

My sweetie – part 1

They tell you at the orphanage that when you get adopted you will be treated like a REAL son or daughter by a loving family. You never know who will want to take you in. You might become the little filly of the couple that could never conceive. Or go to live with a rich family and be surrounded by brothers and sisters that will love you forever and ever and keep you close to them. You may even be raised by the lone mare that couldn't bear to be alone any longer.

They tell you of these wonderful things that await you, they assure you of a life worth living, that you just have to be patient for the right family to find you. But that isn't always the life you receive.

At least, not for Sparkler.

Sparkler had spent her entire life in Mrs. Carewell's Orphanage for fillies in Canterlot, watching as every filly around her was adopted by a loving family that needed to fill an empty place in their heart.

Sometimes a family would even return to adopt another filly, often the best friend of the one they had recently taken home as their beloved child.

But Sparkler never had any friends so she knew that they weren't returning for her. I mean, who would want to adopt HER? She barely spoke. She never socialised. She never approached anypony for anything. She just wandered the orphanage awaiting the day that somepony might take pity on this poor foal and bring her home to love and cherish her. Yet here she was; the oldest filly in the entire orphanage, as lonely as the day she was abandoned here.

RING!!! RING!!! RING!!!

".....Eugh.....Shut up....." Sparkler muffled as she reached for her alarm clock.

It had been a long night. Like many before Sparkler had spent the night imagining what it must be like to have a place to call home. This time she imagined what it would be like to live with ponies that own a sweet shop.

The young pink unicorn began to take in her surroundings. All the young fillies had already left the dormitory. Unlike her, they had school to attend, so she was allowed to sleep later than they were. She heard the door opening and looked up to see a familiar purple earth pony carrying a tray on her back. It was Mrs. Carewell.

" Another restless night, dear?"

Sparkler shuffled slowly from her bed," Yeah. Same reason as always."

Mrs. Carewell was the founder of the Orphanage, opening its doors under the orders of

Princess Celestia in order to give Equestria's abandoned fillies a home. The ageing earth pony carefully set the tray on Sparkler's bed. She had brought Sparkler her favourite breakfast, fresh pancakes and apple juice.

Mrs. Carewell was the only pony Sparkler would open her heart to. She was the only one to show any real care for the young unicorn. She sat beside Sparkler and placed a hoof over her shoulder.

"Well it makes me happy to see you still have a glimmer of hope in your heart."

Sparkler forced a smile, "I just wish somepony would notice me."

Mrs. Carewell embraced her in a comforting hug, "They will, dear. They will."

Moments passed by before Mrs. Carewell got up from the young filly's bed.

"Now then, I think it's about time you got cleaned up. Eat your breakfast and don't forget to bring the tray into the kitchen when you're finished, dear. You're free to take a day out into Canterlot if you wish?"

The staff at the orphanage had decided due to her age and her ongoing loneliness that it might be best if they let Sparkler out into Canterlot during the day in the hopes that she might make some friends or even find somepony that will want to take her in.

Sparkler paused before answering, "Oh....yeah. Um... Maybe I'd be better off here today?"

Mrs. Carewell merely gave a tut in response, "Now dear, how are you supposed to find someone to adopt you when you wont even take the chance to socialise?"

Sparkler felt guilt wash over her. They had been giving her a big chance with these days outside. She would leave with a few bits to buy some lunch and be able to see first hand what life was like outside of the orphanage.

As much as she dreaded it, she finally agreed, "...Alright. I'll go out today."

With delight in her words, Mrs. Carewell left the room.

"Good! I'm glad to see you taking some responsibility. Ask Ms. High Note to give you 5 bits from the savings jar. Be back by sunset, dear!"

"I will be." she replied. With a heavy sigh Sparkler got back to her breakfast, knowing what awaited her outside.

Sparkler took her time walking from the orphanage into Canterlot Centre. It was a lively place, full of different businesses and ponies from all over Equestria. Certainly it was a happy place.

If you had a family.

