

Twilight blinked, and her reflection blinked, when she moved, her reflection moved, and yet even still, the person looking back at her felt off somehow. Discord's influence had been anything but kind to her and though officially his defeat and her subsequent check up with her therapist had ensured things were returning to normal, it was still a hard transition. For one, her face felt... small, for lack of a better word and the unicorn opened her mouth and stuck out her tongue only to find the same pinkish appendage that was always there.

Shaking her head, Twilight rubbed her temples with her index fingers while shutting her eyes tightly and repeating the mantra that had become so near and dear to her over the last few weeks. *I am me, this is me. I am me, this is me.* Over and over she repeated this in her head until finally her flesh felt like it was truly hers and that she was no longer a strange combination of both puppet, and puppeteer.

Breathing deeply, Twilight Sparkle straightened her back, ran a hand down her loose tee shirt and smiled at the happy dragon logo located on the centre. Sure it wasn't the most... refined of apparel, but Twilight felt strangely relaxed in the poorly fitting old shirt, a feeling that was in short supply these days.

Looking back into the mirror, Twilight looked up and down her body, as if checking to make sure she was still all there, and she hadn't grown a second horn or something.

Sure enough, the same bean pole thin unicorn looked back at her, her cutie mark poking out from the edges of her shirt's sleeves. Only the bottom were visible, but Twilight felt a little proud when her gaze passed over the marks that had first appeared on her upper arms when she was only thirteen. With a gentle sigh, she continued her visual inspection, finding a strange comfort in the knowledge that she was still the same person.

Her horn was filed to a well manicured, but not sharp, point and her hair was cut as plainly as ever, the bangs of which were a simple straight line across her forehead. A pony tail completed her signature relaxed but not lazy look and a simple silver necklace with a sun and moon medallion was hidden under her shirt. A shirt that was a simple black color with the grinning face of a cartoon dragon on the center. The well loved fabric was a little baggy, and beaten, having faded significantly over the years, but it served its purpose well.

Her pants were simple and relaxed like the rest of her outfit and consisted of a pair of dull grey sweats that Rarity would usually talk her out of wearing if the fashionista was not also dealing with the ramifications of Discord's influence. For now they were perfect, covering Twilight's thin legs and also almost hiding her comfortable and ill used, running shoes.

Shaking her head, the unicorn placed a finger just below her eye and gently tugged at the flap of skin, revealing that the dark rings under her eyes were as prominent as ever. She sighed and let her arm flop back down before turning the tap and washing her hands. Even though she had only come into the bathroom to cool off, and did not strictly need to do so.

It was better to be sanitary, Twilight thought to herself, before turning to the hand dryer next to the door and frowning even deeper. It was one of the new electric kinds that made Twilight flinch whenever she saw them as to her, they were little more than bacterial breeding grounds. Summoning her magic, the unicorn conjured a brief gust of wind to dry her hands before giving them one last wipe on her pants and opening the door.

The restaurant she walked into was not terribly busy during this time of day, as it was between both the lunch, and supper rushes that usually clogged places such as this one. Still, there were a few ponies sitting in booths, electric lights glowing between them and illuminating some greasy dish.

As Twilight maneuvered her way through the restaurant and made a turn towards where she knew her table was, she noticed that a new group had sat several feet away from her friends when she was in the bathroom. Though Twilight was initially tempted to ignore them, a spark of recognition and familiarity made her look closer. The most notable feature of the group was that they were all girls, and all unicorns who also seemed to be around the same age. Twilight quickly recognized the signature red skirts and gold tops that marked them as students of Celestia's school for the gifted.

Pushing that thought out of her mind, she ignored the students and made a beeline towards her friends who were sitting in a nearby booth. And subsequently not noticing that she had been recognized by said students, who began a hushed, yet animated conversation while sparing an occasional side glance at the homely unicorn passing them by.

Approaching the table, Twilight realized that she had walked in at a good, or bad time, as no one said anything and most of her friends were looking down, picking absently at their food. Which meant that either conversation had just died down, or it had been killed. Gulping down her apprehension, Twilight stepped forward and took her place at the head of the table.

"So, what did I miss?" She asked, a hint of hope worming into her tone.

