

Tabluna Rasa - Part 5

--Dreams of Parties!: Pinkie Pie--

Once more Luna was drifting through Ponyville. *So, the Element of Laughter next, right? Now what was her job? Um... butcher? No, I don't think that was it... Baker? Candlestick maker? No, I'm pretty sure it was baker, we'll stick with that. So a baker would live...*

Luna halted in her tracks as she looked up at the building before her. It looked like a gingerbread house had had an affair with a cupcake. *Is that place even waterproof? And what about the rats, wouldn't they just eat it?* Trying not to think about it too hard, Luna entered the bakery. The ground level was your standard bakery, front room with display cases and a large open space for events, and a kitchen out the back. Also on the ground floor Luna could sense two sleeping ponies. Presumably the owners of the house. There was also someone on the upper floor. Investigating, Luna found a pink earth pony laying asleep. This was the Element of Laughter alright, although Luna was confused as to why the mare had gone to sleep cuddling a... was that a sack of flour?

Ah yes. Luna remember a bit more about the pony before her. This was the one who was... how had Celly put it? A few cupcakes short of a batch? This would be interesting. Bracing herself, Luna peered into the dreamscape.

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Pinkie bounded downstairs at the sound of the first knock. "Oh this is so exciting! What will we do tonight? Ooh, maybe we can go to Cloudsdale again!" She reached the bottom of the stairs in just two bounds, a new best! She flung open the door and began talking at once. "Hi Dashie! It's so nice to see you today, what can I... wait a minute, you're not Rainbow Dash!"

Standing at the door was Princess Luna! The twist left Pinkie momentarily speechless. Luna spoke up "Hi, I hope I'm not interrupting anything. Did you have something planned for today?"

Pinkie got her voice back. "Oh no, not really. I mean, I was expecting Rainbow Dash, but that's only because it's Monday and Monday is the day I always hang out with her! Fluttershy I see on Tuesdays, Applejack gets Wednesdays, Thursdays go to Rarity, then it's Friday, Friday can be anyone depending on what happened that day, and that leaves Twilight for Saturdays!"

"Then what about Sundays?"

"Oh, Sundays. That's reserved for things that don't make any sense. Anyway, since it's you at the door and not Dashie I guess I get to hang out with you today! So, what's on your mind? Any reason for this unexpected but still super awesome visit?"

"Oh, well yes actually! I need your help with something."

"Help? Well that's silly, most ponies would go to Twilight for help. Unless they need help with a party, and even then for some reason they try to stop me finding out about it. Jeeze, you spike the punch one time.... Ooh, is that why you're here? Do you need my help with a party?"

"Well, it's like this. Since returning from my vacation as it were, I've discovered I don't really know any pony other than my sister."

"You know what would fix that right up? A party! Oh, sorry, am I going on about that too much? Rarity keeps trying to tell me that I'm a one track pony or something like that, but I think that's silly because Dashie's the racing pony around here, not me, so why would I be on a track unless I was cheering for Dash?"

"Are you sure you're not thinking of one trick pony?"

"No, I know tons of tricks as well. Ooh, if you'd like I can show you some of my best pranks! Oh, but we were talking about a party weren't we? No wait, that's just me skipping ahead. How can I help you Luna?"

"Well since I'm talking to Equestria's top party planner, there must be only one thing I'm after. Fashion advice. Should I try wearing socks?" Luna's tone was deadpan, but after a few seconds her face betrayed her. Stifling a giggle, she resumed. "No, actually, I do need your help planning a party. It needs to be big!"

"Ooh, I can totally do that! I'm the best at parties, all the ponies do agree. Well, not counting those grumps at the Grand Galloping Gala. They wouldn't know a party if it jumped out of a cake wearing nothing but another cake yelling 'PARTY!' Wait, am I getting ahead of myself again? Did we do the part where you ask for my help with a party?"

"Yes." Luna was doing her best to follow the party pony's ramblings, a good way to get a headache. "A 'Get to know Luna' sort of party."