Every time that Sparkler set foot in Canterlot Centre she was shunned by any and all ponies. They didn't have time to waste on this broken filly. They had businesses to run, places to be and ponies to meet.

After spending some time in and around the market, Sparkler decided to get some lunch. She made her way to her favourite sandwich stand; Aunt Violet's Flowerbed Delights. Aunt Violet was a sweet old mare that would often give Sparkler a discount. She was probably the only pony around to notice this adolescent filly was coming from the orphanage.

"Good day Miss Sparkler, I haven't seen you around in a while. I was beginning to wonder where my favourite customer had disappeared to."

Sparkler approached the stand with a small smile on her face, this was the only place in Canterlot she felt welcome.

"Sorry to worry you. I've been helping out at the orphanage alot and its really been taking up my free time."

Aunt Violet smiled back to her," All water under the bridge dear. The usual I take it?"

Sparkler frowned; as much as she loved Aunt Violet's daisy sandwiches, she was incredibly thirsty. If she wanted a drink she was going to have to settle for something smaller.

"Sorry Aunt Violet. I'm real thirsty so I'm gonna have to leave the daisy sandwich today. Could I have a grass Panini and some water instead please?"

What happened next was the sort of kindness Sparkler had grown to expect from Aunt Violet. She left the counter and handed Sparkler a daisy sandwich and a bottle of water. If only every pony was as kind as her.

When Sparkler reached for her change bag around her neck, Aunt Violet shook her head.

"Go buy yourself a treat, dear. Enjoy the sun while Celestia lets it shine."

Sparkler was overjoyed. Maybe today would be a good day after all.

Or so she thought.

Sparkler decided to eat her lunch under an oak tree in the local park. Setting her bag beside

her, she took out her daisy sandwich and dived deep into the delicious flavour, soaking up the sunlight as she ate.

She was halfway through her lunch when she heard some familiar voices. They were laughing. Laughing at her. These voices were the reason she didn't like to leave the orphanage. Yet even on such a wonderful day, they had found her again.

And they weren't going to leave her alone.

"Well, looky here. If it isn't the little orphan girl." the smallest of the four bullies began.

This group would never leave Sparkler be. Sometimes she could go a day without running into them, but more often than not they would find her. When they did, they would make sure she understood what was most likely the truth; no one loved her.

The filly amongst the group stepped forward. She was younger than Sparkler, sporting a red coat and black mane with white highlights. She spoke up, "You just don't get it do you? You don't belong here orphan. You belong up there." She pointed a hoof towards the orphanage. "Do the world a favour and stop showing your dismal mug around Canterlot. You're supposed to be happy here you know...."

The little earth filly pinned Sparkler to the tree and forced two hooves into her face.

"....so put a smile on your face or get lost, orphan!"

The young unicorn welled up with tears. It never got any easier. Sometimes they would tease her, other times they would throw things at her. But nothing hurt more than this.

One of the colts grabbed her sandwich, "Check it out, how did an orphan like you get such a good lunch?" He threw it to the ground and lifted his hoof.

Sparkler lunged at him, only to be tripped by the filly. Her face hit the ground with a dull thud. The young bully held her in the dirt, forcing her to watch as they destroyed her food.

"NO!!! GIVE IT BACK, DON'T!!!"

Squish!

It was too late. She knew it was too late from the moment he grabbed it.

They all laughed as he wiped his hoof clean, "Hah, I never liked daisies anyway."

Sparkler began to spill loud sobs. They had taken what kindness she had received and squished it into the dirt. And for what? To make her cry? If so they'd more than succeeded.

The filly still had Sparkler pinned to the ground, barely letting her gather enough air as she

cried.

“Well it serves you right you depressing li...WHOA!!!”

Suddenly Sparkler felt the filly being lifted from her chest, hearing as she fell to the ground behind her. As surprised as she was by this, she didn't dare lift her head for fear of being attacked by the other bullies. Suddenly whoever it was that had saved Sparkler from further humiliation began to defend her from her attackers.

