

## Harmonic Chaos

Pinkie Pie set the bouquet of flowers down at the base of the statue and stared at them for a long time. They were the best roses that the florists had on demand. The colours were the brightest she had ever seen for roses. Their petals shone a vivid red in the morning sun, the perfect contrast to their bright green stems, wrapped in a small, white silk band that prevented the thorns from jabbing her mouth.

She sat down in front of the statue, staring at the flowers, not sure if she wanted to look up. Everything was so bright that day; even the grass stood out more than normal, its bright green felt stretching out towards Ponyville. She looked at everything on the barrow except for the statue. Finally, tears welling up in her eyes, Pinkie Pie started to speak softly, her voice barely above a whisper, for if anypony knew she was there, she would have to explain why she was there, why she brought flowers, and why she had done so every week for the past two years.

“You know I don’t hate you,” she said. “Other ponies do, even some of my friends. Twilight really hates you, but I think that’s just because you messed with her friends. Rainbow... I don’t think she hates you, but she doesn’t exactly *like* you either. Applejack’s forgotten you; all she does is buck apples and tend to the farm all day long. Fluttershy would forgive you if given the chance. I just know it. I don’t know about Rarity though... she’s so hard to read sometimes, especially when she’s really upset. I mean, one time me and Rainbow dumped water on her and she was really, really angry, but not like this. I think she dislikes you, but she won’t ever talk about it. I really wish they could know you better... like I do.”

Pinkie forced down a sob and changed the subject. “I got to watch the babies again this week... Mr. and Mrs. Cake were in Coltimeore delivering a cake. I really think the twins are starting to like me! I only had to do the flour trick three times!” Her ears perked up and eyes brightened. “I even got to help make it and it was so much fun! It was chocolate, and really good! I would’ve made you some, but... well you know.”

She paused for a moment before continuing. “Me and Rainbow played some more pranks this week! We replaced Twilight’s ink with invisible ink again and it was hilarious! She wrote five whole pages of notes before she realized it wasn’t working! Then we also replaced the mayor’s pens with licorice! She was really nice about it, though, and didn’t get *too* mad. After that, Rainbow wanted to put sneezing powder in Fluttershy’s animals’ food, but I told her that was going too far.”

She scratched at the ground with her hoof while she considered what to say next. “That’s the difference, isn’t it? Between you and me?” She looked at the statue of Discord, as if pleading for an answer. When none came, she continued. “You have to know how far is too far. Otherwise you cross the line and hurt ponies. That’s all you did. You crossed the line.” Tears

started to roll down Pinkie's face and she hung her head.

"If only I'd been there," she told herself, "I could have stopped you. I could have told you it was too much... I could have saved you." She lay down, brooding. "I should have been there. You were amazing, and I didn't do anything."

*Don't beat yourself up so much,* whispered a voice in her head.

Pinkie Pie's gaze shot up as she looked around for the source of the voice. However, there was no pony in sight.

*Yooohoo. I'm up here,* came the voice again, recognition teasing at the fringes of her mind.

Pinkie Pie looked at the flowers, wondering, *Can flowers talk? If they can, why do we eat them? That really has to hurt. And what if there's some flower country out there, angry that we keep eating their friends. What if they attack Equestria? That would be horrible! I have to tell Twilight so she can warn the princesses!* Pinkie thought, jumping up.

*As if flowers could be as spectacularly fun as me,* called the voice before she could bolt towards Ponyville.

Again, Pinkie Pie looked around, searching the area. The only things on the barrow were she, the flowers, the statue, and the cookies she had left the previous week. Her eyes finally came to rest on the stony figure. "Discord?"

*Ding-ding-ding! We have a winner!* his voice boomed in her mind.

"But... statues don't talk!" Pinkie rationalized.

*Pinkie Pie, you've been coming to this hill, this statue, every week for two years now. You've told me everything that has happened to you. Did you expect me not to listen?*

"But... you can't talk! You just can't!" Pinkie covered her ears and closed her eyes as she focused on reality, fearing that another attack of her psychosis was coming on.

*Pinkie, it's okay,* Discord said comfortingly. *You aren't having an attack, I promise. It's me, the real me.*

Pinkie removed her hooves from her ears and looked up at the statue in bewilderment. "How?"

Discord laughed in her mind, a beautiful, sweet laugh she had never heard before. *Why*

*Pinkie Pie, you know how I became a statue! You helped!*

Pinkie Pie glared at him, her face a mask of anger as she leaned towards the statue. "You know how much that hurt me! I didn't want to seal you away, but there wasn't much choice."

