

<uSeaGM> ***Group 4 Session 115***

<uSeaGM> Evening is upon you! And that means putting on your dresses and fancy clothes (if you brought them) and visiting Canterlot Castle!

<uSeaGM> At the castle gates, guards in fancy armour bow as the group passes, clearly expecting you, and the group is met by aides who lead you inside. The castle is much quieter at this time of day compared to when you visited before.

<uSeaGM> The group is brought to an opulent waiting room complete with tasteful tapestries and soft furniture. Through a large set of closed double doors is the dining room, which is still being prepared. The aide explains that the group will be called in when it is ready for them. Through much smaller doors are bathroom facilities for guests who wish to freshen up before their meal.

<uSeaGM> A bowl of light, juicy grapes sits on a small table as both a snack and an appetizer.

<uSeaGM> *Session Begins*

* Artifica fusses over Berry's mane-bow Because she's a mommy and that's what mommies do.

* Red_Mage appraises the room, popping a grape into his mouth.

* Milia had sat down on a couch. She giggles as she watches Artifica make sure Berry is looking /just/ so. "I'm not sure what's more impressive, sweetie: your eye for detail, or the fact that she's sitting still while you do that."

* Lucky_Stars is freaking out and fussing over herself in the bathroom, trying to do last minute freshening up. She was, uh, pretty nervous about meeting the princesses.

<uSeaGM> Mercy assists by balancing a grape on the end of Berry's nose! Thus taking Berry's complete attention.

<Red_Mage> "I feel overcome by my curiosity. May I ask who you all rescued from a crashing zeppelin or what town you defended from a rampaging dragon to earn dinner with the Princesses?"

<Red_Mage> "To say such a thing is a rare honor is putting it lightly."

* Milia hums out at Red Mage, taking some time to think about her answer. "Well... we're honored guests of Equestria! Orrrrr... something." She waggles a hoof dismissively. "In any case, I think it's less 'what we've done' and more 'what we're hoping to do together'. Remember what Artifica told you a few days back on our first day? They're totes just extending their hospitality towards

* Milia us. You know. Friendship!"

* Milia beams a grin at Red Mage. "Which includes you, too! Because you are totally our friend and therefore are pretty much their friend, too, by the Transitive Property of Bosom Buddies."

* Red_Mage hmm's a bit as he think, adjusting the collar on his dresswear. It's a very nice outfit, a full dinner suit with a few extra baubles thrown in. "I suppose that makes sense, yes."

* Red_Mage grins. "I certainly don't mind. It doesn't hurt one's image in the slightest in Canterlot to have attended a dinner with the Princesses."

<uSeaGM> Mercy nodnods. Both at what Milia had said and at the words she used. "Hee! Bosom Buddies!"

* Artifica rolls her eyes and giggles at Mercy.

* Milia giggles at Mercy's reaction. And then, she realizes something! Oh noes! "Speaking of friends... is Lucky okay? She was all like... clammy and glistening when we got here. And making this really nervous wheezing noise." The zebra's gaze wanders over to where Lucky had... well... escaped to, as soon as they were shown to the waiting room. "Is she nervous? She's nervous, isn't she."

* Lucky_Stars emerges from the bathroom, her makeup expertly applied. She was wearing a nice silver and green dress. She takes her seat over near Milia. She did indeed look nervous. "Ooooookay."

* Red_Mage chuckles and silently mouths to Milia, "Yes."

* Artifica smiles to Lucky_Stars. "Nice. You look great."

<uSeaGM> Mercy eyes Lucky_Stars and claps her hooves as she rejoins them. "Ohh, pretty!"

* Milia applauds Lucky's re-entrance. "There she is!" She nudges the mare. "Lookin' good."

* Red_Mage nods. "Indeed. An excellent choice, Lucky."

<uSeaGM> Lavender Dream noms on a grape as big as her hoof.

* Lucky_Stars blushes. "Thanks."

* Milia giggles and pats Lucky on the back. "Deep breaths... deeeeeeeep breaths..." she quietly reassures. And then, her attention drifts back to Red Mage. Or, rather, half way to Red Mage, and half way to Lavender, who was currently discovering the wonders of food items as big as your face. In any case! "So, you've really never met the Princesses before? Aren't you like... nobility or

* Milia something?"

* Milia adds, "I thought that meant like, you came to the castle and did... nobility things." She still didn't know what the point of nobility actually was. Sure, it had been explained what they are

/supposed/ to do... just not really what they /actually/ did.

* Artifica smiles down to Lavender. "So, how do you like grapes?"

<Lucky_Stars> "That's the venue of his parents right now."

<Milia> "You know, like dinners! And dancing! /Fancy/ dancing."

* Milia 'ohhhhhh's at Lucky. "So it's like the family business... I see."

* Red_Mage nods. "Yes, I am not technically a noble yet."

* Artifica smiles to Milia, "You and I. Dancing. Fancy." (Or, well, as fancy as to wastelanders could pull off.)

