

**Dusk**  
Chapter Two  
Part One: Twilight Sparkle

As I entered Sweet Apple Acres nervousness spread through me, this was my chance to tell Applejack that I loved her and I couldn't afford to mess it up. All the books I'd spent my entire life reading suddenly become useless when presented with a situation like this. I couldn't see Applejack anywhere in the open so I went up to the house, almost hoping she'd gone out so that I could postpone my upcoming screw up.

Anxiousness began to build up inside of me. When I reached the door I had to gather up the courage to open it. I stood out there for a few minutes, remaining motionless. I had to do it. I lifted up a hoof to knock at the door, but suddenly Applejack opened it. She looked surprised at my presence.

She was so beautiful.

"Oh hey Twi', how are ya?" My heart melted upon hearing her voice. She sounded pleased to see me.

"I'm OK, I guess..." came my typically awkward response. Princess Celestia was right, I definitely shouldn't of wasted so much time studying at the expense of social interaction. "I was gonna talk to you about something, but you look like you're on your way out, so I guess this is a bad time."

"I wasn't leavin', I was just gonna stay out here an' enjoy the lovely weather is all. And even if I was goin' somewhere, you should know I always have time for you Twi'." My heart skipped a beat and Applejack gave me her most reassuring smile. It was so infectious that before I knew it I was smiling widely too, despite my nerves. "What did you wanna say to me anyway?"

It was now or never, I needed to do this right. "I just wanted to say..." Unsure of what to start with I just blurted out the first thing that came to mind. "you mean a lot to me."

Applejack promptly looked down, but not before I saw the bright blush upon her cheeks. I knew then that this was going to work, my confidence returned. "Golly Twilight that sure is kind of ya, you mean a lot-"

I cut her off, it was obvious what she was about to say anyway. Deciding to just go for it I began my all-or-nothing gamble.

"And it's not just that. You're the most beautiful pony I've ever laid my eyes on. Whenever I'm with you I feel safe and secure, I feel like nothing can go wrong. You've always been supportive of all of your friends, you always try your hardest with everything, I aspire to be like you. I know

I'm not deserving, but I want you. I love you." There, I had said everything. Now I just needed a response.

Applejack stared at me, mouth wide open. The next few seconds were silent, but it felt to me like several eternities had passed with each one. I couldn't bear it.

"Oh, Twilight!" Tears began to form in Applejack's eyes. "I can't believe... I always... I love you too!"

She began to cry tears of happiness and we embraced each other lovingly. I felt so relieved that I'd taken Pinkie Pie's advice and not kept my emotions locked away.

After clearing away the tear stains on her face Applejack continued to speak. "I never thought I'd hear you say those words Twilight, you've made me the happiest pony in all of Equestria. I've loved you for a long time, but you always seemed more interested in readin' than in me, so I never said nuthin' 'bout it. An' don't take me the wrong way, you're book-smarts has always been somethin' I love about you," Applejack's words affected me deeply, it saddened me to learn that she had been living with this burden weighing upon her mind for so long, but it made me happy to know that I had put an end to her inner turmoil. At that moment I saw something flash by in the corner of my eye, but my focus was firmly placed elsewhere so I payed no attention to it.

I couldn't wait any longer, I had to do what I'd wanted to most. I leaned in towards Applejack and kissed her passionately. She kissed me back with every bit as much passion as I had put forward. I didn't ever want to stop.

## Part Two: Rainbow Dash

The reassuring feeling of flight kept my nerves in check as I flew to Sweet Apple Acres. Concentrating on the familiarity of my surroundings and my activity was all I could do to stop myself giving up and returning home. I thought about what to say when I saw Applejack, but my mind immediately began to play through all the worst possible outcomes of the impending conversation. None of them were even close to what actually happened.

Sweet Apple Acres was in sight now. I was about to land just outside of Applejack's house when I noticed she was standing right there, with Twilight. My heart sunk. I flew up to the roof of the building quickly in an attempt to avoid being seen. Once I had landed I leaned in towards the ponies below in an attempt to hear what they were saying.

They didn't seem to be talking so I leaned over the edge of the building and took a quick glance down. The sight below tore my heart to shreds. Twilight and Applejack where locked tightly together in a kiss. Despite how much stress the sight gave me, I could not tear my eyes away. At that moment I wanted to be twilight more then anything else in the world. She had everything

I'd wanted right there on her lips, I found it hard to hold back tears of despair.