"That's a great idea! I wish I'd thought of that!" Pinkie grinned and jumped out the door, snaring Luna in her bushy tail. "Come on then, we're heading to Twilight's!"

The pair was about halfway across Ponyville before Luna managed to untangle herself from Pinkie's tail. "Wait, so why are we going to the library? Do we need Twilight's help after all?"

"What? No, don't be silly! But we do need a super awesome place to host the party, and library is the second best place for parties!"

"What's the best place then?"

"Sugar Cube Corner of course!"

"So why are we going to the library?"

"The payoff of course!"

As the two ponies approached the tree that served as Ponyville's library and Twilight's residence they noticed it was strangely busy. There were several pegasi hovering around the upper window, all

tugging on what appeared to be an apple tree lodged in the side of the library.

"How on Equestria does an apple tree wind up in another tree?" Luna asked.

"I dunno, you tell me."

They entered the library where they found Twilight in conversation with Applejack. "Well shewt Twilight, That's one of my apple trees alright, but how they hay did it get up there?"

"I'm not really sure, it was just there when I got up this morning." Twilight spotted Pinkie and Luna across the room. "Oh hey Pinkie Pie. And Princess Luna, what brings you here?"

Both ponies answered as one. "A party!"

Pinkie took over the explaining. "See Luna here wants to get to know the ponies around her better. So what better way to do that than a party!"

"And all the ones in Canterlot are so boring, so I came here to have a proper one!"

"And we'd like you to come if you're not busy!"

Twilight was busy looking between Pinkie and Luna, waiting to see if either of them would start speaking again. "Well, I am a bit behind in my studies, so I don't know..."

"Oh please Twilight!" Luna implored. "You're one of the few ponies around here who I almost know!"

"Yeah," Pinkie joined in. "And we were kinda hoping to have it here as well."

"Well..." Twilight gave in. "Oh sure, why not. My studies can wait one more day. It's not like it's every night I get a visit from royalty."

"Yes!" Pinkie pumped her hoof into the air in celebration. She then turned to Applejack. "What about you AJ? You in?"

The farmer gave a nod. "For a Pinkie Pie party? You know I am. When will it be?"

"Tonight, duh! It's Luna's party, and she practically is the night, so we can't have it in the day!"

"Besides, we'd have no time to decorate if we held it any sooner."

Applejack smiled. "Heh, I guess that makes sense. Anything I can help with?"

"Actually, can I count on you to do the catering? You're totally the best cook in all of Equestria!" Pinkie gave Applejack her best smile.

"Gotcha, I'll go do that right now."

"Great!" Pinkie next turned to Twilight. "Twilight, can you send Spike to tell Rarity that she's in charge of decoration, and then find Rainbow Dash to spread the word?"

"Well sure, I can do that. What are you going to be doing then Pinkie?"

"Luna and I have to get some supplies for tonight! So we'll leave you to it! Assume everypony's invited!" Pinkie turned to Luna. "Come on Luna, let's go!" She was out of the library before anyone had a chance to respond. Luna smiled at Twilight before following suit.

"So Pinkie, what sort of supplies are we getting? Cupcakes? Pin the tail on the Pony? That game's still played right?"

"Of course it's still played! It's my favourite party game! But no we're getting a different kind of supplies." Pinkie lead Luna to a shop that looked more like a circus tent than a building. "Come on, let's see what they've got."

As they entered the shop Luna looked around. Pinkie smiled as she saw recognition dawn on the Alicorn's face.

"This is a prank shop!"

"Yup! What kind of a party would it be if there weren't any pranks? Not one I'd want to be at!"

The shop's owner, a unicorn with a jester hat for a cutie mark, emerged from the back room. "Why hello there Pinkie! Planning another party?"

Pinkie giggled. "You know me too well Bozo! Let's see... I'll take my usual order number one, and whatever else my friend Princess Luna picks out!"

