

**The Unexpected Epilogue and the Unctuous Explanations**  
**By: Gabriel LaVedier**

“Mommy! Mommy, we’re going to late!” Dinky Doo called out into the depths of her home, the little purplish unicorn tapping her hooves impatiently.

“Now, now little one, we’re not going to be late. We have plenty of time.” Carrot Top trotted in a leisurely manner to the young filly.

“Not you, mommy. My other mommy.” Dinky Doo looked around Carrot Top into the house once again.

“Oh, yes! Dear! We need to hurry.”

From the back of the house, soon enough, emerged the light purplish form of Ditzzy Doo, the mail mare. She was looking fine, freshly-groomed and with both her eyes focused properly. “Coming! Just wanted to make sure I looked my best.”

“Oh honey, you always look perfect to me.” Carrot Top pressed her neck to the side of Ditzzy Doo’s neck, eyes closing briefly as she leaned against her wife.

“Eeeew, mushy mommies! Do you hafta do that?” Dinky Doo took on the face of a typical child overcome with typical childhood aversion to displays of affection.

“Some day, little one, you’re going to find some colt or some filly that makes you want to be mushy too.” Carrot Top fondly ruffled the top of Dinky Doo’s head.

Ditzzy Doo got a look on her face, a smiling, but still look that usually heralded the slip of her eyes. After a long moment however, her eyes shut, she gave her daughter a hug and said, “Yup! Just wait, you’ll be mushily happy someday too!”

Carrot Top sighed and smiled, opening the door for the two of them. “Come on, a couple of the other parents are saving us a seat.”

“Yay! We get to see Sweetie Belle’s play!” Dinky Doo was out the door, dashing like a wild filly for the center of Ponyville, which was quite brightly lit and had a stage set up.

The two mothers trotted much more calmly into the town square, which was quite thickly populated with ponies of all ages. Dinky Doo was nearly lost in the shuffle, but her boundless enthusiasm, and loud voice, kept her in a noticeable state until she was reached. She was chatting with Berry Pinch the little carnation-pink filly, who was standing with her mothers, Berry Punch and Romana. “Ahh, there you are. Perfect timing, we have seats all staked out.” Berry Punch smiled and indicated a large blanket, folded over thickly and saving a space sufficient for four mares and two fillies.

“Wonderful. And so convenient. We don’t need special accommodations.” The other five looked back after Carrot Top had spoken, to see Lyra and Bon Bon. Bon Bon was down on the ground like many others. But Lyra had a chair with her. And was sitting in it in a slouching, stomach-showing posture. “Well, she knows how to be comfortable, at least.”

The ponies settled comfortably onto the provided blanket to watch the stage. Though constructed quite quickly, it was made very well. It was quite a professional job, with a small orchestra pit, wings, and a substantial backstage area, including standing spaces for special-effects unicorns. In the space provided for the primary special effects unicorn was Rarity, standing grandly, looking quite proud, and blowing kisses to Fluttershy, standing in the wings with a clipboard.

The orchestra, in fact, was actually composed of certain royal players, including some veterans of the Grand Galloping Gala. Quite impressive for a performance of a play written by a little filly from a little town like Ponyville. Also, the costumes had been designed by Rarity herself. But as the writer and co-star was her sister, it made more sense.

The playbill was passed around amongst the audience, which had nearly been seated. It was a fairly elaborate production. The main four were billed as Scootaloo, Sweetie Belle, Applebloom and Zecora. In smaller letters were others playing smaller roles, the biggest name in the bunch being Rainbow Dash.

With the audience seated, the lights around the area dimmed and the orchestra began to play. Though using classical instruments there was some mixing and technological work done by DJ P0N-3. There was even a backup group of singers who were in soft light, while the main spotlight shone down on Sweetie Belle, in a beautiful dress, before a microphone. “It’s me and you, doing what we do (It takes a long, long time.) Gotta tell somebody, gotta move my body, gotta get out and go, oh my friend... Take my

revelation...”

### **The Author’s notes and references**

Hello there, the author here. I hadn’t intended for there to be anything like this. But I got to thinking, it never hurts to have notes. I LIVE by the footnotes in my texts. But then, they generally involve archaic language. However, I think in general it is only decent of a writer to give notes for his work, if only because some people really do need them.