*I understand, Discord replied sorrowfully. I-I shouldn't tease you like that, not after everything you've told me. He paused, waiting for the right moment to continue. Well, it seems that the Elements of Harmony aren't quite as powerful without the powers of the princesses behind them. At least, that's what I can make of it. He paused again. It isn't much, but I have been listening. This is the first time I've been able to break through and talk.*

Pinkie's eyes lit up with hope. "Does that mean that you..."

*Yes Pinkie, I know all about that,* Discord replied nonchalantly.

"That's not what I meant," Pinkie corrected him. "I meant to say 'Does that mean that you can get out?'" she said, the caution obvious in her voice.

Discord sighed. *No, not in my current state. The only way I could get out is if you and your friends released me, but I know that nopony would take that chance.*

Pinkie hesitated and stopped to consider the possibilities, her face a stoic mask as she flip-flopped between her feelings for Discord and her fear that he would be the malevolent god of chaos he had been before. Finally, her fear won out. "You're right. I-I don't know how you've changed, or if you've changed at all. I couldn't take that risk." She bit her lip, fighting to hold back the tears welling up in her eyes.

*I could show you,* Discord offered.

Pinkie Pie eyed him warily. "What do you mean you can 'show me?'"

*The is one of the few things I can do, I can talk to ponies like this, and I can show them myself, intimately. My past, my present, my thoughts, my regrets, my wants and desires. Everything. Years ago, before I was banished the first time, I could even bring a pony into my mind and let her feel what I feel. But, alas, those days are gone from me.*

Pinkie took a moment to consider what he was saying. He was offering to give her a glimpse into his mind, his most private place. She would see everything about him, and confirm all of her suspicions in one fell swoop. Still, she hesitated, unsure if he was lying to her. After a few agonizing minutes of deliberation with herself, Pinkie spoke.

"Okay, I'll do it," Pinkie said.

As soon as the words left her mouth, she felt herself drawn out of her body, and, for a moment, she felt as though she was nowhere. She felt neither hot nor cold, soft nor hard, conscious nor unconscious. Then, she felt herself being pulled in a direction. Without warning, she appeared in a ginormous room, which she could only suppose was Discord's mind at work. All of his memories, thoughts, and emotions were swirling around her at an unimaginable speed. She could barely make out what they showed. All she saw were flashes of Discord in various states of maturity, blurs of white and blue, and a lot of grey, which she assumed were from his most recent imprisonment.

"Oh, I'm so sorry. Sometimes things get a little out of control here," Discord said. However, his voice wasn't in her mind this time. Rather, it came from beside her.

Turning to look, Pinkie saw Discord in his true draconequus form. "You're... *you* again."

Discord chuckled. "Only in here, my dear. Now, where shall we start?" He gestured towards the maelstrom of memories surrounding them.

"At the beginning?" Pinkie suggested.

"Very well." Discord waved a memory forward, and summoned a couch so that they could sit.

Pinkie reclined on the couch as the memory came forward. It showed a young Discord playing in a large corridor that he had converted into a bowling alley and added several fluctuations of gravity. He continued to roll strike after strike, increasing the obstacles with each successful roll. Each time, the clatter of the pins echoed all around her, growing louder as he added more with each successful roll. Just as he rolled another successful strike, the door to the hall opened and Celestia walked in, angry. Pinkie couldn't hear what Celestia was saying, but she saw the bowling alley disappear, along with Discord's happiness.

When that scene had ended, another took its place. In it, he was playing tennis with a clone of himself. Pinkie Pie and Discord watched hundreds of memories, each a different game and each the same as the first. Discord was having fun and enjoying himself, until Celestia or Luna came in and made him stop. After a thousand years' worth of memories, he stopped even trying to have fun. Discord just sat around and attended to his royal duties, looking miserable and bored all the while.

Eventually, Pinkie turned to face Discord, tears streaming down her face. "I'm so sorry," she sputtered. "No one should be treated like that..."

"It wasn't your fault. Don't be sorry for it."

The memories played by in quick succession. Discord grew angry and resentful of the sisters as he was denied his fun at every turn, and Pinkie scooting closer to him in sympathy. In every scene, he was sourer and angrier. After what seemed like only two or three years' worth of memories, Pinkie saw him snap. Something changed, and Discord became the malevolent god of chaos she knew all too well.

"I don't want to see this," Pinkie Pie wailed as she buried her face in the couch.

