

A New Equestria

By Mist

Chapter Seven (*Rainbow Dash Saga*)

For the third night in a row I had been awoken by a disgruntled looking Rainbow Dash. For the past three nights she had gotten up and decided to get me up with her, and ask if I wanted a drink. Ordinarily I would tell somepony that they were being rude waking me up every night, but seeing as how I was the guest, I let it slide. I would decline the drink but stay up with her anyways.

Every time it was the same; she'd pour herself a drink, and down it in one long series of gulps without coming up for air. Then she'd sit there at the table with an appearance that suggested stress was weighing down on her. Sweat was pouring off of her like a garden hose, and she looked terribly shaken.

It was no different tonight, but for some reason I felt it necessary to say something this time instead of sitting there quietly during this whole process.

"What's wrong? You've been waking up like this almost every night. You hardly ever get enough sleep." I asked daringly.

She took another gulp of her drink and let the glass clank on the table. "Nightmares, that's all..." She was clearly trying not to tell me too much.

A part of me decided that I needed to know more. "What kind of nightmares?" I asked.

Dash glanced over at me and made solid eye contact. Her gaze was powerful, enough to probably kill a pony just by looking at them. I held still while she stared, until she sighed and looked back down at her glass.

"You know why I joined the military?" She asked.

"To help Equestria?" I answered stupidly.

"Before the war, my parents had another daughter. She looked a lot like me, just the most adorable sister I could have ever asked for. They named her Colors, and I just fell in love with the girl to where I just wanted to watch her grow up." She said.

I could feel a story coming on; I let her continue without interrupting.

"Well, only about a year after she was born, they died in an accident. So I became her legal guardian. Losing my parents was hard, but I got through it with her. I raised her like she was my own child really, even though she was my sister. I had to play the role of big sister and mom; it wasn't easy, but I loved that little girl so much..." She went on lost in her memories; I could even see a smile start to grow on her face.

"What happened to her?" I asked.

The smile on her face quickly disappeared. “It was about seven years ago, when this whole war began. The darkness had been growing steadily for a long time, but we didn’t even think that anything would become of it. We were wrong on so many levels though. Trixie initiated the first attack that started the war; she sent a large set of troops armed with guns to assault Ponyville.”

“W-what happened then?” I was hesitant to ask.

“Well it sure wasn’t a battle, it was a massacre. They gunned down any and all unarmed citizens. They showed no mercy to anypony, and murdered them all. Colors and I were sleeping at the time, but Trixie happened to notice that I was in the town, so she came knocking at my door. Before I knew it, she pulled me outside and her soldiers held me down at gunpoint. I’ll never forget what she did next though...” Dash paused for a moment and appeared to be choking on her words.

“She had her soldiers pull Colors right outside next to me. I begged her to leave her out of it, but she didn’t listen. She looked me right in the eye and told me to send a message to Celestia; to tell her that her kingdom was about to come to an end. Then to show me she was serious, she ordered one of her colts to ‘Kill the kid’ right there and then.” Dash stopped, tears started forming in her eyes.

I didn’t know what to say, words wouldn’t come out of my mouth.

“She had them kill her right in front of me. I couldn’t stop them...” She was breaking into a full sob now.

I had never imagined I would see her like this. Every time I had heard about Rainbow Dash, I never once thought about a more sensitive side to her.

“It wasn’t your fault Rainbow Dash. There was nothing you could have done...” I attempted to soothe her pain.

She ignored my offer and continued. “I looked her right in the eye. I promised her right there and then, that I would return the favor; that I would be the one to kill her.” Dash’s eyes filled with fire to go with the tears.

“And you have nightmares about it every night don’t you?” I asked curiously.

Dash wiped her tears and turned away fairly embarrassed. “Among other things...” She commented.

I decided that I didn’t want to pry too far; after all it was enough to make her relive one bad memory. I approached her and placed a hoof around her and smiled trying to cheer her up.

“We can’t change the past, but don’t worry. We can still win this war; we can make them pay for all the lives they’ve taken.” I explained.

She thwarted my hoof away and took a step away from me.

“You don’t get it, kid! Our enemy doesn’t give two flying fucks about anything but winning! They don’t give a fuck about casualties, they don’t give a fuck about who they’re up against, they don’t

give a fuck about you, and they sure as hell don't give a fuck about me! Our enemy just wants us all dead, and they'll stop at nothing to accomplish it. They'll throw as many bodies at us as they need to until we're all dead." She was on the verge of shouting.

"You make it sound as though we've already lost..." I lowered my head.