Luna had wandered away and was looking at some of the merchandise on display. There was a wide variety of course, fake blood, sneezing powder, invisible ink, the usual prankster's repertoire. There was also other, less common things like smoke bombs, hollow cakes, explosive candles and a piñata filled with slime instead of candy.

Pinkie looked at Luna. "Well Luna, anything that looks like it could be fun? You need only ask and we can get it!"

Luna smiled. "Actually, I think I've got a good idea for a prank. I'll need the fake blood and smoke bombs for it though."

"Okie dokie loki!" Pinkie turned to the owner and nodded. "We'll take some fake blood and smoke bombs as well. Put it on my tab!"

"Right-o Pinkie. I'll go grab the stuff for you now then." Bozo headed into the back room to get Pinkie's things.

"So then Luna, what's this prank idea? Can I get in on it?"

Luna gave a mischievous grin. "Oh, I was planning on it. Here's the plan..."

The party was going swimmingly. They'd had to start a bit sooner so that the fillies and colts could attend for a while. The slime piñata had entertained them all right, and Pinkie had already had to apologise to Twilight for the ensuing slime fight. It was beginning to get late now, and the foals and their parents and siblings had headed home. It was getting to be that way for the rest of the ponies as well, most of them still not used to being awake at late hours.

Pinkie was glad to see Luna was enjoying herself, and more of the Ponyvillians had worked up the courage to talk to her. But they still hadn't enacted Luna's prank, waiting for the perfect moment. Pinkie made her way over to Luna, who was momentarily without somepony talking to her.

"Luna, can you come to the kitchen with me? There's a batch of cupcakes in there that need to go on the table." This was of course a coded hint that it was time for the finalé.

"Hmm? Oh! Yes, right. Of course."

The two went into the kitchen. Luna closed the door, checking to see that there were no eavesdroppers. "Okay, coast clear. Ooh, this is going to be good!"

"I know! I wish I'd thought of this prank! They're going to love it, I'm sure!"

"Well, that depends. It could go horribly wrong of course. Anyway, you know your part?"

"Well it's not like there's much I have to do for it. You get to have all the real fun Luna."

Luna smiled. "Yes, but it wouldn't be possible without you." she paused and wiped the smile from her face. "Okay, let's begin."

It had been about half an hour since anypony had last seen Pinkie Pie. Most ponies took that as a sign that the party was over, and were on their way to the door. Before anypony could leave however, the door slammed shut and issued a click. It was locked! And if that wasn't enough, the lights chose that moment to go out. Panic began to set in, but it was just beginning. Smoke began to flood the room, creeping up the walls and across the floor. But this wasn't normal smoke. It glimmered with a dark blue sheen to it, almost like the night sky mirror in the floor. The last time any smoke like that had been seen had been last summer sun celebration! But did that mean...

"Mwahahaha! You little foals! You've fallen right into my trap!" As one, the ponies turned to find the source of that voice. It was as they'd feared, the queen of darkness, Nightmare Moon had returned!

"Did you really think I'd reformed? Bah! I was just biding my time, waiting, plotting, scheming... and now my plans of come to fruition! The night will last forever!"

"Big deal!" Rainbow Dash was already in the air. "We've stopped you before, we can stop you

again so long as we still have the Elements of Harmony!"

"Oh? But it was my understanding you needed all the elements to stop me, and that just isn't possible! Behold!"

The lights flickered just a bit, and formed a spotlight of sorts. And what they lit up caused a shriek of horror from the assembled crowd. Lying there in a pool of red was Pinkie Pie, still as a stone.

"This foolish girl thought she could stop me, but see now what has become of her! The same fate awaits each of you unless you bow to me and accept me as your Queen! MWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! MWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!"

It was too much. There wasn't a single pony that wasn't screaming now. The noise mingled with the booming laugh of Nightmare Moon, filling the library.

"AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!" But as the laughter continued, her voice started to boom less, becoming... softer? Gentler? "Hahahahahaha!" That voice was now nothing like Nightmare Moon's. Most of the ponies had stopped running now, and looked at Nightmare Moon in confusion. Before their very eyes, her form began to waver as the illusion spell dropped, and now there was only Princess Luna standing there laughing.

The corpse of Pinkie Pie beside her started to giggle as well, and before long broke out into full laughter, betraying her attempts at playing possum.

"Hahahaha, oh wow, you were so right Luna! That was awesome!" The party pony was rolling around in the pool of fake blood, busy laughing.

"Hahahahaha! Oh, you guys should have seen the look on your faces! Priceless!" Luna wiped away a tear from her eye and looked up at the assembled ponies. Over the last few minutes their faces had undergone a change, from terror, to confusion, until finally, anger. "Uh.. you guys aren't mad about that prank thing are you?"

As one, all the unicorns at the party lit up their horns. "Uh oh," Pinkie gulped, nervous for once. "Lynch mob. Run. Run!"

Both of the pranksters were out the door in a flash. There was a delay of a few seconds before the mob could follow. A few of the faster Unicorns were already casting stun bolts at the fleeing pair. Despite the situation, Luna was still laughing. "Hehehe, well at least we had fun with that!"

Pinkie was giggling as well. "Yup! Luna, you'd better fly away! No need to be stuck here with me."

"You sure? It seems wrong to abandon you like that."

Pinkie smiled. "Oh no, I have my ways of escaping. No one can capture Pinkie Pie!"

Luna hesitated, then eventually flew up. The pegasi in the mob followed her, leaving only the earth ponies and unicorns following Pinkie. She smiled. This was going to be a piece of cake. She jumped behind some crates in an alleyway, and emerged on the other side of town. She looked around, satisfied

that there was no-one following her. "Well, that was easy. Now, where will I next meet up with Luna? Ooh, I know! The stargazing hill!"

A few seconds later Pinkie was at the top of the hill, waiting for Luna to show up. And another few seconds later, she did. "Pinkie! I'm glad I found you again? How'd you manage to escape?"

"Oh, I have my ways." Pinkie gave Luna a wink. "Anyway, wasn't that party fantastic? Oh, they'll be talking about that one for years! Oh, at least they would be if..." Pinkie shook her head. "Nonono, that's not important right now! Anyway Luna I think it's probably time we say goodbye. It's been super-amazing having you here, and I hope you can visit some other time as well!"

"Of course I'll visit again! This has been the most fun I've had for like, millenia! Of course, the last party I tried to host was on the moon, and the moon rocks were dreadful company."

Pinkie gave Luna a hug. "You take care of yourself! Come back whenever you like! I'd be happy to throw you another party."

Luna nodded. "Oh, and I hope you don't mind, but I took the liberty of taking some of your pranking supplies for myself. Is that okay?"

"Of course it's okay silly! You go prank your sister for me! Now bye!"

Luna spread her wings and took off. As she flew away though, something strange could be seen happening to the landscape. The sky, as if snagged on her wings, was pulled along with her, leaving a white void where the sky was meant to be. The ground beneath Pinkie faded away as well, until all that could be seen was white in all directions. Pinkie spoke up again.

"Real Luna? I know you're watching. I just wanted to let you know, I meant it when I said I'd be happy to throw you another party. A real one this time, with real cake and real friends! I won't even pull any pranks if you don't want. Now, I hate to do this to you, but I still have the better part of a night left, and I'm sure Dashie will be so disappointed if I don't have a dream of her tonight, and I can't have you seeing that, so bye bye! See you soon!"

Everything faded to black.

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Luna was flung backwards through the wall. She shook her head a few times. "She could really sense me? She can control her dreams? She's one to watch, that Pinkie Pie." She hovered in though for a while. "But her version of me, what was that like? Fun-loving on the whole I'd say, and she seemed to indicate that I should be happy.... maybe that's who I should be?"

Luna let out a sigh as she flew towards the library. "Well, one last stop for tonight then. Let's find out what my sister's prized pupil thinks of me."