**A general note on the accents:** The written word is generally new in human experience, and consequently is an often imperfect indicator of the dizzying array of noises capable of being produced. As well, accents, being an acceptable standard audio variation on a language as opposed to a cant, argot or pidgin, can be difficult to render well as the difference stems from a deformation of the “normal” pronunciation by a small or large degree. It can be a subtle thing especially when representation can render two different accents the same way. The only way to make an accent truly clear and notable in text is broadening and exaggerating. I am sorry this caused problems. But it was an artistic necessity.

**A general note on the plot of the story:** I had at least one complaint that explicitly said that the story had no “plot” and was therefore bad. I’d like to point out that your life doesn’t have a plot. Neither do arc-less shows or any media that highlight ordinary lives. It’s called “Slice of life.” The characters exist with particular personalities within certain parameters. Elements are introduced to these characters, and their reactions are shown. That’s the story. A romantic drama slice of life with fantasy elements (Because the setting itself is fantasy.) Just wanted to get that noted.

### **Specific references and explanations for “First Blush”**

**Elements of Discord:** Originally the story had a far more “straight-played” fantasy component, to the point that it involved all of the mane six invoking the inverse of their elements, or misusing them so badly that they rebelled. For example, Pinkie Pie would misuse laughter by not taking anything seriously, including the chaos she was sowing among her friends; and Applejack unable to be honest about her feelings for Rainbow Dash.

**First Blush:** The stories are numbered using typical English idioms that also had something to do with the events. In this case, first blush meaning both the first appearance of the plot (as in the phrase “On first blush”) and more literally as in, the romance between the mane six now comes to the point of a blushing, direct thing.

**Azurite:** Come on, it’s a fun name. And I happen to own a piece. It’s a fairly common mineral at rock fairs and other such things. It’s quite lovely and really dresses up the dull stone on which it crystallizes. All these tiny blue points across a small area.

**Logistics:** This, of course, would be Twilight Sparkle’s specialty, in any universe. The ability to organize and plan things into manageable units. Which would appear to be Twilight’s whole life.

**Whispering Wind and Cinnamon Cider:** Twilight Sparkle surely had a life before she was a super-scholar. She had to go to school in the normal sense. And these two are sort of an oblique reference to the kind of manipulative and insincere female characters in shoujo high school dramas. This is especially relevant because these types can be the plot-enhancers of yuri (lesbian) writers, as in the case of Kaname and Momomi in Strawberry Panic! Or Kisaragi from The Last Uniform.

**“Medicine”:** Surprisingly, I don’t think this would be standard corn whiskey, given that most refined grains probably go into making flour for all the sugary treats or other types of meal for cooking. In all likelihood, this would be especially hard apple cider, probably passed through a still or allowed to freeze in the winter, leaving only the portion with the highest alcohol content. And yes, it’s a bit of a stereotypical thing to have

as a character element. But it's funny.

**Graftin'**: In the technological mish-mash of Equestria, I'm pretty sure that agriculturists like the Apple clan would know about splicing branches from two different types of tree together to create new varieties. It's certainly easier than waiting for normal variation.

**Ship of Theseus**: A classic thought experiment in Philosophy, based on the myth of Theseus. After he returned from the defeat of the minotaur his ship was put on display. However, over time weather and simple processes caused parts of it to wear out. So those pieces were replaced. Eventually, every part of the ship had been replaced, leaving no original pieces behind. Is it still his ship? That's the thought experiment.

**Griftin'**: Grifting, conning, scamming. Same thing, really. But using that kind of word, it implies a sort of Old Timey conning, like someone in a bowler hat and seersucker suit with a small moustache selling snake oil out of the back of a wagon. If you didn't see, Uncle Bad Apple was shown in the short story, "Bad News Apple." Not too bad of a stallion, all told.

**"Do you know? Have you heard the news?"**: This is the first (but CERTAINLY not the last) reference to the anime series (And manga, and movie) "Revolutionary Girl Utena" my earliest and most formative lesbian media influence. Specifically, this is typically the first line spoken by the shadow puppet girls each time they appear. The words represent both rumors, and prophecy. Gilda is using them in both senses, the rumor being Applejack's relationship with Rainbow Dash, the prophecy being her impending psychological torture of Applejack.

**Ditzy Doo (And Gilda)**: Ditzy Doo is, to be blunt, a kind of prophet. When her eyes go "off" her statement is meant to be interpreted in the context of the surrounding action. Her "Derp" is the end of the statement to be interpreted. Why? Because she is half of Applejack's non-intangible Psychomachia. Psychomachia, from the title of a late Latin poem about the battle for a soul, is the technical term for that little Angel/Devil team on shoulders. It should be pretty clear who's who in Applejack's case.