<Red_Mage> "The position I will likely occupy one day has some...irregularities associated with it."

* Milia 's ears perk up. Like a meerkat, her head slowly turns toward Artifica. "R-right... right now? Because I will /totally/ dance right now!"

<Red_Mage> "They have spontaneous dancing where you're from, too?"

<uSeaGM> Lavender Dream looks up at Artifica with a vaguely 'child-caught-sneaking-cookies' expression as grape juice drips down her muzzle. "Umm... they are good, yes."

* Milia hops up and extends her hoof to her positively lovely wife. "May I have this pre-dinner dance inside this strange food waiting room?" She politely bows as she asks this, for good measure. "...Yes we do," she comments back to Red Mage.

* Red_Mage chuckles. "Griffins are apparently often greatly confused by the pony propensity to burst into song. Since you all come from far away, I was unsure if you shared that trait or not."

<Lucky_Stars> "It baffles me that there are those confused by it. Sometimes you just got to sing and dance."

* Milia chuckles at Red Mage. "Are you kidding me? We sing all the time! It's how I do my magic. I literally know a language that's /just/ singing. We /totally/ do the same thing."

* Milia nods firmly at Lucky. "Exactly."

* Red_Mage shrugs. "Apparently some species do not share the pony propensity for bursting into song and dance. What can I say?"

* Milia makes that 'thbbbbbbbbb' horse noise that they do sometimes. "Nuts to them, dude. Their loss."

<Red_Mage> "Indeed."

* mimezinga fell asleep for reasons. is still sleeping and dreaming of what she missed

* Milia turns to glance at Red Mage. "What was that about 'irregularities', by the way?"

* Red_Mage raises his eyebrows. "Hm? You mean regarding holding a position in the Royal Mage Corps?"

* Milia glances back and forth. "...If that's what /you/ meant by it, then yes. That is what I meant by it."

* Artifica take's Milia's hoof in her own.

* Red_Mage nods. "Yes, apologies for any confusion. By 'irregularities', I mean that such a position is bestowed based upon merit, rather than birth. There are some tests of sorts that I must take first rather than becoming a full mage due to heritage."

* Berry is mostly sleeping while nomming a random mane

* Artifica leads Milia to the center of the pre-dining room. "Would someone like to provide music?"

* Berry mostly, hornymom's mane

* Artifica suspects having a sleeping daughter on your back is one of those great things for keeping proper fancy dancing form. You know, like a book on your head or a grape on your nose.

* Milia squees! and happily trots with Artifica into the center of the room. She follows behind, her tail wagging like an eager puppy's. Ever since she had learned to dance back at Carousel Boutique, she basically will take any excuse to do it. Pausing her conversation with Red Mage for a moment, she looks to Mercy and Lavender.

* Milia asks, "Maybe you could sing something for us? Our little guitar player is... err... /napping/, at the moment..."

<uSeaGM> Mercy nods quickly. "Sure, we'd love to!"

<uSeaGM> Lavender gives what was left of her grape a forlorn look and then reluctantly sets it down to join Mercy.

<uSeaGM> Together, the spirits start to sing.

* Artifica grins at 'napping' and whispers, "She's sleepnomming." With a soft chuckle, "Our daughter is a sleepnommer."

* Berry dreams about the gala

* Artifica leads, doing her best to remember the dance lessons. Fancy dancing is so very different from arcade dancing.

* Milia snickers, getting into proper Fancy Dancing™ position. "It's a wonder either of us have any hair left..." she murmurs back.

* Milia clears her throat awkwardly. "Emm... c-can you lead? You know these steps /way/ better than me."

* Berry 's left ear twitches when the spirit starts singing, but the donkey doesn't wake up

* Artifica begins dancing, taking the lead. She's actually rather thankful to lead, as it's easier than following while wearing a winged donkey filly.

* Berry a donkey's ear twitching is, related to a normal twotching, like a whale doing a dolphin's trick. mostly, the ear flapflaps

* Artifica starts with slow, graceful steps that send the two twirling about the floor.

* Lucky_Stars pokes Red_Mage.

* Red_Mage looks over. "Yes, Lucky?"

* Milia giggles happily, dancing and twirling and spinning with her wife. With an only /slightly/ fake haughtiness, "You are as elegant as always, my love... graceful as the wind, sweeping through a meadow~"

<uSeaGM> The two spirits sing a slow ethereal song that brings to mind hot summer days and refreshing spring showers.

<Lucky_Stars> "Just wondering how you're holding up."

* Red_Mage blinks and then smiles. "Well, I'm holding up just fine. A bit nervous, but who wouldn't be in this situation, yes?"

<Lucky_Stars> "I'm suuuper nervous."

* Red_Mage pats Lucky on the shoulder and tugs at his collar a little. "Well, as I said that is completely understandable. I have heard the Princesses try to be approachable, at least."