Applejack sighed, the apple farmer's shoulder's sagging as she gestured to a slightly sheepish looking Pinkie Pie who was currently stuffing her face with cold fries. "This dingbat thought it would be a right swell idea to bring up *you know who* while we were eatin'."

Twilight frowned, her gaze lingering on the orange earth pony for a moment as she looked her up and down. Her faithful stetson remained perfectly perched on her head as usual, but there was also something off about the usually rock steady pony. The jean vest worn over her checkered shirt barely contained her bulging physique like always, but it was a little eskew, like the shirt was being worn inside out or something. Even her blue jeans looked a little off, but Twilight quickly shook her head and forced her mind back into the conversation.

"You know not to do that Pinkie Pie." Twilight began, leveling a stern, yet kind look at the party pony. "We may have all managed to escape his grasp more easily than most, but having your mind messed with is still not a pleasant memory."

In the corner of her eye, Twilight noted that Fluttershy was shaking like a leaf and nodding her head vigorously, her butter yellow hands clutching the sides of her light pink dress tightly. "Y-yeah." She muttered.

"I just said that we should be happy, that's all." Pinkie Pie exclaimed, after she swallowed the mouthful of fries. "Yeah it wasn't a fun time, but we still saved the world, got our brains back in order and were home in time for supper. I'm just looking on the bright side ya know?"

"That is nice darling, but perhaps we could just avoid this type of conversation for a few weeks." Rarity offered, smiling gently. "Until everyone has had a chance to heal at their own speed."

"Yeah, no offence Pinks, but I'd be totally cool not talking about that jerk face for a little while." Rainbow Dash added, only to square her shoulders and sit a little taller in her chair, inadvertently showing off her wonderbolt bomber jacket a little more prominently. "Ya know, for Shy that is."

Pinkie Pie sighed even harder, her shoulders visibly falling to the point that the straps of her bright orange and yellow dress seemed ready to fall off. Thankfully the slim blue vest she wore kept everything in place and ensured she didn't accidentally end up flashing the table.

"I guess your right," Pinkie Pie admitted. "I just want everyone to cheer up. You're not supposed to be glum after saving the world, you're supposed to be partying and signing autographs and accepting lucrative brand deals."

Rarity chuckled nervously to herself as she straightened the deep purple blouse she wore, hoping that her friends had not found out how expensive her clothing was. "Yes well, once we have put all this behind us, I'm sure we will be partying it up, but until then why don't we avoid this whole debacle for just a little longer."

"I agree." Twilight declared, gently taking Pinkie Pie's hand in her own, giving it a gentle squeeze. "It's not that we aren't happy, it's just a little too fresh in our minds right now. How about this, in one month we will have a 'we saved the world party' and then we can begin the celebrations."

Pinkie sighed, and gave Twilight's hand a squeeze back. "I guess that's fair." She muttered, until all of a sudden she pulled her hand back and nearly jumped out of her seat. "That gives me a whole month to plan and make this the bestest party Equestria has ever seen! Great idea Twilight!"

"Well don't go overboard, most of us still gotta work to do on sundays." Applejack added with a smirk.

"It's a month away AJ!" Rainbow Dash exclaimed, throwing open her arms. "Can't you like, plan for that or something? Besides, it's a party, you're not supposed to be able to work the next day."

"Hmm, well I suppose it's been a coon's age since I cut loose..." Applejack muttered as she tapped her chin.

"Though not to open a wound so soon, but I was wondering something." Rarity began. "I noticed that some others suffering from Discord's Touch were a bit worse off than we were. You wouldn't happen to know why, would you Twi?"

Twilight frowned. "Yes and no. The elements of harmony protect us from some things, but Celestia said that shielding us from mental trauma was not something they are capable of doing."

"Pfft, I guess were just awesome." Rainbow Dash declared with a smirk.

Fluttershy perked up for a second and pointed to Twilight's left. "I think we have a visitor."

Twilight and most of the table turned to where Fluttershy was pointing, making the young teal coated unicorn girl visibly flinch and raise a small book up like a shield. "Uh hi? My name's Sunshine Spinner and I was wondering if you were Twilight Sparkle? If so, can I have your autograph?"

