

Teatime at Twilights

It was quite a normal day for Twilight Sparkle and her friends. The sun was warm; the Pegasus ponies had missed a raincloud from yesterday, causing a rise in humidity. Nevertheless the birds were chirping and the sound of buzzing bees filled the air. She, Spike and the rest of the gang were settling in to enjoy a tea party together on this lazy afternoon; earlier that day Pinkie found out that everyone slept in. Pinkie, ever Ponyville's dedicated party pony, declared a party to take place. Twilight eventually talked her into having a tea party and when they were all settled in, Pinkie revealed a startling truth about herself.

"I've never actually had a tea-party before this today! So....what do we do?" asked Pinkie.

The other ponies gasped in shock. "Um, Pinkie?" responded Fluttershy in barely a whisper, "You've never, ever had a tea party not even ever?"

Pinkie shrugged "Um...nope. I've had almost every OTHER kind of party though. I've had birthday, dinner, caroling, surprise, welcome, going away, pool, house, block, COSTUME ooh those are so much fun, slumber, dance, graduation, pre parties AND after parties! But this is my first time ever tea party!" her friends stared at her blankly as she gasped for breath, Rainbow Dash giggled a little bit. "It's really no surprise that you've never thrown one before Pinkie, because it's literally the *lamest* party you could throw."

Rarity glared at Dash, and cleared her throat "As they say, a party is a party, and I for one do not think a tea party to be different from anything else. But, I must say that I quite enjoy the occasional tea party and, I admit, a tea party does imply less...madness than others you've thrown. But the spirit is there all the same."

"That's right!" chirped Twilight, summoning a copy of *Perfect Partying Practices* from behind her, flipping it open. "A good tea party is a social gathering where friends get together and enjoy each other's company over brewed tea and light snacks." Twilight shut her book and smiled. "So-- are we having fun everypony?" Everyone nodded enthusiastically, except Dash, who was busily chewing an apple slice "Applshak, theesh are th' betht app'e shlices ive effer 'ad" she gulped, washing it down with tea "What did you put on them?" AJ smiled proudly. "Ah Jes' toasted 'em a bit and sprinkled cinnamon, weren't nuthin' to it."

Pinkie sighed and stirred her tea absently. "Is there anything else we can do though, girls?" she said straightening herself "As much of a party pony I am, I'm really not feeling the fun here."

Dash leaned over and whispered in Twilights ear "Told you even Pinkie wouldn't like it." Twilight rolled her eyes and pushed Dash away "Well, it's not like we can add to the party, just because it's not in the book doesn't mean we can't do something fun. Spike! Can you get me the book for me?"

Spike groaned. He had been quietly snacking on Applejacks delicious apple slices, trying to avoid being noticed “But Twiliiiiight, I put it all the way back up on the shelf already...” Twilight magically yanked an apple slice he was holding out of his claw.

“You can have some more food after you get the book for me Spike.” she said matter-of-factly. “Oh ok then,” Spike made a show of dragging himself over to the ladder to pick up the book.

Fluttershy smiled shyly sipping more tea, Rarity adjusted her make-up in a little mirror. Twilight munched on an apple slice. Pinkie sighed; this was definitely not her kind of party. She’s heard of tea parties before, but had never got the chance to try it; something that she was glad of now. Pinkie was getting drowsy from the heat and glanced at Twilight

“Hey, I’m gonna use the little pony’s room, be right back!” and she bounced away from the table. She didn’t even need to use the bathroom, she just wanted to move around a bit, get some water, open a window and feel the breeze.

A loud crash suddenly reverberated throughout the room, covering everypony in a huge cloud of dust. Fluttershy screamed, dropping her tea and scurrying under the table shivering. Dash instinctively jumped into the air hovering above the room. Twilight coughed, looking around for Spike- she saw him poke his head out from under a pile of books. “What happened? What did you do?”

Spike shook his head and shrugged. “I lost my balance on the ladder and fell backwards into the tree trunk. Sorry about the books, Twilight.” Twilight flung open a window, and Dash blew out the dust from the room.

“Well, at least you’re not hurt Spike. I guess we won’t be finding that book anytime soon though,” Twilight sighed, hanging her head. Applejack trotted over, eyes wide.