**Snood**: An overly-decorated large-mesh hair net, mostly associated with Flappers in the 1920's.

**The giant dessert-making machine at Sugarcube Corner**: I've been watching a LOT of "How it's made" and "Factory Made" on Science Channel. I love watching all those computer-controlled, incredibly-efficient machines at work. And I especially love watching the food-making ones. It's quite fascinating. That's why there's one at the bakery.

**Sugar and hot sauce**: It's the only possible explanation for how Pinkie Pie can do the weird things she does.

**Tic-Tock**: Another OC pony of mine. He's the town clock worker, meaning everything from pocket watches to complex mechanical creations on a large scale. And he's an Earth pony, so at something of a disadvantage, having to work with mouth-tools. Thus his magnification rig. Also, his name isn't a typo. It's 'tic' as in an uncontrollable action. It's not TOO apparent in the text, but he will end some regular sentences by saying the name of a mechanical part, especially watch parts, like mainspring and faceplate.

### **Specific references and explanations for "Second Thoughts"**

**Cheap plastic watches**: Swatch Watches, of course. The scourge of every 80's parent and status symbol for every 80's kid.

**"I knew it! I'm going to get that joke all day!"**: Tic-Tock is, of course, dressed as Doctor Emmet Brown for 80's day. So, he fears he will get time machine jokes all day. At least he'll be spared Time Warp jokes.  
**"Yea, nothing out of me, lately. I mean... Nothing."**: An obligatory Dr. Who/Dr. Whoof joke following a time machine gag.

**Pinkie Pie's fancy jacket:** A Members Only jacket, naturally.

**Big hair and lots of chains:** From this statement it can be assumed that the Cakes were great fans of hair metal acts like Twisted Sister, KISS, Poison and the rest.

**Rainbow Dash's attire:** The big suit is a reference to David Byrne of Talking Heads, while the red stair-step hat is a reference to Devo.

**Fluttershy:** The makeup and boots are a KISS reference.

**Protruding metal spikes:** Horses have their... Foal-feeding organs on their lower bellies. And Madonna once more metal cones... In an obvious location.

**Spike:** He just never seems to fit in. But his "Saturday Night Fever" attire and vague disco king feeling match up with his would-be lothario attempts.

**Equestria Broadcasting Organization:** A somewhat-mangled attempt to make reference to the BBC, a state-funded television network within a monarchy. Which, in this story, is known for making tv movie dramas, as the real Beeb is.

**The scenery in the CMC Club house:** Another Utena reference, meant to be the dueling field, with lilies in place of roses (Lilies being a modern Japanese symbol for lesbian works.)

**"Sword of Celestia, grant me the power to bring Cutie Mark location!":** A variation on Utena's line when drawing the sword of Dios from Anthy. "Sword of Dios, grant me the power to bring world revolution."

**"Theos, Dieu, Deus, Abraxis... That one's just a legend":** Names for god in Greek, French and Latin, respectively, alluding to the Sword of Dios (Which is Spanish for god). The Abraxis and legend portions are a reference to the music from the anime series, which includes a song whose title may be rendered "Legend: The god's name is Abraxis."

**Gender Percentages:** In horses, there are often many more mares than stallions, though I don't have the numbers on me. For Equestria I'm running on a very loose assumption of about 3:1 Mare:Stallion proportion. I've heard as high as 7:1 in nature and could also work with 4:1 or 5:1 in Equestria.

**Chocolate pudding, mud, oil, feathers, five kinds of noodles:** See TVTropes under the headings "Noodle Incident" and "Noodle Implements." Made all the worse as Twilight will cast these items in the worst light possible when combined with Pinkie and Dash.

### **Specific references and explanations for The Poison Apple Tree**

**Wall of shame:** It's fairly clear that Bad Apple is on the wall for being a grifter, despite all the good he does. Braeburn is on there because Granny Smith is old, regressive and racist. This is not at all uncommon for older generations in tightly-knit and large families, which can amplify the in-group/out-group bias by filling up their capacity to feel connection and concern for others. The irony, in our world, is that Granny Smith is perfectly fine with lesbians, because in Equestria, I suspect, that given the gender percentages, lesbianism represents traditional, conservative family values.

**Mister Bradley X. Higgsbotham, Esq.:** It should be no surprise that, as Applejack is technically not allowed to talk to Bad Apple (And as Bad Apple is probably being looked for by any number of savory and unsavory ponies) that he has a number of aliases in various places, which allow him to get mail and send it off as well. Typically, the first names involve the letters B A D. And the Esq. is just for pretension.