* Artifica mimics Milia's touch of haughty. "And you, my love, are simply divine. To dance with you is to be one in perfect motion and soul, like the moon dancing with the tides."

* Milia blinks, nearly stumbling in her steps. A giggle escapes her as she attempts to recover and keep from falling out of time with the dance. "...Okay, you /totally/ win that one."

* Artifica keeps a straight face for a whole two more seconds before sharing in Milia's giggle.

* Milia nuzzles her wife and hums out sweetly as their dance continues. She leans into Artifica as much as their constantly shifting movements and positions would allow. The zebra's insides were starting to feel all warm and glowy. "Mmmmm~... this is really nice, though... We should go everywhere like this. Walking is /so/ two hundred years from now."

* Red_Mage asks in a low tone, "So, Lucky, have any of our new friends showed up at any school clubs you're in?"

* Milia would have shown up to basically most any club Lucky and Red were a part of and at least seen what they were about. She was REAL pushy about reading the stories they wrote in their creative writing club.

* Berry opens one eye "i'm hungry"

* Artifica_ would have looked into clubs Milia and Berry were interested in, if mostly so she understood what they were about. Her own skills lend themselves more to workshop clubs.

* Berry flutters to the grapes and starts nomming. yay spoiling your appetite berry, you're doing it right!

* Milia chuckles at Berry. "It won't be long now, sweetie. Don't worry." Unless it was. You never know, with fancy ponies.

<uSeaGM> With a midnight-blue glow the doors to the dining room open.

* Berry smiles at stripeymom "what are we going to eat?" she hopes there are broccoli. she loves broccoli

<uSeaGM> Inside the dining room is a fairly long table with a princess sitting at each end. Five empty places are set at along each side of the table, making 10 spaces in total for the nine equine guests and the two miniature spirits.

* Red_Mage stands up tall, looking slightly uncomfortable as he starts walking towards the open doorway.

<uSeaGM> Princess Luna sits at the end of the table nearest to where you enter. Her face lights up upon seeing Berry and she gives you all a friendly smile. "Please take a seat. Sit anywhere you would like." Celestia smiles and nods from the other end of the table. "Welcome. Thank you all for joining us."

* Berry trots to a random princess

* Milia stops dancing as the doors open. She gives her wife a deep, loving kiss before truly breaking away. This was dancing, after all. It had to end with a smooch!

* Berry sniffs sniffs the moon princess, then smiles and licks her "hello!"

* Red_Mage bows deeply to each Princess, going so low as to bend his forelegs at the knee. "Your Majesties, I am most honored that this invitation has been extended to myself."

<uSeaGM> Mercy and Lavender finish their song as the dancing stops and the passion spirit nods in approval of Milia. The pair float over and catch a ride on their shaman's back.

* Milia also makes sure she gives her two spirits a big kissy hug combo for providing them with such wonderful music to dance to.

* Artifica_ kisses back. It's a wonderful, loving kiss. And lasts long enough to give Berry unrestrained princess licking opportunities.

* Artifica_ curtsies deeply to Celestia and Luna.

<uSeaGM> Princess Luna giggles and lifts Berry into a nearby seat. "You are friendly as always, Berry."

* Berry smiles "i lke being friendly! it is a lot better than setting on fire hordes of monsters!"

* Berry frowns "or seeing mommies getting hurt..."

* Berry frowns more "or having to leave friends behind..."

<uSeaGM> Princess Celestia nods to Red_Mage and speaks softly, yet her voice carries in the room. "A friend of theirs is a friend of ours. We were most pleased to find our guests were getting along with you so well."

* Red_Mage remains bowing, awaiting to word to rise. "Yes, your Majesties. Friendship is the foundation upon which Equestria is built." Then he swallows to fight back his rapidly drying throat.

* Red_Mage is not nervous of course. Not at all. That was definitely not a bead of sweat working its way down his neck.

<uSeaGM> Celestia smiles. "Please rise. Take any seat you wish."

* Milia , desire to be affectionate thoroughly satisfied (for the moment), then heads into the dining room. She mirrors Artifica's curtsey. Upon hearing Berry's claim, she stands back up and shoots a crooked smile at Luna. It slowly shifts into a thing of quiet sadness as the young donkey continues.

* Lucky_Stars had been freezing in place upon seeing the princesses, which is why she was quiet. Her eyebrows were twitching. "Ehe...he..he..." What should she even say, holy crap these were the princesses aaaaaa.

* Red_Mage rises slowly and whisper to Lucky_Stars. "Bow until she tells you to rise. And thank

her for hosting you."

<Lucky_Stars> "Aaaah." She drops to the floor in some sort of weird bow.

* Milia leans down and nuzzles Berry tenderly. "And she won't have to do /any/ of that any more. No more monsters, no more fire, no more hurt mommies, and especially no more leaving friends behind."

* Berry smiles at stripeymom and nodnods, happily nuzzling back

* Red_Mage smiles nervously as he moves to a seat.