Though Twilight was shocked by the sudden appearance of one of the students she had seen earlier, she was more surprised by the book she held. A book that was simply titled Harmonic Resonance Theory by Dusk Shine.

"Yes, that's me and you may..." Twilight muttered before suddenly pointing to the book. "Where did you find that?"

"Oh this? I found it at a used book store." Sunshine declared, her sudden excitement overwhelming her nervousness. "The stallion who sold it to me only wanted five dollars, can you believe it?"

"Err no." Twilight muttered, extending a hand. "May I?"

The student nodded eagerly and handed over the book, which Twilight opened and slowly flipped through. Prompting Rarity to lift her eyebrow and lean a little closer to the unicorn.

"Twilight darling, who is this girl and why does she want your autograph?" Asked the fashionista.

"Yeah, I mean if she wanted my autograph that would make sense." Rainbow Dash announced with a smirk, only to earn her an elbow in the gut from a certain farm pony.

"I'm a big fan of Twilight's." The student announced, a wide smile crossing her face. "Her work on harmonic resonance theory was and is still quite ground breaking. It's actually what I'm doing my thesis on right now."

"Yer a little young to be going after such a title, how old are ya anyway?" Applejack asked, tipping back her hat as she gave the girl a once over.

"I'm twenty one!" Sunshine Spinner declared.

"Land sakes girl, when did you finish highschool, when you were thirteen?" Applejack mused. "Well congratulations either way."

"Thanks! And I finished highschool last year actually, but that was because of some issues with one of my classes." The girl looked down, a blush crossing her face.

"It was P.E wasn't it?" Rainbow Dash remarked with a snicker, the girl's face becoming even brighter.

"Now Rainbow Dash..." Fluttershy began, leveling the pegasus a firm glare.

The rainbow maned girl raised her hands defensively. "I'm just saying, physical education is important is all. It teaches health and sex ed and all that good stuff."

"Ooh, that was my favorite part!" Pinkie Pie declared, grinning from ear to ear. "I don't know why everyone hated it. You learn fun words like medulla oblongata."

"Besides, twenty one isn't that early." Twilight mumbled, still flipping through the book. "At that age I had finished my second masters in the field of magic, and had started my first in quantum magical theory."

The purple unicorn continued to flip through the book for a few more seconds until she realized that her friends were dead silent. Blinking owlishly, she looked up to realize that her friends were all staring at her with open mouths while the teal unicorn was nearly vibrating out of her clothes.

"What?" Twilight muttered.

"You have two masters?" Rarity blurted.

“And a P.H.D in applied magical theory, among other, more minor accolades I’ve accrued over the years.” Twilight replied, her eyebrow raising when her friend’s jaws opened wider. “What? You knew I was a doctor, it even says so on my driver’s license remember?”

“I thought that bouncer was just telling a joke.” Pinkie Pie replied weakly.

“And she’s also written two very successful, and groundbreaking books!” The unicorn offered, only to cover her mouth suddenly. “I’m saying too much again aren’t I?”

Twilight shrugged. “It’s just a shame those harmonists burned so many of them, I’m surprised you managed to find an original from when I had to write under a pen name.”

Sunshine Spinner’s awkwardness vanished in an instant and she nodded eagerly. “It took a lot of looking but in the end it was worth it, and it will be even more awesome with your autograph.”

Twilight’s eyes went wide and she quickly flicked back to the first page. “Err right, that’s why you were here. One second.”

The unicorn looked around for a pen only to shrug and light her horn, conjuring a glowing magical quill that she used to write the words; *Stay curious -Twilight Sparkle*. In flowing, elegant handwriting in the bottom right corner. “There you are.”

“Oh my gosh this is so awesome!” Gushed the student, who clutched the book tightly against her chest. “I can’t wait to rub it in Starlight Vigil’s face tomorrow!”

“Hopefully not literally, that doesn’t sound like fun at all.” Pinkie Pie added.

“Um, can I ask you one question? I promise it won’t take long.” Sunlight blurted suddenly, the nervous girl shifting from foot to foot awkwardly.

“Sure, you girls don’t mind, right?” Twilight asked, looking over to her friends who all shook their heads. “Go right ahead.”

