

# Mine, Little Pony

## Crafting is Magic

By I'm Only Kidding



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# Chapter 1

## The Smell of Muffins

“Group teleportation?” wondered a small lavender unicorn out loud as she studied the book in front of her. Twilight Sparkle had been methodically reading her way through every book in the library. If there was one thing she could appreciate, it was knowledge. Suddenly, her stomach began to rumble. If there was another thing she could appreciate, it was food.

“Spike!” she shouted loudly. Twilight’s call startled a purple and green baby dragon, who jumped, dropping the pile of books he had been carrying in the process.

“What, Twilight?” Spike asked in an exasperated voice.

“It’s time for lunch. But you sound busy, so if you want to keep working...” Spike was already out the door. Twilight followed the cloud of dust that led to Sugarcube Corner. As she passed the Carousel Boutique, she noticed Rarity was having lunch as well. Rarity happened to glance out the window and gave Twilight a wave (which she returned) before turning back to her salad.

Finally, Twilight arrived at Sugarcube Corner. As she entered, she saw Spike waiting for her, tapping his foot impatiently.

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After a quick lunch of sandwiches (vegetable for Twilight, ruby for Spike), Twilight returned to her studying. *If this spell works*, she thought, *the girls and I could go anywhere, anytime!* The prospect excited Twilight; the group wouldn’t have to go on day-long journeys to get to other cities like Fillydelphia or Manehattan. After a few more hours of studying, Twilight decided it was time to test the spell out.

“Spike!” After the sound of something heavy being dropped, the dragon walked into the room.

“What?”

“Go get all the girls. Tell them I have a new spell I want to try out!”

“Couldn’t you go do it yourself? I have to... organize the books by... knowledge content.” Twilight looked at Spike and sighed.

“Okay, but I bet Rarity will be hurt by your absence.” Before she finished her sentence, he was gone. Twilight decided to use the waiting time to double-check that she had memorized how the spell worked. In about a half-hour, the door burst open and Spike walked in, flanked by Rarity, Pinkie Pie, Rainbow Dash, Applejack and Fluttershy.

“Thanks for coming on such short notice, girls. Did Spike tell you why I asked you to come over?”

“He said somethin’ about bein’ able to go places without walkin’ there,” Applejack said. The rest of the ponies nodded.

“Well, he didn’t get very detailed, but that’s the gist of it, yes. I found a group teleportation spell that would allow me to take us all to any location nearly instantly. You’ve all seen me teleport at some point. It’s just like that, but with all of us.”

“And this spell... could it be used to take us to, say, Manehattan?” Rarity asked, her eyes growing distant with wonder as she spoke the city’s name.

“Yes, it could be used to go there or anywhere else. I just wanted to get you all here for a test run first. If you’re all okay with it, I would just take us to somewhere in Ponyville. Outside Rarity’s boutique, maybe?” All the ponies nodded again. Fluttershy was nervous, but she was thinking of all the wonderful animals she could see that weren’t found near Ponyville.

“Okay, then! Let’s try it,” Twilight said. She trotted next to the other ponies and closed her eyes in concentration. Her horn began to glow with a powerful light, and with a bright flash Spike was left alone in the library.

“They could have at least taken me,” he said in indignation.

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With a second flash, the group reappeared a few feet from Rarity's doorstep.

"Whoa! Even I can barely move that fast," exclaimed Rainbow Dash. Twilight stared at her.

"Rainbow Dash, I don't think you can move instantly."

"Have you ever even seen my Sonic Rainboom? I can move *faster* than instantly." Twilight decided to give up. Bragging was Dash' nature, after all.

"This will be marvelous, darling! We can visit Canterlot, Manehattan, all of the cities that really *matter*!" said an excited Rarity.

"Ah could sell mah apples in other cities without havin' ta wait fer us to take a trip!"

"Oh... I could see lots of lovely animals that don't live in Ponyville..."

"I could watch every Wonderbolts show no matter where it was!"

"I could go to all kinds of parties in all kinds of different cities! Like the Gala, but better, with ponies that like to PAR-TAY!"

"Right... I think we should take this one step at a time," Twilight said. The others reluctantly nodded their agreements. "I think we can have our first real trip soon, though! Is everybody free on Friday?" The others grinned and nodded.

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Having decided to go to Canterlot on their first trip because it was closer than all of the other options (and because they didn't want to press their luck on the first try), the ponies were all properly prepared. Pinkie had brought the most, her saddlebags filled to the brim with sweets of all shapes and colors.