The kiss seemed to last forever, the sight was excruciating for me. I hated Twilight just as much as I wanted to be her, she'd ruined everything I'd wanted for so long. Finally, the ponies stopped kissing, they nuzzled each other softly and I couldn't watch anymore. I couldn't stand to just observe as what I loved slipped from my grasp. *You never had a grasp on it in the first place*, I thought scathingly too myself. It was true.

I was about to leave and save myself the pain of knowing anything else about the lovers when I heard Twilight's voice. "Do you mind if we keep quiet about this for now? I'm not sure how our friends would react if they knew about us..." From the sound of what Twilight had said it seemed logical to think that the two had only just gotten together, otherwise why would they just be discussing something like that now?

Learning that made me hate myself even more, if I had only come a few hours earlier and not wasted my time having arguments in my own mind then maybe *I* could have been the one down there with Applejack. *You're such an idiot*, I told myself.

"Uh, sure Twilight. You know I like jus' tellin' the whole truth and I'm sure they'll be fine with it. But if you don't want me to tell anypony then I won't. I promise," came Applejack's response. I briefly considered spreading their secret to unfairly lash out at Twilight, but I would only make Applejack mad at me and that's definitely not something I wanted to do.

I heard a faint whispering and then the sound of hoofsteps. I looked over the edge of the roof again when the sounds had ceased. It seemed that the two had entered the building. I didn't want to think about what they might be doing, in fact I didn't want to think about anything to do with them. I began to fly back home, my only plan was to cry and get this entire event out of my system. The crying part happened at least.

### Part Three: Applejack

I couldn't believe it when Twi' came up to me and said exactly what I'd dreamed of her saying. I almost thought it was just one of those dreams until she kissed me. We spent the rest of that day just talking, mainly 'bout how we felt and what we loved about one another. Thinkin' back on it, it was awfully mushy. But heck I don't care, it was one of the best days I ever had. I wasn't sure why she wanted to keep our love a secret, but hey I'd do anythin' for Twilight.

She offered that we meet up again the next day at her library, carelessly I accepted without remembering that I'd agreed to help Fluttershy out with herding for the official bunny census. I decided to first go to Twilight's library and tell her about my mistake, so that she wouldn't think I stood her up or anythin'.

Upon reaching the library I rapped on the door, Twilight answered it promptly and instantly

locked me into a cuddle. "Applejack!"

"Hey Twilight," I responded in turn, cuddling her back.

"I've come up with so many things for us to do today," said Twilight enthusiastically while pulling me even deeper into her embrace.

"Aww shewt... well sorry to say this Twi', but I remembered after ya left that I was supposed to help Fluttershy out with herdin' her animals today. Maybe we can do these things another time." I said, looking at her apologetically.

"Oh. Well I thought this was going to be be our first proper day together..." Twilight spoke grimly, the look on her face was one of hurt. "But I can see that's not what's going to happen, can't you just forget about her for a day and be with me?"

"I really am sorry Twi', but I promised this to Fluttershy weeks ago, I can't go back on it now," I stated, feeling bad about letting her down. I didn't want to ruin her day, but it seemed that I had.

"Never mind. I just find it kind of *convenient* that you didn't remember about this until *after* you told me you were free today..." She said accusingly, narrowing her eyes.

"Hey now, wait a sec'. I am sorry this mix up happened, but I guarantee you, I am *not* making this up. Why wouldn't I want to be with you? I love you and you should know that." She still looked dissatisfied with my explanation. "Look, I promise I'll meet you here by dusk today, then we can do whatever you want."

That seemed to cheer her up a little. "Alright then, but you better be here! I always feel good when you're with me."

"Don't worry, I'll be here. I'd do anything for you Twilight."

"Anything? Well if that's the case then *don't* go to Fluttershy's, seems simple to me." *Oh great*, we'd gone straight back to the start again. Just as soon as I thought that we'd solved the problem we had actually just hit another brick wall.

"Don't be silly Twi' you know I gotta keep my promises, I already explained all this."

"Well you promised to be with me all day too," she said bitterly.

"I promised Fluttershy help first, so I'm gonna help her. Simple as that. I'll be back here later anyway, so don't be worryin'," her bickering was beginning to annoy me now.

Twilight looked like she was about to retort when she stopped. After a few seconds of silence

she spoke again. "Sorry Applejack, I just... I thought you were trying to get away from me. I love you so much, you know that, and it hurt when you said you were just going to leave after we'd already agreed to meet. But I understand, you already promised her. I overreacted, sorry."

"You can be very silly sometimes Twilight, you know I wouldn't want to get away from you," I kissed her on the nose. "But I really should be headin' off now, I don't want to worry Fluttershy by bein' too late."