“Leave little filly **alone!!!** Fillies need friends, not hurters! Why hurt little filly?!!”

Not hurters? That didn't make any sense. Was this a foreign pony defending her?

The bully slowly got to her hooves, “C'mon guys, lets go. Leave the orphan and the retard. They belong together.”

With that the bullies left. Now that they were gone, Sparkler decided to get up. She was a mess, covered in dirt and dust. Mrs. Carewell wasn't going to be happy about this. She felt a hoof under her chin, ushering her to raise her head. She met the gaze of a pony that she had only ever seen bringing parcels to the orphanage. The weird speech finally made sense.

Sitting before her was the googly eyed mail mare, Derpy Hooves.

Before the shaken unicorn could say thank you, Derpy spoke to her.

“Little filly is hurt, bad or not good?”

Sparkler had no idea what she was talking about. Then the searing pain hit her. Sure enough, she had a long gash across her forehead where she had hit the ground face first. Derpy reached into her mailbag and pulled out a small napkin. Using Sparkler's bottle of water she began to clean the wound and wipe away some of the dirt around Sparkler's face.

“Better feeling now?” Derpy asked her with a small smile on her face.

Sparkler slowly nodded....then she wobbled...then she fell.

Before she could hit the ground, Derpy caught her.

“Oh no's, not good. Where live? Where home for filly?” Derpy began to panic. She looked around to see if anypony could help her. But the park was empty. Frantically, she grabbed the water and splashed some over Sparkler's face.

With a cough, she slowly came to again.

Sparkler had gone delusional. She was slowly recovering. Slowly. She had taken quite a blow to the head when she tripped.

This was getting Derpy nowhere. She thought back over what the bullies had said.

“Retard....together...orphan...ORPHAN!!!” She quickly glanced to the nearby orphanage.

Without haste she grasped the barely conscious Sparkler and flew low and gentle towards the orphanage.

RING!!! RING!!! RING!!!

“...Shut up....ow...”

Sparkler awoke to find she was in her bed at the orphanage. As usual she had been taken from her dreamy night by that annoying morning alarm. Wait, morning?

She jumped from her bed. All the little fillies had left for school. She could hear lunch being prepared in the kitchens. But how? She had only just eaten her own lunch.

“Oh thank Celestia you’re awake!”

The familiar voice of Mrs. Carewell brought some reassurance to Sparkler.

“Wha...what happened? Why am I back here? It’s only two in the afternoon. Well, it should be. I only just...” She didn’t even notice the elderly mare sit down beside her.

“Calm down, calm down. It’s OK. You had a run in with some bullies. They gave you a nasty nick on the head, but Mrs. Derpy brought you here when you started losing consciousness.”

Now she remembered. The insults. The beating. Being tripped as they destroyed her food.

Then she remembered the mail mare. She had defended her. Without a reason this mare had seen to it that the bullies left and even brought Sparkler back to the orphanage.

Sparkler quickly spoke up, “Is she here? I need to talk to her, to thank her.”

With that Mrs. Carewell began to build tears in her eyes. She brushed the hair out of Sparkler’s eyes and after a pause finally spoke.

“There will be plenty of time for that, dear.”

Sparkler stared back at her, confused by the sudden burst of emotions, “What do you mean?”

“.....She’s going to adopt you.”

Sparkler made sure to make her last few weeks at the orphanage her best. She wanted to leave being remembered as more than the oldest filly to be adopted. She was ecstatic, nothing could ruin her mood now. Not only was she being adopted at last but she would never have to set foot in Canterlot again. She decided to spend her final weeks helping out Mrs. Carewell in the school rooms.

“Now don’t forget to put those books in alphabetical order in stacks of five, dear. Otherwise I’ll have to hand them out one by one, you know how long that takes.” Mrs. Carewell was not only the founder of the orphanage, she was also the teacher. She would often spend her mid day coffee break talking with Sparkler. An older filly like her needed someone to talk to.

Sparkler struggled with the pile of books,” Whoa..... I could use a little help with these things...oof!”