“Okay, I don’t know how to phrase this so everyone understands but like, do you think the background harmonization frequency is a force of nature or is truly intelligent? Because in your books you give evidence to both but in the second book it seems like you were leaning towards the force of nature explanation.” Sunshine Spinner gushed.

“Harmonization frequency? Isn’t that like a radio channel or something?” Rainbow Dash asked, scratching her head.

“It’s a sort of frequency that seems to permeate everything on Equis and even penetrates the crust of our planet. It acts as a magical background noise so to speak that seems to make

everything that it touches more harmonious in some way or another.” Twilight explains. “Though I’m not sure how or why, it seems to act primarily as a way to stop magical mutations that are shown to crop up in it’s absence.”

“Ahh, I think I get what your trying to say.” Applejack murmured.

“Well I never was able to get the funding for my experimental magical vacuum chamber. Something about costing more than Canterlot castle but I’m not sure if that was true or not.” Twilight replied with a shrug. “Regardless, I never figured it out myself but personally from what little I have been able to test on the subject, it seems like it’s a force of nature and I have the perfect metaphor for why it may seem intelligent to some.”

Twilight’s horn lit up and she pulled over a glass of water and hovered her finger over it’s surface. “If we think of water only in the weird way it interacts with surface tension we might think it’s trying to reach up and grab my finger, like so.”

Twilight placed the very edge of her finger against the water, and accurately predicted the way the water seemed to almost reach out and grab her digit.

“If all we looked at was that interaction, then we might think it’s sentient, but as everyone knows, it’s just water.” Twilight pulled back her finger. “As it stands right now, we are only looking at a single way that the harmonic frequency interacts with living things, so it would be silly to assume that it’s the result of a conscious actor of some kind.”

“I think I may need a nap after this.” Muttered a baffled Rarity.

Sunshine Spinner on the other hand, was nonplussed by the explanation, and was deep in thought. “That makes sense... Thanks, you’ve given me a lot to think about.”

The purple unicorn smiled, and nodded to the girl. “Your very welcome, have a wonderful weekend.”

Sunshine Spinner nodded before walking away, her gaze distant, her mind no doubt occupied by this new information.

“You mentioned some sort of harmonists that didn’t like your book, who are they?” Rainbow Dash asked suddenly, leaning in close. “Are they somebody we are gonna haveta beat up someday?”

Twilight rolled her eyes and was about to launch into explanation mode again, only to be interrupted by Pinkie Pie who shook her head. “I don’t think so, most harmonists don’t believe in that dogmatic gobbledegook and just like singing songs and stuff.”

"Yes, I remember going to a few events with my mother when we were younger but the Ponyville church shut down years ago." Rarity added.

"I suppose they don't have many harmonists in Cloudsdale either, but to answer your question they are basically a bunch of ponies that believe that there exists a literal god of harmony that controls everything, somewhere out there." Twilight explained only to shrug. "But most folk don't really believe that part, like Pinkie explained."

Applejack nodded. "My family are all harmonists, but they don't buy into none of that hooey. Just that if you want to be a good pony you gotta do your best to embody the elements of harmony. Kinda like a rules for life type of deal."

"Something that comes pretty easy for us." Pinkie added with a giggle.

Fluttershy nodded. "Miss Summer Breeze was a harmonist, remember?"

Rainbow Dash nodded. "Oh yeah, she always wore that medallion thinger."

"Like this one." Twilight offered, lifting her own medallion from her shirt, and displaying the half silver, half gold medallion. "I don't believe it myself, but I do think the symbol is nice and this particular one was bequethed to me by my grandmother before she passed."

Rarity nodded knowingly. "You could certainly choose more garish jewelry."

Twilight chuckled, and tucked the medallion back beneath her shirt. "True, I could wear the symbol for male for over a week before someone finally corrected me."

Rainbow Dash's face immediately lit up and she all but jumped out of the booth. "Hey I told you that was a prank, the seller guy told me it was the symbol for female!"

Pinkie Pie snickered. "I think the whole town was convinced you were a dude, or were transitioning."

"P-pinkie!" Rainbow Dash yelled, her voice raising a few octaves as her face became brighter still.

Applejack rolled her eyes and grabbed Rainbow Dash's sleeve, tugging the girl back into her seat. "Chill out before we get kicked out."