"Alright, is everypony ready?" asked Twilight. After receiving a chorus of "yes" from her friends, she opened the library door and they all stepped outside. It was still early in the morning, as the group had no idea how long

the teleportation spell might take (plus they wanted to fit as much into their day as possible).

“Okay, gather round!” Twilight said. As the others crowded next to her, her horn began to glow. Twilight closed her eyes in thought as she worked the complex spell through her head, channeling the magic through her horn. A pink mist began to slowly spread over the group of ponies, leaving them with a tingling feeling.

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Ditzy Doo flew through the air, headed towards her first stop of the day: Twilight Sparkle’s library. As she passed Sugarcube Corner, she smelled the sweet scent of freshly baked muffins. The mail mare couldn’t wait until her route was over for the day, then she could get some chocolate chip muffins for breakfast! Ditzy closed her eyes and inhaled the smell. Ditzy was in luck today, as the wind blew the scent towards the library, and she kept her eyes shut. Suddenly, the mare felt a tingling feeling, then an impact.

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Twilight Sparkle was nearly done with the spell, now focusing on her destination. Suddenly, she was knocked off her feet, losing her concentration. Her eyes burst open to find a wall-eyed gray pegasus giving her an awkward apologetic smile, moments before a bright flash engulfed them all.

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Rarity groaned inwardly and slowly got to her feet, rubbing her head gently with her right forehoof. She opened her eyes to see a devastating site. All around her lay her friends, groaning and struggling to stand, the spell leaving them all somewhat drained. Even more, they were all... blocky. They had somehow lost their curves, and were now constructed of small cubes. The only triangles in sight were Twilight’s horn and the wings of Rainbow Dash.

A quick survey of the landscape revealed similar construction. What appeared to be trees, constructed completely out of cubes, along with everything else in sight. In the distance Rarity could see some sand, followed by a massive body of water. After a few seconds, her friends let

out a collective gasp as they noticed each other and the environment. Rainbow Dash flared her wings, trying to make certain they still worked.

“Ugh... what happened? We were just getting ready to go to Canterlot and then there was a bright flash like there was when we tried this before but this time it didn’t take us where we wanted to go, it took us to here and now we all look funny and everything is all square and I don’t see anybody around here and—” but Pinkie was cut off by Twilight’s hoof in her mouth.

“We know, Pinkie. But... what is this place? And why do we look different?” Twilight said. She noticed that Fluttershy was a wreck, shivering and staring around like something would come charging at her at any second. Rainbow Dash was hovering a few feet above the ground, Pinkie was investigating a flower that seemed to turn to face her no matter where she moved, and Applejack closely inspected a tree, her ears twitching as Twilight spoke.

“Uh, Twilight? Ah think that spell didn’t work,” Applejack said.

“It worked, I just lost control after Ditzzy knocked into me. Wait, where *is* Ditzzy?” All the ponies looked around as though she would suddenly materialize. “Well, if she isn’t with us I think the spell didn’t get her. Lucky pony.” Rarity gathered herself and spoke.

“Twilight, darling, can you take us back now? This cube style must make me look awful!”

“The sooner we get home the sooner we aren’t here,” Rainbow Dash said. Still, the chromatic-maned mare was interested in everything she saw, including some very square clouds. As Pinkie Pie was looking towards a hill in the distance, a shape appeared on top of it, moving closer.

“Hey, everypony! I think that’s Ditzzy over there!” she said, pointing. All of the ponies ran closer, but as they drew near and the shape grew clearer they saw it was brown. “That can’t be right. Ditzzy isn’t brown!” Pinkie Pie said again. The shape walked towards them, then let out a “moo”.

“A cow? It’s only a cow?” Applejack asked. “Hello! Can you tell us where we are?” she asked. The cow responded with another moo. “Doesn’t wanna talk, ah guess.”

“Whatever. The important thing is getting home,” Twilight said. The group all gathered around her as they had earlier, and her horn began to glow once more. Then, nothing.

“Uh, Twilight? You do remember how to use your horn, right?” asked Rainbow Dash.

“Yes, I do,” Twilight responded with a hint of irritation in her voice. “I just... I can’t seem to gather the energy to do it again.”

“WHAT?!” yelled all of the ponies at once (with the exception of Fluttershy, who whispered it. She still felt like a loudmouth).

“I said... I can’t get us home.”