<uSeaGM> Princess Luna sticks her tongue out at Red_Mage and then looks at Lucky_Stars. "You don't have to do that, just take a seat."

<uSeaGM> "Don't be cheeky, Luna," Celestia scolds.

* Red_Mage blinks in confusion, not sure what to do about royalty acting quite so...well, like that.

* Berry looks for a fits, tries a place. she fits! this means she sits!

<Lucky_Stars> "Ooohk-kay." She quickly takes her seat.

* Berry is probably sitting in a bowl on the table

<uSeaGM> The Princess of the Night pouts. "Nobles make everything take too long," she grumbles.

* Red_Mage gulps. "My apologies, your Majesty. I merely wanted to observe proper protocol.

<Red_Mage> "

* Milia beams a happy smile back to her daughter, before hopping into a seat of her own. Probably near the middle somewhere. It's only now that she notices there's an extra space. "Aw snap, I think there's a place for you two!..." she whispers back to Mercy and Lavender. A giggle escapes her. "You get to sit together. Oh, it'll be so cute!..."

<uSeaGM> Luna giggles and spins the Berry-bowl around.

* Lucky_Stars gulps.

* Berry "weeeeeeeee!" spins and spins and spins and it is a lot of fun but "WEEEE! i feel like puking!"

* Red_Mage sits still, not daring to take any food before his hosts.

* Milia leans over and mouths 'deep breaths!' to Lucky.

* Artifica_ looks between Celestia and Luna. Then raises her hooves. "I sense... sisters."

* Berry is not sure if having to puke AND being happy is proper

* Berry etiquette is quite obscure

<uSeaGM> Mercy and Lavender prepare to take their seat beside Milia when Celestia floats over a stack of cushions for their chair to give them height. The spirits bow at the princess in thanks, one also giving a suggestive wink, before they settle down on the cushions. The scale makes them look a bit like dolls attending a tea party.

* Milia raises her hooves to her mouth and starts giggling uncontrollably. Yes. Yes, it was as cute as she thought it would be.

<uSeaGM> Luna allows the Berry-bowl to come to a slow natural stop. "Are you feeling okay, little one?"

* Artifica_ joins in Milia's assessment.

<uSeaGM> Several waiters enter the dining room and fuss about, pouring a choice of fine champagne and wines for each of the dinner guests. At the princess's instruction, they leave the bottles (plus spares) in ice buckets on the table and swiftly depart.

* Berry is a little green, nodnods but doesn't really look hungry. she tries walking out of the bowl and stumbles face-sitting on a chair.

* Lucky_Stars drinks her wine.

* Red_Mage picks up his wine glass in his magic, taking a sip.

* Berry sits properly and finds.... bubbly water! but it is in an evil glass! ohnoe! problem-solving berry, this is your turn!

* Artifica_ looks at Berry looking at the wine and uh-ohs. "Princess, do you have some sparkling (non-alcoholic) cider for Berry?"

* Berry taptaps her forehead and starts thinking "cottlestone, cottlestone, cottlestone pie..." she has an idea! pours the glass in the ditch! now it is a proper drinking surface! lick lick lick

* Milia also can't help but snicker at Artifica's comment. It was kinda funny and a bit disarming to see the Princesses act like... well, like sisters. Simply lost in her enjoyment of the moment, she lifts up whatever was poured for her and starts to drink without thinking. A familiar taste.

<Berry> *dish

* Milia immediately spits it back into her glass, wiping her mouth furiously. Her ears fold back. "Me too, please..."

* Lucky_Stars tries to turn invisible, fails, and then pours another glass of wine. "Huh, this is pretty good."

<uSeaGM> Luna smiles at Artifica_. "That is sparkling cider in Berry's glass..." she watches Berry pour it into a bowl. "Orrr it *was* at least."

* Red_Mage nods. "Only the best vintages for royalty, I would assume."

* Berry is licking tasty cider. this is acceptable

<uSeaGM> Celestia nods at Milia. "Our apologies, we should have asked what the rest of you would prefer." Moments later another waiter enters with a bottle of sparkling cider all for Milia. He is about to take away Milia's champagne when Mercy calls him over and whispers something to him. He places an extra large glass on the table and pours Milia's former drink into it, along with Mercy's before departing.

<uSeaGM> Mercy giggles and hops into the large glass. She too had discovered 'bubbly'.

* Red_Mage looks between the sisters, not sure which to address. "Ah...so, I have always meant to ask when I had the chance what the experience is like at the induction ceremony for newly minted Mages each year."

* Berry is done drinking. time to make some conversation "so... what games ponies play in this castle?"

* Berry stops before asking, lettig red's question being answered first

* Milia perks up. "Oooh! Thanks!" she beams to the waiter. Popping the top off of her cider, she just starts drinking it like that. Yep, this whole thing was hers now. Precious, precious sugar. And bubbles.