“Wouldja look at that...” she whispered, awed. The ponys stood up, walking towards the mysterious object now lay before them in the hazy sunlight: a black earthy chest, wrapped in heavy chains and sealed with a rusted padlock.

Twilight looked at the trunk and then about the room. “Where could have it come from?” she wondered aloud. Rarity looked upwards “It must have come from upthere!” Near the split between the first and second floors of the library was a square indentation, of where the trunk was resting before Spike slammed into the tree.

Dash frowned “So...what IS this exactly?” Applejack stared at the trunk, exclaiming “It’s a treasure chest!” Rarity’s eyes sparkled. “I’ll bet it’s filled with beautiful jewels, and clothes, and gold, and who *knows* what else?!” she turned to her friend and asked pleadingly “Twilight Sparkle, you simply **MUST** open this chest and let us see what’s inside!” Twilight stared at the box. There was something odd about it, certainly. It must have been buried in the ground a long time ago, and the tree grew around it, bringing it above-ground as it grew “Well, alright, a lock this old should be a piece of cake.”

Purple light glowed around her horn and the old lock shuddered, and falling apart in three pieces, the chains around the box sliding away noisily. Twilight hesitated as she was about to open the box--something was wrong. The songbirds had stopped chirping, the breeze had

stopped, and even the insectine buzzing that permeated the air was gone. It was like the world was holding its breath, waiting. “Well, is anypony going to open it?” squeaked Fluttershy.

“I will!” announced Dash loudly. She pranced up to the box, lifting it open with a grunt. “It’s heavier than it looks.” The box sat open, but the hinges weakened with age and rust, couldn’t support the lid and it snapped off. The ponies gathered around the box and peered inside. “It’s It’s-“began Rarity.

“Empty,” finished Applejack. “Somepony went to a lot’a trouble to pull sucha clever prank.” The ponies all moaned in disappointment, shuffling away. Spike, now able to get a look inside, leaned over the edge of the box and promptly fell in. “Hey, it’s not empty you guys, look what I found!”

Spike stood up inside the crate and pushed a blanketed bundle wrapped in twine onto the floor. The ponies hurried over to the bundle and Rarity tore off the twine desperately. “I *knew* there had to be something in there!” she shouted eagerly, flipping her mane over her shoulder. The last fold came open, and the item in the chest revealed itself. Fluttershy inhaled deeply and blew the layers of dust covering the top.

It was an ornate, rectangular box adorned with pictures of jungle animals- some, Twilight had read about in books, some, she hadn’t. Emblazoned on the cover of the box was a beautiful sunset, a river snaking through mountains and forests unfolding beneath. “It’s so beautiful, look at that detail!” gushed Rarity, “Whoever carved and painted that must have been quite the artisan.”

Twilight looked at the ancient box; it was heavy and unusually cold to the hoof when she touched it. The most peculiar thing about it was in the top left corner, there was a picture of a hat- it matched perfectly the one she discovered when she first moved into the Ponyville library, next to some binoculars and other knick-knacks she found in a closet. The creature wearing the hat, though, was like no pony she’d ever seen before, the snout was all wrong and the eyes too small. She shuddered nervously and looked around again.

Applejack was the first to comprehend the situation, “Girls, I haven’t th’ faintest clue what this is, but my biggest question is-- sh’ we open the dang thing, ‘r not?” Rarity chuckled nervously, “Well we can’t just stand around all day not *knowing*....go ahead and open it Twilight.”

“HEY GUYS!” shouted Pinkie as she bounced down the stairs. Everypony jumped in surprise. “That’s a super-duper idea for a party! We can all play a board game together!”

“How can you tell it’s a board game?”asked Dash. Pinkie made a sour face, but it vanished as soon as it appeared. “Look Dash, I’ve played enough board games to know one when I seen one, and this looks like a doozy, I’ve never even heard of it before!”

Rarity flopped onto the ground, “Oh bother, I had my hopes set so high for treasure...” Pinkie Pie laughed “The real treasure here is that now we can all have a super duper fun time

playing this game together! So everypony gather round, Pinkie Pie is back in the partying spirit.
Let's play some Jumanji!"

To be continued...