“How is that possible, Twilight? What could be stopping you?” Rarity asked her.

“Well, it could be any number of things... the spell might have taken up too much energy, or it might be something about this... this place... that does it.”

“Isn’t there anything you can do?” asked Fluttershy, so quietly that Twilight almost missed it.

“Well, we could try to boost my power. I remember a room in Princess Celestia’s castle when I was an apprentice. It was made of diamonds, and the princess said that they amplified a unicorn’s magical power, while keeping it controllable. So if we can find a room made of diamonds... but that’s hopeless!” All of the ponies hung their heads after she said this. Then Rarity’s horn began to glow.

“There are diamonds down there! But they are all so deep... I could never dirty my hooves with this... this... dirt!” she said. As Rarity spoke the last part, she gave the others a meaningful stare. Rainbow Dash was the first to pick up on this, and began to paw at the ground where Rarity’s horn



was pointed. Rainbow Dash frowned as she wondered why she was having no effect on the grass or the dirt beneath it. Then, cracks began to appear on the grass, spreading farther and farther, until a loud “pop” rang out and a cubed area of the ground disappeared.

“What the...” Rainbow Dash trailed off, then a tiny cube of dirt appeared. She cautiously reached for it, and as she got close it flew towards her saddlebag, which opened by itself and allowed the cube in. Surprisingly, it added almost no extra weight. “What just happened?”

“Well, the block of grass and dirt broke and it left a small block of dirt that flew into your saddlebag,” Pinkie summarized. Rainbow Dash reached into her saddlebag to pull out the dirt, and held it on top of her hoof as she inspected it. It was, indeed, dirt. She set it on the ground, and jumped back as it became full-sized again once it hit the ground.

“Is this some kind of magic?” Twilight wondered aloud. Rainbow Dash continued to inspect the block of dirt, wondering if it would change size again. Pinkie seemed even more curious, and started pawing at another patch of grass to see if she could replicate the result. She did, then picked it up. As it flew to her saddlebag, Pinkie made a heart-wrenching discovery: her candy was gone.

“My candy is gone!” she announced. The other ponies didn’t seem to take this grave matter as seriously as she did, and began to discuss how they could leave instead. Pinkie sulked.

“I’m sure if we waited a few days I’d be able to save up enough magical energy to get us all home,” Twilight said.

“That’s easier said than done, Sugarcube. We have no idea what’s goin’ on here, and even the ground works different than it does back in Equestria,” Applejack said. Suddenly, they all heard the sound of wings flapping. They glanced at Rainbow Dash, who was currently on the ground. Then a loud thud rang out, and as Fluttershy ran to hide behind Rarity part of a nearby tree shattered and became a smaller block, which flew into the mail bag of Ditzzy Doo.

“Ow,” Ditzzy said simply. She was used to knocking into things. Her poor depth perception had led her to believe that she wouldn’t have to swerve to avoid the tree for quite a while.

“Ditzzy!” all the ponies cried out in unison, running to check on her. Her head seemed fine, as fine as a head that has just hit a tree can be.

“That’s me!” Ditzzy said, smiling at the attention she was getting. The mail mare briefly wondered if she should preen, but decided that it wouldn’t do to show off. “Say, why is everything... weird?” she asked. Twilight set about explaining all about the spell and how a certain mail mare had messed it up.

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“I’m sorry! I didn’t mean to hit you! The smell of muffins, I closed my eyes, I’m sorry!” Ditzzy cried. She felt terribly guilty about causing this.

“It’s... alright, Ditzzy,” Twilight said. “If we can live through a few days here, we should be fine. I’ll have saved up the power to get us all home, and then everything will be fine.” She didn’t want Ditzzy to start crying. Ditzzy had always been very sensitive, and her eyes and kind nature served to make everypony around her feel as if they were personally responsible for everything that was wrong with the world when they made her cry. Ditzzy seemed to get control of her sobbing, and cleared her throat.

“So... we just stay here for a while? What’ll we eat?” she asked.

“Well, um... I don’t know... those flowers look tasty,” Twilight said. Pinkie Pie bit one, and quickly gave a nod of approval.

“See? We’ll be fine here. I’m exhausted, though. Anypony else want to get to sleep? This grass is awfully soft.” The ponies all settled down for the night as the sun began to set...

# Chapter 2

## Dance the Night Away

(or Spend it Fleeing in Terror)

“Psst! Twilight! Wake up!” Pinkie Pie said as she nudged the lavender unicorn.