**Zecora and Applebloom:** First of all, a note on my idea of Zecora- I am operating the world of this story on the general assumption that Zecora is relatively young. I imagine her particular tribe has a kind of post-puberty/post-Cutie-Mark coming of age ritual that involves a long journey to mature. And that Zecora just liked the Everfree Forest. After all, coming from a rather dry veldt environment, the lush fullness of the Everfree forest would be wonderful. As well, it's an herbalist's dream come true. Thus she might not be any older than the mane case, and might even be slightly younger than, say, Pinkie Pie. Thus she's not that much older than Applebloom. Just more worldly. And even then, she recognizes the need to wait until Applebloom is a little older, at least until she has her Cutie Mark. Until then, she is only in a mentor role, teaching her valuable lessons, though Applebloom sees more.

**Annoin' friend:** In the context of Sweetie Belle's play (In that it's essentially a rewrite of Revolutionary Girl Utena) this means Sweetie Belle gave Applebloom the role of the Nanami expy.

**Colt Role:** In the "straight" sense, it's a role for a male (And in context, she's talking about the role of Akio, or possibly Touga if she hasn't thought it out to the end.) In a looser sense, it may be the equivalent of a "breeches" role, meaning a young male part that can be and is often played by a woman.

**An afterthought for the plot:** Not necessarily true of Anthy. She IS very important, but it's not immediately apparent; she seems to be only a MacGuffin Device. This is just Sweetie Belle being conciliatory, and to make Scootaloo seem even more important.

**Canterlot Academy of Advanced Studies:** Again, I suspect Twilight Sparkle had real schooling of some sort, and did her time at some kind of advanced institution before going full-time private tutoring with Celestia.

**Paddock 51 and Silo 13:** Even sweet, happy worlds have odd conspiracy theories. Silo 13 is a reference to Warehouse 13. Note I've never watched it but the premise seems to say it all.

**Lightning Statues:** This seems random and it is. It's a reference to the statues in one level of the SNES game SoulBlazer that can shoot lightning if you touch them while the lightning ring is equipped. I always liked that game even if I could never beat it.

**Weird things that don't look anything like anything in Equestria:** Humans are just a rumor made up by ponies wearing tinfoil hats.

**Early 30's:** Clearly, this was written before Cutie Mark Chronicles. I had assumed that Spike was a "baby" dragon in that he was under about 50 or so. He certainly talks and acts like a guy in his 30's. Now I just exaggerate the age/lifespan difference between dragons and ponies and say that Dragons mature extremely rapidly early in life, for reasons that are entirely based on the fact that in very large predator species, young ones are most likely to be killed and eaten by stronger siblings, rival males or other predators.

**Sir Doctor Professor Crescent Sliver, OY GKOE FNS PhD MD JD DVM Litt.D:** Another OC, but with a much smaller scope as he is very well limited in where he may appear. His full alphabet soup of titles means he is a member of the Order of the Yoke (like the Order of the Garter), Grand Knight in the Order of Equestria (Order of the British Empire), Fellow of the Noble Society (The Royal Society), a doctor of several non-medical disciplines, a doctor of medicine, a doctor of laws, a doctor of veterinary medicine and a doctor of letters.

*"I was angry with my friend;/ ... My foe outstretched beneath the tree."*: "A Poison Tree" by William Blake.

*"A different object do these eyes require;/ ... And weep the more because I weep in vain."*: "Sonnet on the Death of Richard West" by Thomas Gray.

**Sensibility:** A poetry movement before Romanticism in England, born out of feeling and sensation, primarily maudlin, depressing types. Most poetry of sensibility was made from regret or the sadness of others. Incidentally, this is why “Sense and Sensibility” is not redundant; at the time they genuinely meant opposite things.

**“While here I stand, ... life and food For future years.”:** "Lines composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798" by William Wordsworth.

**One did not simply trot into the Mountains of Madness:** “One does not simply walk into Mordor” “Lord of the Rings” by J. R. R. Tolkien. “At the Mountains of Madness” by H. P. Lovecraft.

**Schadenfreude:** In case anyone doesn't know, this means taking pleasure in the misfortune of another. There's a song about it in “Avenue Q.”