* Lucky_Stars somehow manages to get a bit tipsy, given she's never drank before. She goes to poke Red_Mage again, but decides against it. So she pokes Milia instead.

<uSeaGM> Lavender face-hoofs at her spirit sister's behaviour.

* Berry mommy got moar cider than her! this is NOT acceptable! time to fight for the limited resources "don't hot it all! gimme some! gimme gimme gimme!"

* Milia takes a moment to nod to Celestia as well. "And, umm... thank you, too. It's not a big deal or anything, I'm just trying to... err... avoid that stuff. If you know what I mean." While she is distracted, her cider is stolen! Noes!

* Milia frowns (only slightly) at the fact that she is once again drinkless. She turns to Lucky after getting poked and pouts, pointing a hoof at Berry. "She stole my cider!..."

<uSeaGM> Luna giggles. She chooses not to mention that the original bottle of cider that had

been used for Berry's glass was still there, in an ice bucket.

<Lucky_Stars> "That's not very nice Berry." Lucky giggles.

* Berry is happy donkey with moar cider. but also feels guilty... probably should give the cider back... "ah... you can has some?"

* Berry offers the glass basck to stripeymom

<uSeaGM> Luna turns to Red_Mage. "The mage-what?"

* Artifica_ watched Milia order sparkling cider. Her eyes say without words how proud she is.

<Red_Mage> "Ah, the Royal Equestrian Mage Corps? There is a sort of confirmation held for all newly appointed mages in its ranks every year."

* Berry also, finds the infinite fountain of cider! a bottle! this means there won't be more wars about limited resources! the war between donkeys and zebras it ended! rejoice, no fallout donkestria this time!

<uSeaGM> Luna looks like she is about to make some sort of horse noises, when Celestia speaks up. "It is an important ceremony, Luna. A tradition several hundred years old."

* Milia 's frown is quickly dispelled. She looks down to her daughter with a smile, and can't help but laugh. "How about we share it, sweetie?" she asks. After reaching over and nabbing an empty glass, Milia lowers it down to to the sneaky little cider thief. "Here... just pour me as much as you'd like to give me."

* Berry has now a bottle! pours HALF of it in the glass!

* Red_Mage 's eyes widen as he does the mental math and he starts apologizing to the Princess of the Night profusely. "Your Majesty, I am /very/ sorry, I didn't mean to bring up anything to highlight your absense."

* Red_Mage bows as deeply as he can from a chair. "I promise I will consider my words more carefully, you have my deepest apologies."

* Milia then comments over to Lucky, while she is awaiting the bestowment of cider, "You're looking less nervous... that's good!" She then glances over to the nearly empty wine glass. "...And I am starting to understand why!"

<Lucky_Stars> "I've never had wine before."

* Berry also, finds out that pouring cider in glasses while fluttering around is fun! is now filling every glass she finds!

* Lucky_Stars fills her glass with wine again before Berry gets to her.

* Milia 'ack!'s as her glass is WAY overfilled, the excess cider spilling over and drizzling down onto the banquet hall floor. "Sorry!... Sorry!..." she stammers.

<uSeaGM> Celestia turns to Red_Mage. "The attendees arrive in their finery, as do their families and older mages, and then I conduct the ceremony alongside the head Magisters. I hope that my sister will join me... but it is long and there are a lot of... 'nobles carrying on', as she would say."

* Red_Mage nods quickly to Celestia. "Yes, of course." He chuckles nervously. "I had rather thought that would be my chance to meet you, not, ah..." He gestures to the table.

* Milia places her very, very full glass back onto the table. She reaches in and sips it a bit carefully so that it wasn't quite literally filled to the brim.

* Milia starts to generate a bit of heat from her forelegs to dry off her poor sleeves. At least she was the one in the /least/ fancy clothes! Her attention turns back to Lucky. "Never had wine, huh? Any other alcohol before?"

* Lucky_Stars shakes her head. "Nope."

* Milia chuckles. "Well... just take it slow, then. You uhh... well... I mean... getting black out drunk at a banquet with the Princesses /would/ be a doozy of a story... but maybe not one you'd look back on fondly."

<uSeaGM> Next comes the food. Plates of roast vegetables, cauliflower cheese, spicy stir-fried mushrooms and noodles, freshly baked bread with butter and a selection of fine cheeses and all manner of other delectable dishes that fill the middle of the table.

* Red_Mage is finally distracted from the Princesses, if only for a moment. He stares at the spread, mouth watering.

* Milia squees! Food! More amazing food! They were getting so much amazing food now! It was the best!

<uSeaGM> A special plate of sandwiches is provided for Luna. Sandwiches filled with some kind of dark jam.

* Berry takes her notebook to check what she already nommed today... some grass at the park, the crumbs she wrestled from the swan, grapes, mommy's mane... yeah, there was still some place for real food. sits and goes for the bread and butter

* Lucky_Stars fixes herself up a plate of noodles, cheese, spicy mushrooms and roast vegetables.