"This isn't over Sparkle." Rainbow Dash declared, jabbing a finger across the table.

To which Twilight rolled her eyes. "No, now we are even, remember?"



Rainbow Dash paused, her anger melting as she really thought about it. "Oh yeah, the whole bathroom prank." she sighed. "I guess we are even, for now."

Twilight sighed and sipped her milkshake. "So what are you girls up to this weekend?"

Pinkie Pie perked up, waving a hand in the air. "Oh, oh me first! I'm going to throw a birthday party for Lyra, and then visit Maud and-"

The rest of the afternoon went by quickly, and the six friends all ended up leaving just as the supper rush was beginning to pile in, each one saying their goodbyes before going their separate ways. Leaving Twilight to walk home alone, a smile on her lips as she trotted through town and made her way towards the library. Few ponies stopped to say hello, or exchange pleasantries, most being able to tell that Twilight wanted to be left alone.

Something the girl did indeed want, as her social batteries were spent and she wanted nothing more than to curl up with a good book and relax for the rest of the day.

The girl trotted up to the door of the library and pushed her way inside, closing the door firmly behind herself before wiping her hooves on the carpet. "Spike, I'm back from lunch with the girls!"

The pudgy dragon peeked from around a small mountain of comic books that were piled high on one of the library's many tables. "Oh hey Twilight, did you have fun going to slunch?"

Twilight paused, raising an eyebrow. "Slunch? What is that?"

"Well you can't call it brunch, you left at like two in the afternoon, so it's more like lunch supper, thus slunch." Spike explained.

Twilight shook her head and trotted over to the table. "That makes sense, but it still sounds kinda gross."

"True..." Spike tapped his chin idly as he looked up at the ceiling. "Maybe lupper? No that's even worse."

The unicorn chuckled. "Do you want me to take over looking after the library or are you busy 'inspecting' this month's comic books."

"It's very important you know." Spike began, patting the pile of comic books. "We have to make sure each one is put into the appropriate age area."

"And it doesn't hurt that all your favorite comics came out this month." Twilight added, her hands on her hips.

"That just makes the work easier!" Spike declared with a smile.

Chuckling to herself, Twilight let her hands fall to her sides as she walked over to the stairs up. "Well if you don't mind keeping an eye on the library I think I'm going to take a short nap, I'm exhausted for some reason."

"Should I wake you up in an hour?" Spike offered without looking up from his comic.

"If you wouldn't mind."

"No problem, enjoy your nap." Spike replied, waving at the unicorn absently.

Twilight rolled her eyes, ignoring the slight teasing edge to the dragon's words, the unicorn making a mental note to tease him about his own frequent naps the next time he had one.

Making her way up the stairs, Twilight slipped past the door to their apartment and made a beeline towards the bedroom, a yawn forming on her lips. A yawn that grew and grew until the unicorn nearly fell over from the force of it.

"Oh my." She muttered. "I guess I was more tired than I first thought."

Shaking her head, Twilight used her magic to close the door behind her, draw the curtains, and swiftly make her bed. Though her hand hovered over a book she had been meaning to read, she ultimately passed on it, knowing full well that she was too tired to absorb any of the information. Not wanting to end up having to backtrack in her book later, Twilight pushed it aside and slipped into bed. She didn't bother to shed her clothes as she was too lazy to bother, and was comfortable enough to use them as pajamas.

For a moment she lay there in bed, covers pulled all the way up to her nose, her gaze lingering on the long beams of sunlight that slipped over the drapes.

"Why am I so tired anyway?" She muttered to herself, the unicorn's mind going back to the night before.

Sure she had a nightmare, but it had been short, due to Luna's timely intervention and after that she had a long, and surprisingly restful sleep. Despite all the stress that had filled her life recently, and lingered from her run in with Discord, today had been surprisingly stress free. With no other answer she could think of, Twilight concluded that it was just her brain trying to catch up on the sleep she had lost immediately after dealing with the chaos god.

Closing her eyes, Twilight prepared herself for several minutes of restless turning, only to immediately fall into a deep, deep sleep.