Shortly afterward I headed out towards Fluttershy's cottage where we'd agreed to meet. My mind wasn't quite at ease though as Twilight's somewhat hysterical reaction to my simple mistake worried me. Sometimes I didn't understand her.

#### Part Four: Rainbow Dash

A day had passed since I'd seen Twilight and Applejack together. All I'd done in that time was cry, despair, feel sorry for myself and sleep. *I'm pathetic*. I had even neglected my weather control services, unfairly leaving my work to the rest of the weather squad. I had no idea what to do anymore, for a long time the thing I'd wanted most was Applejack and now that wasn't just highly unlikely, but was basically out of the question.

Ponies always thought that getting into the Wonderbolts was the top priority for me and in a way it was. It was true that I had always wanted to be in the Wonderbolts, but it'd become even more important to me recently because I thought getting into such a prestigious athletic team would impress Applejack. Without that as an incentive it mattered far less to me.

I still wanted Applejack, even with the knowledge that she could never be mine, I couldn't let go just yet. I needed to do *something* or I would go crazy thinking about it. A distraction, just to simply *not* think about her for a while. It was already very late in the day, I had to come up with something quickly.

Fluttershy was so calm and laid back all the time, I decided to visit her and see if she could help relieve some of my stress. I began to fly out of my cloud top home and towards Fluttershy's idyllic cottage. The time it took me to get there went by quickly. Flying was one thing that I was genuinely good at and it was a slight help in taking my mind off of my troubles.

I landed outside the cottage door and knocked on it. No pony answered and I couldn't hear any sound from within. *Brilliant*, I thought sarcastically. I waited around for a minute on the off chance that she would be returning soon. I was fortunate, as a short while later I saw Fluttershy in the distance returning home. She was with Applejack. At that point I felt like life itself was trying to crush me. But I wouldn't hide this time, walking forward I shouted out to the two ponies. "Hey there Fluttershy, what're you doing out here... with Applejack?" My voice began to waver on those last couple words, not knowing what the answer would be.

"Hello Rainbow. Applejack was just helping me herd the bunnies together for the seasonal census," Fluttershy responded with her eternally tranquil voice.

"We just finished actually Rainbow, I better be headin' off now and leavin' you two to talk." Applejack said, trying as always to do what was best for her friends.

Looking Applejack in the eyes seemed an impossible feat for me, so I responded with my glare pointed firmly downwards. "Oh... OK then. See you some other time," why couldn't I just say what I felt?

"Is somethin' wrong sugarcube? You don't seem too happy," asked Applejack, being typically compassionate.

"I'm OK, I've just been kinda stressed out lately, I guess," I said hesitantly. Trying to open up to Applejack, even in such a small way, was hard for me after years of hiding my feelings. I addressed Fluttershy when I next spoke. "That's what I came to you for actually, you always seem so calm and collected."

"Well then, I can see you two need some time together, so I'm gonna head off now. I hope you feel better soon Rainbow," and with that she left. Immediately trying to forget about her, I turned my mind to the matter at hand.

"So Fluttershy, do you know anything I could do to help me relax?"

Fluttershy thought for a moment and then answered. "Usually, when I get mad, I just go out into the open and just look around me at nature and think of how beautiful it all is. It helps me realize that the world is such an amazing place and that however angry I get, there will always be something to cheer me up right around the corner."

"Wow..." I said, not expecting such a fully formed and moving answer.

"We should do it now, I know the most astonishing place! I mean, If you want to of course."

"No I think that's a great idea," I said honestly. "I've really been needing to just slow down and think."

Fluttershy smiled at me happily, but said no more. She signaled at me to follow her and took flight moving almost completely vertically. The steepness of the angle shocked me and I had no idea what Fluttershy was leading me to. I followed in silence wondering where we were going.

Fluttershy's moderate pace of flying was so different to my own. I always dashed about from place to place at top speed, never slowing down. Following Fluttershy helped me to appreciate the advantages of just taking your time, it gave me a chance to think and it let me just soak in

what was around me rather than constantly being somewhere new.

Preoccupied with my thoughts I hadn't really noticed how long we'd been flying, when I came back to reality I realized dusk was beginning to spread across the sky. Suddenly, Fluttershy stopped at an utterly unremarkable looking cloud and landed on it.

"Uh.. Where are we exactly?" I questioned.

"The highest cloud," she said simply, as if it meant something.

