up a foreleg to quiet her, Lyra only started licking along the hoof.
Bon-Bon brought it down and pushed against Lyra's chest. "I'm serious." The firm look on her face took Lyra instantly from her giddy state.

"Lyra," Bon-Bon began again. "I think you should take your sister up on her offer."

Lyra sighed, "I told you already, I'm not dragging you and Tootsie away from everything you know."

Bon-Bon's eyes shied away. "You wouldn't have to."

Lyra's heart turned to ice, "What are you saying? You *want* me to leave?"

Bon-Bon turned and put a hoof on her cheek, "No, honey, never." The panic died in Lyra's chest and she let Bon-Bon speak. "What I'm saying is, that I don't want to hold you back. Canterlot isn't that far and we could come up every weekend and in the off season you could come back down."

Lyra was crying again, Bon-Bon continued. "We'd still be a family and I'm sure we'd be able to make Tootsie understand." Bon-Bon kissed her on the nose. "I've seen how frustrated you are here. I know that you *need* this to be happy."

Lyra stopped crying and giggled. "My Bonnie," she pressed her horn against her forehead, "My sweet Bonnie. You could chop up my lyre and bake it into a cake and eat it and I wouldn't care."

Bon-Bon shook her head, "You don't need to say-"

Lyra kissed her forehead and moved down her nose, "I could play for Celestia and all the assembled royals and their families and friends every night and *none* of it would mean a thing to me if I couldn't kiss you after." She had reached Bon-Bon's lips, and continued talking between kisses, "Without my girls, I *can't* play. I can't eat. I can't breathe. I need your guilting me into third helpings because you cooked too much. I need little Toot telling me all the made up adventures she went on." She stopped kissing and pulled back so she could see all of Bon-Bon's face, her eyes were shimmering with held back tears. "Do you get it now? I don't care if I have to play on street corners for change, because *you're* what I need. More than anything."

From below, Lyra's stomach grumbled loudly. "Oooo, and I need cookies. Lots of cookies."

Bon-Bon's face broke into pure joy and she laughed and wiped at her eyes. "That's good, because I have a whole 'nother tray cooling in the oven."

Lyra rolled onto her back and dangled her legs over the edge of the bed. Bon-Bon kissed the top of her head before getting off the bed. She turned around at the doorway, "Hey, love you."

Lyra smiled at the ceiling, "You are so mushy."