* Red_Mage serves himself a plate, sampling from most of the dishes present.

* Milia idly comments, "Dude, this is awesome!... I'll never get used to these food avalanches!...

Like that party when we first got into Ponyville! Or the picnic!" She looks over at Luna's dish, noting that it looked quite a bit less... extravagant. She is /immediately/ curious. And what's more, they seemed familiar. "...I think we actually had some of those at the picnic, in fact...

* Milia Rarity brought 'em."

<uSeaGM> Luna noms on all sorts of things, but especially the sandwiches.

* Milia tries to remember. "They were black... somethings?..." She is struggling. It was a few days ago.

* Berry is nomming good noms, with her mommies and friends. is happy and doesn't have a single things that worries her in the world.

* Artifica_ has a hard time deciding what to nom first. But soon is eating with as much enjoyment and love as everyone.

* Berry is helping hornymom to decide what to nom, mostly nomming everything else

<uSeaGM> "Blah Curranh Jahm," Luna says to Milia with her mouth full.

* Lucky_Stars giggles at Princess Luna.

* Red_Mage blinks at Luna.

* Milia perks up. "Yeah! That's it!" She giggles. "I guess they're Sweetie Belle's favorite." Pause. "...Aaaaand I am guessing they are your favorite, too."

<uSeaGM> Luna nods, creating Princess Crumbs.

* Red_Mage tries not to laugh at the sight. It would be so unseemly.

* Milia looks at the big plate, full of sandwiches, and then back up to the Princess. Then, she sloooooooooowly starts to reach over with a hoof, toward one of the sandwich halves on the edge of the plate. Her gaze never breaks from Luna's, though her eyes gradually narrow. It was getting /so/ intense.

* Red_Mage gasps quietly as he watches the face off unfold in front of himself.

<uSeaGM> Luna nudges a sandwich towards Milia. "Wanh onh?" she asks.

* Berry is eating cheese! this is so fancy! puts cheese in sptripeymom's plate too! she HAS to try it!

* Milia continues to wordlessly stare. She slowly picks up the offered sandwich and takes an agonizingly, excruciatingly slow bite. And then? A slow nod. "...Yesh. Yesh I do."

* Red_Mage blinks, then glances at Celestia again. "Your Majesty, if I might ask...what is the

reason for all this? I mean no disrespect, but having ponies who have not yet graduated high school for dinner at the castle seems quite unusual."

* Lucky_Stars drinks some more wine, and keeps digging into her food.

* Berry smiles at Red Mage and answers every doubt "because we're friends!" smiles "well, we weren't but then we became! i also said i was sorry for saying bad things!"

* Red_Mage 's eyes dart back and forth between Berry and Celestia. "I see," he says slowly.

* Milia gasps, swallowing her bite. "It's good!..."

<Red_Mage> "Do you often make friends with princesses, Berry?"

* Berry smiles "i make friends with everypony!"

<Red_Mage> "Ah. And non-ponies, too, I assume?"

* Berry nodnods

* Milia then graciously bows her head to the moonbutt. "It's totes yummy. Thank you."

<uSeaGM> Princess Celestia looks at Artifica_, Watch, Prism, Whisper, Milia, and Jasmine as if asking how much, if anything, Red_Mage and Lucky_Stars had been told.

* Milia then gasps at her plate. Cheese had appeared! "Ooh! Mystery cheese! My favorite!" She pauses before putting any in her mouth, having caught Celestia and Red Mage's exchange. And that look she was shooting them...

<Red_Mage> "So Berry, do you and your mommies travel very much?"

* Berry nodnods "yup. but i don't remember very much. i took a missile to the head, remember?")

* Milia swallows nervously and pipes up to Celestia. "Ahh... Lucky knows a little bit, at least where we're from... I don't think Red here knows quite the story, but I imagine he will soon."

<Lucky_Stars> "My lips are sealed."

* Red_Mage 's ears are burning, but he pretends not to notice for now.

* Milia says this plainly and loud enough to hear. Which, basically, created a self fulfilling prophecy type situation! But, if it was going to come out anywhere, this was honestly probably the safest place to do it.

* Red_Mage blinks. "A missile. You mean you travel to dangerous places?"

* Milia beams a smile at Lucky. A smile of gratitude and trust.

* Berry has quit (Ping timeout: 121 seconds)

<Lucky_Stars> "This is important, and while I have a big mouth, I'm going to try and quell it at least for this one thing."

<uSeaGM> Celestia answers Red_Mage diplomatically. "Your new friends have been travelling for a long time and they brought very important message to us."

* Cerberus nods to red mage "very"

* Milia then starts to nibble on a creamy cheese. It mixes with the aftertaste of the black currant jam perfectly... gasp! She immediately puts said cheese onto the remainder of her sandwich. Perfection.