After giving her a quizzical glance she just nodded downwards signaling for me to look. I turned my gaze to the earth and finally realized how high up we were. Clouds were usually cleared from the sky on days like this, but this cloud was far, far too high up to be noticed by the weather team. From such a vantage point I could see for many miles in each direction, the entirety of Ponyville was only a small piece of everything I could see. It was simply stunning. The breath taking sight expelled all troubles from my mind in an instant and left me in awe.

"This is amazing." I stated.

"I know." Fluttershy replied.

We were there for hours, just admiring the beauty of the world.

#### Part Five: Twilight Sparkle

The haunting, yet beautiful, dusk began to crawl over Ponyville. I observed through the windows of my library as the almost disturbing ambiance that the darkness delivered overtook the whole region. The dusk was equally as magnificent as it was chilling and on a normal night I would love to just gaze at the stars for hours searching for complex constellations, being astounded again and again at just how grand this world, or rather those places beyond it, could be. However this was not a normal night, I was waiting for Applejack to come back from helping Fluttershy, assuming that she would show up at all. *No I can't think like that, I need to stop this unnecessary overreacting.*

This was my first proper relationship and I didn't want to screw it up, I know I should have acted more logically though. Fluttershy was a friend, she wouldn't do something to hurt me and Applejack was the element of honesty, of course she was telling the truth. If she didn't show up soon though, my fears might have been justified. When I was with Applejack all my worries seemed to disappear, but since she wasn't there I wasn't in the best state of mind.

I had sent Spike out overnight, so that he wouldn't know anything about me and Applejack. I know she wouldn't mind him knowing, but I couldn't be certain he wouldn't react negatively. Despite my uncertainties, Applejack's reassurances that our friends would be fine with us had

begun to turn me around on the issue. She always knew the right thing to do when it came to this sort of stuff. Lost in my thoughts, the knock at the door surprised me.

I answered it and, sure enough, Applejack was there. Instantly my paranoid fears were dispelled, I felt bad for even considering that she wouldn't come. "Hey Applejack," I greeted simply and led her into my library. "How are you doing?"

"I'm pretty good thanks Twi'. I'm glad I'm here, now I can jus' relax, helping out Fluttershy took a lot of energy outta me," came her response.

"And I'm glad you're here too! You always cheer me up and make me feel safe," that was my favorite thing about her, when she was around I felt like nothing in the world could go wrong. She was so dependable.

"Always pleased to cheer ya up Twi'," said Applejack, hearing that made me even happier. She drew me into her warm, soft embrace with a strong hug. I loved her so much.

"Oh Applejack! I'll love you forever and ever, we'll always be together," I said enthusiastically, unable to contain my passionate feelings.

"You always say the nicest things Twilight," Applejack told me, flattering as ever.

"You *are* the nicest thing Applejack," I said, trying to make her constantly feel cherished. She laughed quietly.

"When are you gonna get some new material?" She teased at my somewhat trite compliment. I was annoyed at myself for saying something so banal, but then she nuzzled me and I knew she didn't really mind.

"Shut it you," I said, now joining in on the joke.

"Make me," dared applejack, she winked at me and I knew what to do. I kissed her with every ounce of desire that I could muster up.

Being with Applejack was the best thing in the world.

## Part Six: Applejack

"I'm glad I'm here, now I can jus' relax, helping out Fluttershy took a lot of energy outta me," I told Twilight shortly after entering her library. I had reached Twilight's home as the day turned to dusk, as I promised I would, and I was looking forward to spendin' time with her. Assuming that she wouldn't flip out again like earlier.



“And I'm glad you're here too! You always cheer me up and make me feel safe,” Twilight let me know. She always said I helped her feel 'safe' or 'secure', it was almost as if the only reason she was really with me was to have her own personal safety net. I quickly shook off those bitter thoughts, casting them off as nothin' more than a product of the weariness I was feeling from helping out Fluttershy.

“Always pleased to cheer ya up Twi’,” I said hugging her tightly.

“Oh Applejack! I'll love you forever and ever, we'll always be together,” claimed Twilight with enthusiasm. I admired her certainty, but it was something I couldn't share so quickly.

“You always say the nicest things Twilight.” I told her honestly.

“You *are* the nicest thing Applejack,” Twilight's romantic comment was as cute as it was cliché. I chuckled softly, she was so goofy at times.

“When are you gonna get some new material?” I teased, nuzzling her lovingly.

“Shut it you,” she replied with not a hint of seriousness. I had an opportunity here.

“Make me,” I said with a wink.

She kissed me with with a profound intensity giving away her deep affection for me. The rest of the night descended into a blur of love and passion. I quickly forgot about my minor qualms with Twilight's behavior and gave in to my lust. She was fun, eager, intelligent and was in love with me, what more could I ask for?