Discord cringed. He didn't like seeing her so upset, but he couldn't think of what to do. With a wave of his claw, he dismissed the memories as fast as he could. He sat for a moment, waiting for Pinkie to stop crying. When she didn't, he mumbled, "T... they're gone. I'm sorry." Discord reached out tentatively, placing his claw on her back in an effort to comfort her. After an awkward moment, he withdrew it and looked at Pinkie, as if pleading for her to stop.

She lifted her head up. "T-thanks. I just... I don't like seeing you so sad. Look, can we just skip to the present? We both know what happened when you were released last time."

"As you wish," Discord said, giving the mare a quick glance to confirm that she was okay. He gestured at a series of images, causing them to come forward and replace the others.

Pinkie looked at them with amusement. There was one where Discord was flying through the sky, not a worry in the world. Another had her standing with her friends next to him, finally making peace. They moved by quickly, each only a small snapshot. The majority of them were of Discord, happy and at peace with Equestria. Finally, they stopped and Pinkie spoke up.

"I don't remember any of this happening. How can you see the future?" she asked, befuddled by the turn of events.

"They are not premonitions. They are—"

"Premo-what?" Pinkie cut him off.

Discord chuckled. "I don't see the future. This is just what I wish for in the future."

Pinkie took a moment to consider this information. On one hoof, they had all been positive, but on the other, there was still a possibility that she could change him. Her mind raged with turmoil. One half argued that it was too dangerous, and the other, more emotional, half said that she could curb his viciousness, that she could change him. Finally, she looked up and saw several images that had been held back.

"Hey!" she yelled. "What're those?!" She pointed at them accusingly.

"They're... well... you see... they're... um..." Discord stuttered.

“Are you hiding them from me?” Pinkie jumped up and pinned Discord to the couch. “You promised to show me everything!”

“I... I... these are very personal,” Discord said, trying to avoid looking at Pinkie by staring at the back of the couch.

“Everything,” Pinkie demanded.

“But—”

“Everything!” Pinkie yelled.

Discord sighed. “Okay,” he relented and summoned the scenes.

The images flew in front of her and surrounded her. They were mostly of her, and of him. In one, they were moving into a house. In another, they were playing with the neighborhood foals. Every scene was of them, together. The final one came up. It was a table setting at The Blue Colt, the soft, flickering glow of candlelight illuminating the table in a private aura. As Pinkie looked at it, she realized what she had been missing all along.

“I’ll do it,” she said, giving him a sly smile. “I’ll try and free you—”

“Thank you,” Discord said, returning Pinkie’s smile.

“On two conditions,” Pinkie finished.

Discord’s ears drooped and his smile faded. “What conditions?”

“First, you have to be nicer, and more fun. That’s not how you make ponies smile or make them happy.” She paused, waiting for a response.

Discord nodded his assent.

“Second, I am going to be your helper... mentor, whatever it’s called.” Pinkie’s eyes twinkled mischievously, knowing he couldn’t resist the offer.

Discord smiled warmly in return and teased, “I guess I can do that...”

Suddenly, the room around them started to fade.

“What is going on?” Pinkie asked, her eyes darting around the fading room frantically.

"I'm losing you... I can't hold it any longer," Discord said, his voice far away.

Pinkie reached out to touch him, but her hoof went straight through him and the couch. "I-I don't want to go now," she complained as the ethereal realm continued to fade around her.

"I'll bring you back soon, I promise," Discord said, his voice distant.

In another second, he faded from her sight entirely, and after another minute the only thing she could see was an empty blackness. Slowly, she felt her eyes growing heavy. She tried to resist it, to return to the room, but she found herself unable to do so. The darkness overtook her, driving her to sleep.

As soon as she closed her eyes and let herself relax, she felt herself drifting back through the void. Her eyes fluttered open to reveal the hillside she had fallen asleep on that morning. Looking around, she found everything was exactly as she had left it. In the distance, she could see the sun sinking below the horizon.

"I must have fallen asleep," she said aloud. She glanced up at the statue. "Discord?" She paused for a moment, wondering if it had been a dream. But her thoughts were interrupted when she remembered she had plans for that evening. "Oh no! I have to babysit for the Cakes tonight!" she screamed at the top of her lungs as she jumped into the air. She hesitated another moment and looked back up at the statue, begging for some response from the statue. Receiving none, she began the long trek back to Sugarcube Corner.

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Written for Evilpoptarts, because he wouldn't stop gifting me Steam games.