* Red_Mage nods slowly in response to both. "I see. Well that is very brave of you all to travel so far to deliver such an important message."

* Cerberus smiles and adds "we come from the future!"

* Milia pauses in her chewing. She looks over to Berry, and then goes right back to her sandwich. "Mmmm-hmmm..." she affirms.

* Red_Mage nods slowly again. "I see..."

* Milia raises an eyebrow at Red Mage. After she swallows, "You doin' okay there?" 'Hi we're from the future we're just gonna drop this on you while we're all eating dinner with royalty.' Yeah he's probably fine.

* Red_Mage clears his throat. "Ah, well. Your wife and your friend Watch intimated to me at various points that you all were attempting to stop some calamity."

<Red_Mage> "Your wife was particularly insistent on secrecy."

<Red_Mage> "But I admit that the stories of time travel were somewhat more difficult to believe."

* Milia barks out a laugh. "Yeah, tell me about it! We're the ones who /did/ it, and it's still unbelievable."

* Cerberus frowns "you don't believe me!"

<uSeaGM> Celestia and Luna both nod at Red_Mage. "That future calamity was the important message they had for us. Now, together, we wish to avert the future which they warned of us."

* Cerberus "in the future there is no green grass and everypony lives underground!"

* Red_Mage sits back. "Berry, I do believe you. Making up stories doesn't result in mid-year

enrollment at Canterlot High and dinner with the Princesses."

* Cerberus fills the new ponies with important details

* Cerberus "and there are bullybugs that kill ponies"

* Cerberus this was relevant too

<Red_Mage> "This is just rather much to take in. On top of being still unsure how am I am to fit into these events if- you mean changelings?"

* Cerberus frowns "no! bullybugs!!"

* Red_Mage looks around awkwardly. "Er, yes. Bullybugs. Apologies, it slipped my mind a moment."

* Cerberus they're... like... those in the mall! but buggy-er! more claws, more teeth, and they don't hug you in the propewr way

<Cerberus> ""

* Red_Mage now looks confused. "The ones in the mall?"

* Lucky_Stars shudders when she hears changelings.

* Cerberus "mommy bled a lot and it was scary, so i set everything in the tunnel on fire and we fled"

* Milia nods. "Bullybugs. Imagine changelings that don't change. And instead they just want to tear you apart and try to lay eggs in your body. And then they /erupt/ out of you." She takes a bite of her sandwich. The jam was particularly thickly laid on here. There is a *squelch* as she bites down.

* Red_Mage gulps. "Those live in the future, hmm?"

* Cerberus "in a place named aquaria"

* Milia nods slowly. ""mmm-hmmmm""

<Red_Mage> "And you said everypony lives underground."

* Cerberus "a lot. 'sept thos that don't live underground"

<Cerberus> *'cept

* Cerberus "after the missile we went underground almost immediately, so i don't really know"

* Red_Mage blinks. "The missile."

* Cerberus "but i found a guitar underground! it was a good trade!" shows her guitar

* Red_Mage nods slowly again. "That is a very nice guitar, yes."

* Red_Mage looks just a little shell-shocked.

* Milia winces. "The... missile, yes." This was dangerous territory. This was weapons territory. "Ahh... a group attacked us on our way to the place where we found the gate we used to come to the past. Many of our group were... almost killed. Including Berry. It was... a bad time."

* Red_Mage nods. "Goodness...I'm not really sure what else to say."

* Milia smiles brightly at Berry. She was still okay. Her smile is then directed at Red Mage. "It's fine... we made it through okay. For... the most part, anyways. And we're not there anymore. We don't have to live like that anymore. /Now/ we get to go on fun picnics and take tours of cool malls and parks and have nice dinners with friends!"

* Milia adds, "And Berry /did/ in fact find a totally sweet guitar."

* Red_Mage nods. "That's good. And the catastrophe is averted by the Elements of Harmony, I suppose?"

<uSeaGM> Lavender and Mercy share a bowl of noodles. There's totally a Lady and the Tramp moment.

<uSeaGM> The moment lasts a while.

<Lucky_Stars> Prism mutters something at Red_Mage's comment, but stays quiet.

* Red_Mage takes a deep breath and forces a chuckle. "Well then, back to dinner I suppose. I didn't imagine that particular rabbit hole would go so deep."

* Berry stares at lavender and mercy for a while, frowns "are you marrying too?"

* Milia 's ears fold back. "Not... entirely such, no. That's, err... that's a bit of a sensitive subject." She sighs, and then takes a deep breath. And oh my god Mercy was really using a lot of tongue. "The catastrophe can't... err, well... there's no one specific thing that can be done." Milia takes a moment to think how best to put it, after hearing Artifica emphasize how she thought

* Milia they needed to approach this.

* Berry oesn't really know a single thing about the war, has no idea of what to do or say, so she simply plays some guitar while they speak

<Milia> "...There's no single thing to zap away or get rid of. It's like a... imagine like a spider web or something. And every little segment of the web represents something that can potentially be changed for the better, but you won't know whether or not you messed the whole

thing up until you actually reach in and start yanking."