"Have you looked around us lately? We have lost. Everything is fucking destroyed, and we're all just sitting here hiding. They've got some of the greatest hunter-killers that ever existed, and they're out there right now, searching the land looking for ponies like you and me, to either turn to the darkness or slaughter and toss on the body piles with the others." Dash was getting tenser still.

I tried to calm her down, but to no avail. "But you are 'The Miracle'; we stand a chance with you." I said.

"Fuck you!" She hissed.

"While you were up there in Skyvale just sitting nice and cozy, I was down here fighting. I fought every day, every night, just nonstop fighting. I watched ponies die left and right for days on end without even a second in between. I didn't win those battles alone, I won them with my comrades, and I lost a good share of my comrades in a lot of those battles. What makes you think that my existence changes anything?" She growled at me.

I was quiet with my answer. "Because you were my hero... I dreamed of coming down here and meeting you. I wanted to help you in any way I could... I still believe in you Rainbow Dash..."

She was speechless. She turned away without a word and I saw myself out. I hoped that a night without me there to pester her would allow her to sleep peacefully for once.

Outside Pinkie Pie was keeping a watchful eye on our surroundings; it was kind of strange to see her just walking back and forth with that serious look on her face where that dumb smile of hers usually was.

"Aren't you the least bit tired Pinkie Pie?" I asked curiously.

"Not in the slightest friend." She responded rather enthusiastically.

Maybe Rainbow Dash was right, and Pinkie Pie really didn't sleep.

"Hey Pinkie... What do you think about Rainbow Dash?" I questioned.

"Rainbow Dash? Well I think she's pretty amazing really. I've never had a friend as great as her, she's the best!" She replied.

"Why do you think that?" I continued quizzing her.

"Dash has done so much for me. She's always taking care of me, sharing her food with me, and checking up on me. She's the only pony who puts up with me. She even keeps the cabbages away, which I'm very grateful for." She explained.

Ignoring her delusions, I could sort of understand where she was coming from. I couldn't imagine that many ponies would want to put up with a girl like Pinkie Pie. She wasn't exactly a pony that I could say that I'd have spent as long with as Rainbow Dash did.

Standing out here with her now, I could see she had a twitching problem. She appeared to be shivering quite often now that I thought about it. It wasn't that cold out.

"Are you cold...?" I asked quietly.

"Nope, why do you ask?" She replied while shivering some more.

"You're shivering..." I answered.

"Oh, I hardly notice anymore, it's a side effect of eating ponies." She smiled.

Eating ponies. I had forgotten all about that, Pinkie Pie had cannibalized that other pony a few days ago. The body responds to eating the flesh of your own kind by some kind of twitching and shivering. It was your body's way of telling to that it wasn't natural to devour your own kind. The fact that Pinkie was *used* to this meant that wasn't the first time either.

"How many ponies have you... Eaten...?" I asked hesitantly.

"I've eaten ponies?" She asked dumbfounded.

I sighed, remembering that I was trying to carry on conversation with a girl with some severe head problems.

"Say, can I show you something?" She either was changing the subject, or honestly didn't remember what we were talking about.

"Um... Sure." I shrugged.

She tilted her head suggesting I follow her. I obeyed and she began to lead me down the remnants of the streets that once paved this town. Not only five minutes down the road she halted in front of a building marked "Sugar Cube Corner", but a crude old sign decaying with age. Once I had caught up to her, she bolted right inside and I followed cautiously.

The inside of the building was far more impressive than the outside. Much of the interior looked very intact and most of it seemed to be repaired. It was clearly in the process of being restored.

It was a nice little bakery, almost nice enough to fool me into thinking it was still operational and the owners were just waiting in the back ready to take orders.

"What is this place...?" I asked.

"This would be Sugar Cube Corner, I used to work here." Pinkie responded as she stood behind the counter and leaned over it smiling at me.

“How’s it in such good condition?” I said.

“I’ve been working to restore it for years. I got a lot of it operational, hopefully once ponies return to Ponyville I can open it back up and we can start seeing customers again.” She responded.

“You did this all by yourself...?” I was fairly amazed at the amount of work put into this place.

“Nope. Rainbow Dash helped. She gathered spare parts and building supplies from all over to help me get this place back in working condition.” Pinkie Pie said.

I suddenly felt bad. It looked like Dash still did care about something, despite trying to make it appear as though she didn’t. No matter how much she treated Pinkie Pie like she was just a loon that kept guard for her, she clearly cared about her more than she let on.

“Pinkie, do you think that Dash can change the world?” I asked, this time however I was accepting the fact that Pinkie may not even realize a war was going on.

“Of course I do. Dashie can do anything that I’m sure of.” Pinkie smiled furiously.

“Me too...” I smiled back.