And when her eyes closed, and her mind drifted off, something else far larger, and far more terrifying awoke half a world away. It's own massive eyes opening to reveal a world as black as pitch.

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Moonlit Dew flitted through the treetops, the pegasus girl clutching tight the tacklebox that housed her fishing rod and everything else she needed for her early evening escapade. With a smile on her lips, she pumped her wings and surged through the last few scraggly trees before emerging out into the open.

In front of her lay a large beach nestled against a small and mostly hidden bay that was itself mostly invisible due to two large cliffs that rose on either side of it. Though not quite big enough to serve as a harbor, it did make for a nice fishing and swimming area for those who knew where to find it. Lucky for her, Moonlit knew exactly where it was, having come here numerous times over the years.

A quick glance told her that the small, shabby old dock was exactly where she remembered it to be. The ancient, and probably rotted wood barely holding together amidst the gentle lap of the waves. Moonlit Dew eagerly trotted down the dock, her gaze drawn to the surprisingly clear water as well as the deep bay that was now before her. Though Moonlit didn't know exactly how deep the bay itself was, she did remember her father talked about how they could have parked the largest warship in the Equestrian fleet here with room to spare, if they could get past the jagged rocks at the entrance of course.

Putting that memory behind her, she trotted to the end of the dock and opened her tackle box. Swiftly getting to work assembling her fishing rod, adding bait to the hook and a bobber near the end.

"Oh Eagle Eye is going to be so excited if I manage to catch a black carpe. I bet that he might even forgive me for inviting my mother down for the weekend." She announced excitedly, snickering to herself slightly as she remembered the look her griffon husband had given her when he had first received that particular bit of news.

Having assembled her rod properly, the girl gave it a few test casts before winding back and sending the hook as far into the bay as possible. With that done, she plunked down at the end of the dock, planted the rod between her legs and leaned back, looking up.

The evening sky was a pleasant sight to the pegasus who despite only wearing a ratty old grey sweater, was unbothered by the cool air rolling off the ocean. Between her pegasus physiology, the layers of clothing she wore, and all the experience she had with the cold, she easily

shrugged off the worst of the weather and simply enjoyed the sights and sounds the bay provided to her.

The stars were just starting to come out as the last vestiges of day receded towards the horizon, the sun's light only visible against the bottom of some of the clouds near the edge of the world. The sight brought a smile to the girl's face and she breathed deep of the salt filled air, more than happy to simply enjoy the wonderful moment nature had given her.

After a while her neck began to ache and she looked down and took the rod into her hands, careful not to jiggle it too much, lest she scare away the fish and make a moot point of her entire evening. Gazing out over the water, the girl's smile faltered somewhat when she noticed that the tide was going out, and far faster than what should be possible. Not only that, but it was an odd time for the tide to go out, though she didn't know quite enough to be able to confirm such a notion.

Still, it wasn't enough to dissuade her good spirits, and the girl began to hum a random tune as she watched the ocean slowly recede from the land. Only to continue to recede to the point that the dock began to groan and the beach became more exposed, where dozens of fish flopped uselessly against the ground.

Eyes wide with panic, the girl began to frantically reel in her hook. "Come on, come on." She muttered, her gaze lingering on the point between the two peeks that obscured the bay.

Just as she managed to reel her hook in and the bright red and white bobber emerged from the surf, the dock cracked. Immediately the girl reached down and grabbed her tackle box before leaping into the air, her wings flapping hard as she struggled to gain altitude. The second she had managed to stabilize herself several feet above the surf, she looked down and found that the dock had broken into three separate pieces, all of which were now floating freely in the bay.

Which looked strangely empty, with scores of fish and even the odd dolphin trapped by the sudden retreat of the ocean. The clap of white caps drew her attention back to the water, where a trio of strange spikes rose from the surf at the very edge of her vision. The girl's jaw hung open and she stared in complete bewilderment as the giant spines drew closer, bringing with it the returning ocean that surged all around it.

Shaking off her shock, the girl pumped her wings hard, putting more distance between her the bay. A good thing too, as she narrowly managed to avoid the wave that surged over the beach and even crashed into the nearby woods. Glancing nervously at the strange rock like spines, the girl noticed that they had begun to dip down below the waves, before vanishing completely.