CRASH!!!

Sparkler hit the floor, dropping the enormous pile of books around her. She looked up from under the pile, embarrassed at what she had done.

“Heheheh.... Sorry. I’ll, uh, clean this up right away.”

Mrs. Carewell started to pick up the books with her. In no time at all they had both sorted the books into four equal piles of five, each alphabetically ordered.

The elderly earth pony softly spoke to Sparkler,” You need to calm down dear. I know you’re excited and rightfully so but please try and concentrate on your work?”

Sparkler raised herself from the floor, dusting off her hooves,” I know, it’s just, this is it. In a few days, I’m going...home. I’m going home.”

Mrs. Carewell began to tear up. She had never been happier for Sparkler,” And I know you’ll be loved there. Otherwise I would never let you go from here.”

They sat in silence before Sparkler spoke up,” Oh, where is it I’m going to again?”

“Ponyville, dear. It’s a small town just outside of Canterlot, near the Everfree forest. Derpy has lived there for 12 years now. It’s a beautiful place, I know you’ll enjoy it.”

Ponyville, it sounded wonderful.

Derpy had been to visit Sparkler twice a week before her adoption. During these visits Sparkler and Derpy had a chance to talk with each other.

But Sparkler also had the opportunity to play with her soon-to-be little sister; Dinky Hooves. Dinky always brought her dolls with her when she visited. Today she had brought her newest doll to show Sparkler.

“So, what's her name? You still haven't told me yet.”

The shy little unicorn had been busy brushing her new doll's mane while Sparkler tended to the one Derpy had brought for her to play with.

She softly answered Sparkler, “Oh. Her name's Ms. Peaches.”

Dinky was still getting used to the idea of an older sister coming home with her, so she tended to stay quiet when she visited, not speaking until spoken to.

“That's a lovely name. Why'd you pick it for her?” Sparkler did her best to keep the conversation going, she didn't like playing in silence.

Dinky answered back, eyes still on her doll, “Well whenever mom buys me something she likes to hide it somewhere she knows I'll look. I found her in the garden under our peach tree so I called her Ms. Peaches.”

Sparkler smiled at the thought. It was a childish but meaningful way to give a gift. It made her more excited about moving in to think of such surprises being left around.

“Your mother must love you very much to give you such wonderful gifts, don't you think?”

Dinky smiled back at Sparkler, making eye contact for the first time since she got here today.

Suddenly Derpy spoke up from behind them.

“Mommy loves her little muffin very much.” She nuzzled Dinky and held her beneath her wing.

When she got up again Derpy looked to Sparkler, a smile spreading across her face.

“Ready for the going time, sweetie?”

“Yes Mrs. Derpy.” With that she gave Dinky her doll and reached for her rucksack. Before she could grab it, Derpy lifted it and tucked it into her empty mail bag.

“Let mommy take your bag of keepsakes and clothings, she has to look after little filly now.”

They made their way into the main hall where some staff and Mrs. Carewell had gathered to see her off.

Mrs. Carewell looked to Sparkler with tears in her eyes. This was never easy. But with Sparkler it felt worse. She had been here for fourteen years and now she was finally leaving.

She knew she would miss the little unicorn, but she was going somewhere where she would be loved and adored so long as she lives. So as hard as it was, she had to let her go.

Mrs. Carewell tried to say something to Sparkler, but before she could the young filly ran to her and hugged her tight.

“Goodbye Mrs. Carewell. Thank you for everything.”

Mrs. Carewell stroked Sparkler’s mane,” Goodbye Sparkler. Enjoy your new family.”

After a few moments they separated for the last time. Sparkler walked to the door to join Derpy and Dinky as they left.

This was it. Her new life.

At last she was free of the insults. She was free of the loneliness. Never again to sleep in a dormitory filled with young fillies still at school. Never again would she have to suffer the bullying. Never again would she be alone.

She was on her way now, off with her new family to a place she had dreamed of her entire life.

A home.