### **Specific references and explanations for Third Strike/Third Charm**

**Poor little bird that made the flowers bloom:** This is a somewhat-confused reference to a short story by Oscar Wilde called “The Nightingale and the Rose.” To be most concise, a nightingale wants to produce red roses for a scholar who will give them to a girl. The nightingale is told by the rose that in order to produce red roses she must sing all night while impaling her chest on a thorn, resulting in her death. Fluttershy's use is rather unfortunate, however, as the scholar is rejected, since his rival brought the girl jewels. The scholar gives up on love and the effort was useless. She might be internally acknowledging that she knows that Rarity might not reciprocate her feelings.

**'But grief should be the instructor of the wise;/ ... ./ The Tree of Knowledge is not that of life.':** “Manfred” by George Gordon, Lord Byron. Crescent Sliver's disdain is my own. Manfred is the height of egoism, unmatched until the rise of Ayn Rand's moral-less monsters.

**Four Acts, Variable lengths:** A reference to the Utena TV series. It is seen in four “Sagas.” Red Rose, Black Rose, Akio and Apocalypse. Akio is very short, Apocalypse is somewhat as well, while most of it is concerned with Red Rose.

**'Rainbow- Revelation' 'Take my revelation':** Both are references to the opening song to the Utena TV series, called “Rinbu- Revolution.” That's a variation on one of the English lines in the song, “Take my revolution.”

**Neighpon:** This word was first used by MST3KFan (aka servo\_chann) on Equestria Daily as the MLP equivalent of Japan (Nippon.)

**Pegasus warriors:** A somewhat brief reference to “Simoun”, a manga and anime series that involves female warriors in flying battles.

**Five about fillies in school:** A bit of a jab about the large number of yuri series that involve schools, usually high school. Marimate, Kashimashi, Strawberry Panic!, The Last Uniform, First Love Sisters, maybe Hayate Cross Blade if you pick up the subtext. And those are just the ones that have made the jump to English. There are any number of others still being serialized in Yuri Hime, and given their own tankouban collections. Just from what I recall, Apocalypse, Yuru Yuri, and others whose names I haven't yet puzzled out.

**Big heavy books with lots of pictures:** Monthly/Quarterly comics in Japan are pretty substantial, made with large size, rough paper. They look like small phone books.

**Frog:** The soft, fleshy part of a horse's foot behind the hoof, which is, itself, just an especially thickened

toenail. This is very significant, and odd. All the ponies have the same hooves, meaning the unicorns are not “true” unicorns. In classical myth and depictions, unicorns have split hooves like goats and cows.

**“O what can ail thee, knight at arms, ... And no birds sing.”:** “La Belle Dame sans Merci” by John Keats.

**Princess Celestia:** It’s not explained in the story, but Celestia could sense Twilight Sparkle’s wild magic state. She knows the feel of it, from any distance. As soon as she felt her lose control, when her eyes started to shine, she set out at once, and arrived just in time for the end of it.

**Bamboo Grove:** Traditionally, bamboo groves were praised as sites for meditation and serious contemplation. Poetry was often done in them, as well as painting. Buddhists and Taoists often sought refuge from the world in quiet groves of bamboo. Applejack does the same with her orchard.

**The closed door confrontation:** Spoiler Alert for Strawberry Panic! The anime series. There’s sort of a series-long shipping battle between Tamao and Shizuma for the hand of Nagisa. It’s actually a very near thing, despite how much Shizuma’s personality makes her look like the obvious choice. In the end, Nagisa chooses Shizuma. But Nagisa still lives with Tamao. So after the end credits, which had shown Shizuma and Nagisa being happy together, Nagisa stands outside the door to her room, and is spoken to by Tamao, who is alone in the dark inside. Rainbow Dash means that she knew she’d fall in love with someone else and have a very painful and awkward conversation with Gilda, if they were still friends and destined to be around one another. But since they’re not, there’s nothing left to say.

**Too afraid to eat a peach:** A reference to “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T. S. Eliot

**Nothing ever ends:** A nearly word for word repetition of the true denouement of “Watchmen”, with Twilight Sparkle as Ozymandias and Crescent Sliver as Dr. Manhattan.

#### **Specific references and explanations for The Unexpected Epilogue and the Unctuous Explanations**

**Sweetie Belle’s song:** This is the opening lines to “Rainbow- Revelation” referenced earlier, which means it’s an English-language soundalike (with proper pacing and on-beat rhythm) of “Rinbu- Revolution.” The vowel sounds at the ends of the lines are spot-on, and the only thing changed from the English part from the original song was to replace “revolution” with “revelation.”