In that moment Moonlit dared to consider the possibility that whatever this thing was, that it had decided to turn back around, only for the center of the bay to bulge as something massive breached the surface. A titanic reptilian head dozens of meters across and bristling with teeth

emerged from the surf, sending an eruption of sea water that flew hundreds of feet into the air. A massive neck followed by an equally as massive set of shoulders emerged shortly thereafter, all of which were covered by a leathery, rigid hide that looked as durable as steel.

The second the creature breached the water's surface it's comparatively shorter arms reached up to grasp at it's head, the beast moaning in pain and confusion. The great creature began to shake violently, it's enormous scaly body quaking as it twisted this way and that, sending small tidal waves to crash against the beach of the small bay.

Enormous spines dominated the beast's back in three separate rows, the center of which were the largest, and went from the back of the beast's head all the way down to it's tail, which only just poked out from the surf. Enormous eyes, each of which were larger than Moonlit was tall looked around the bay in a panic, as if searching for something. When the creature didn't find what it was looking for, it cried out in agony, it's voice so powerful that it nearly knocked the pegasus out of the air.

The deep wordless cry echoed off the cliffs, making the girl clap her hands over her ears lest she be rendered deaf from the great creature's wailing. A wail that grew more panicked and confused as time went on, all while it clutched desperately at it's head. It's body continued to shake, and slowly the cry began to die, replaced by a growl of primal rage that became so powerful that Moonlit was fairly certain that she was moments from death, yet she remained locked in place by fear.

Fear that was every bit as primal as the great monster's cry, as if she were being willed to remain in place and witness the great monster's anger.

As the cry of rage began to fade Moonlit noticed the creature's spines had begun to glow, a spiderweb of blue energy creeping up from it's body until each and every spine on it's back was thrumming with a terrifying power. Power that exerted such a force that Moonlit felt as though a weight had settled against her body and made her wings itch in a way that she couldn't explain.

The monster reared back, drawing itself to it's full height, it's maw opening and revealing that the same unearthly glow was emanating not only from it's spines but from it's mouth as well. Before Moonlit had a chance to wonder what was about to happen, the creature let loose a blast of energy so devastating that one of the twin peaks that gave the bay its name, simply ceased to exist. The area immediately around the point of impact exploded violently, rubble flying hundreds of feet in the air as dirt, stone, and trees alike were reduced to ash in an instant.

Though Moonlit initially thought it was some sort of bizarre ancient dragon, the sight of it's strange blue flames dismissed such a notion. After all, she had seen dragon fire before, and this was not the flames of a dragon. There didn't seem to be much in the way of heat, only an unbridled destructive force that was more akin to a concentrated explosion rather than the fire of a dragon.

The monster lurched suddenly, its destructive breath sputtering as it listed to the side, its hands going to its head as its eyes closed. Then, just as suddenly as it began, the monster's breath attack flickered and died. The enormous creature let out one last confused and pained cry before toppling sideways.

Massive waves erupted from all directions of the creature, briefly exposing its motionless form at the bottom of the bay before it was utterly swallowed by the ensuing rush of water that surged in from all sides. The crash of waves and the ensuing destruction of the surrounding landscape did little to grab Moonlit's attention, who stared intently at the spot that the enormous creature had vanished beneath the surf.

For a few seconds a faint blue glow could be seen beneath the water, until that too vanished, and all was still once more.

For a moment the girl remained nearly motionless, only her rapid breathing and the dull flap of her wings reminding her that she was indeed still alive and what had happened, had indeed happened. Then, all at once, she turned and desperately began to fly back towards town, not even noticing that she had dropped her rod and tackle box sometime during the monster's appearance.

Pure, unbridled panic coursed through her mind.

"That bay is over two hundred feet deep, that's impossible, that thing, was impossible." She muttered to herself. "No dragon can grow that big, nothing can."

Shaking her head, the girl dismissed such thoughts, focusing instead on what was next, and who she should tell. Noticing the distinct shape of her village emerge on the horizon, she changed course slightly, focusing on the singular golden tower that rose from the rest of the town. The royal guard outpost may be small, and the guards stationed may not believe her, but she had to tell someone about the god that risen from the ocean.

"Celestia save us." She muttered.