<Milia> "You know you're going to /have/ to start pulling threads, but you don't know which ones will fix it or /how/ you have to pull them, nor do you know which ones will end up tearing the whole web down if you even so much as brush up against them. That's about where we're at right now."

* Red_Mage gapes. "That's quite a conundrum."

<uSeaGM> Luna pretends not to watch the spirits at work.

* Milia nods, "Hence, the secrecy."

* Red_Mage nods. "Yes, I see." He sits, deep in thought as he nibbles his food.

* Berry "also, we don't want to go back because it is a bad place. but we don't belong here. probably we will have to go back. this is sad" berry is sad indeed

<Lucky_Stars> "You'd better not go back."

* Red_Mage nods a little. "I'll second Lucky. Going back sounds dreadful."

* Milia returns to eating in silence. Hoo boy, the air got a lot heavier in here. She stares down at her daughter, frowning. "Hey... hey, sweetie, no. No. We don't need to go back there. No more cleaning up mommy's blood, no more getting hurt, and no more killing. Okay?"

* Milia beams a confident look at Lucky. "We won't. Too much pie here, remember."

* Red_Mage clears his throat. "Well...I'm glad you all have enjoyed Canterlot so far." There you go, Red. Just try and ignore all of that stuff. Levity will surely return to the room in a moment.

* Berry "what if the bullybugs come here too? what if the only way to stop them is to go back and break the mirror? what if we bring the bad days here too? i don't want the nice princesses to die here too! i don't want the pretty ponies to be sad!..."

* Berry being a fallout hero, is ready to carry the weight. karma? check

* Red_Mage looks a bit shocked. "Is all the talk of dying quite necessary?" he asks, with unusual quietness.

* Milia starts to panic. Shit shit shit shit. She reaches over and picks Berry up into a hug, starting to give her comforting mommy pets. "Shhhhhshhhshhhhhh... it's okay, sweetie... none of that will happen. We won't /let/ any of that happen... that's why we're here. And we got rid of all the bullybugs, remember? It's just like I told you back at the arcade: they can't get us anymore."

* Milia frowns over at Red Mage. "She's scared... sorry."

* Red_Mage nods slowly. He also makes no attempt now to return the conversation to normal

this time.

* Red_Mage just quietly eats, and reflects on just how smooth he was accidentally opening that can of worms. Smooth like...like gravel.

* Lucky_Stars does something ponies usually do in uncomfortable situations. Drink! She downs the rest of her glass of wine.

* Berry is hugged, doesn't reply but doesn't really seem relieved. for some reason, she is resigned to go back. and she is sad about this

* Red_Mage looks pleadingly at the Princesses. "I realize that knowing all of this is more than I have a right to in the first place, but I feel compelled to ask: why am I here as well?"

<Red_Mage> "I could have easily been told just to mind my own business. I may be skilled in some schools of magic, but I scarce think I am capable of knowing how to alter the future itself."

<Red_Mage> "And knowing, being unable to help, is the worst pain I can concieve of for now."

* Milia continues to hug and mommypet. And maybe reach down and continue to nip at her sandwich.

<uSeaGM> Luna looks at Red_Mage with a mouth full of sandwich. "We already told you. You're here because you're their friend. If they trust you, then we will trust you." She smiles like a shark. "Don't make us regret it."

* Red_Mage looks at the Princess of the Night and for once looks honestly terrified. "Never, of course not," he shakes his head vigorously.

* Lucky_Stars hugs Milia, then Prism, then Whisper, then Berry, then Artifica.

<uSeaGM> Princess Luna's smile turns sweet. "Good!" she says to Red_Mage.

* Milia gives the slightly tipsy (or possibly far more than that) mare a big hug in return. Friend hugs!

* Berry smiles, thinks this is the time to add more relevant informations "we got a detention at school! it was boring!"

* Milia can't help but chuckle at Luna's reaction. "Couldn't have said it better myself..."

<Red_Mage> Whisper squirms a little and blushes as a very tipsy unicorn mare hugs him.

* Red_Mage picks at his food a little more, now looking thoroughly shaken.

* Lucky_Stars hugs Red_Mage too.

* Red_Mage blinks and looks in surprise at Lucky_Stars. "Er, hello. I think you've had enough to

drink, Lucky."

* Berry keeps playing guitar, it's a catchy tune, probably something rag-time related

<Lucky_Stars> "Nonsenshe. I feel fine."

<Red_Mage> "Alright, well will you still let me accompany you home Lucky?"

* Milia looks down to Berry. She gives the donkey a gentle snug and enjoys the music. Her eyes wander over to Lucky. 'Fine', she says. Oh yeah. She'd been that kind of fine before. "Sleep on your side..." she cautions.

<uSeaGM> ***End of Session for Group 4***