“Ungh? What, Pinkie?” Twilight asked groggily.

“I hear some weird noises! I think it’s some kind of a monster!”

“Monster? Don’t be ridiculous, Pinkie, almost all of the monsters in Equestria are in the Everfree Forest.”

“But... we aren’t in Equestria anymore, Twilight...” Suddenly everything rushed back to Twilight.

“We... uh oh... well what kind of noises?”

“It was kinda like ‘oooohhhhhhhhh’” Pinkie groaned.

“It was probably just Rainbow Dash waking up. She always moans like that after a nap.” When Twilight finished, Pinkie pointed to Rainbow Dash, who was currently snoring loudly. Then Twilight heard the noise.

“Um, Twilight? IT wasn’t that close last time I heard it.” Pinkie sounded worried.

“I think we should wake the others, Pinkie...” Twilight said. A hint of fear had crept into her voice. The two started quietly waking the others, hoping to avoid any noises that might give away their position. Unfortunately, Rainbow Dash gave them a fight.

“What do you want? Why’d you wake me up?” the rainbow-maned mare asked loudly.

“Sshh! Quiet, Rainbow Dash!” Twilight whispered.

“What for? You wake me up in the middle of the night and have the *nerve* to tell me to be quiet? Is sleeping too loud for you? I mean, I –” but Rainbow Dash stopped as a purple hoof found its way into her mouth.

“Listen,” Twilight said simply. Rainbow Dash perked her ears up, and caught the moaning noise. Twilight slowly removed her hoof.

“So? It could just be Applejack. She’s probably having one of those dreams again.” Despite trying to sound confident, Rainbow Dash had begun whispering as well.

“Ah’m awake, and ah heard that.” Rainbow Dash blushed. Then Fluttershy’s scream broke the air.

“Help! Help! It’s on me!” yelled the yellow pony as she tried to break out of the grasp of a bizarre green creature. Not wasting time on finding out what it was, the others rushed to assist her.

“Put her down, ya... ya thing!” Applejack yelled as she delivered a kick to the creature’s torso. Years of applebucking had built plenty of muscle, and the creature simply disappeared into a puff of smoke, leaving behind a small feather. Fluttershy rushed to huddle next to her friends.

“W... wh.. what was that?” she asked, shaking.

“I don’t know,” Twilight said, “but I don’t think we want to find another one of them. We need some shelter if we’re going to stay safe. Applejack poked at the feather, and it flew into her saddlebag like the dirt from the previous day. Then the ponies all grouped together and set off, looking for a temporary home.

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“This oughta do!” Rainbow Dash said as she and the others inspected a cave. In the dark it was very hard to see inside, but shelter was shelter. As the group cautiously headed inside, Rarity and Twilight used their horns to cast magic light about the tunnel. Finally, having reached the back, the ponies all agreed that it would do for the night. Rarity was reluctant at first, but staying in the squalor of a cave was better than being attacked.

“So, goodnight again, girls,” Twilight said. The purple mare, however, didn’t sleep. She kept her horn lit as the others slept. Twilight was determined to keep watch and make sure nothing else could get at them. *But... oh no. If anything comes into the cave, we’ll be cornered! But wait! If the cave was almost impossible for us to find until Ditzzy tripped and landed inside, it would probably actually be impossible for something to find without falling!* With that thought, Twilight stopped using her horn to radiate light, once again hoping to avoid giving away their position...

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“Psst! Twilight!” The small purple unicorn awoke, seeing Rarity’s face above her instead of Pinkie’s.

“Yes, Rarity?” she asked groggily.

“I hear a dreadful hissing noise! I think it’s another of those... those *things!*” Upon hearing that, Twilight jumped to her feet.

“Wake the girls!” Twilight squealed. As soon as all of the mares were awake, the hissing grew louder, and outside the cave they could see eight glowing red lights.

“Wh... what’s that?” Fluttershy asked.

“I’m not sure,” Twilight responded. She lit up her horn; if they were going to be attacked, they would need to be able to see to fight back. The girls gasped at what they saw: a massive spider standing at the entrance of the cave. Fluttershy ran behind the rest of the mares.

“I... I’m t-terrified of spiders,” she mumbled. She could handle manticores and cocatrices and even the occasional dragon should it threaten her friends, but the frightened pegasus knew that the rest of the ponies could take care of this by themselves. Rainbow Dash was the first to do so, charging at the spider as fast as she could. Right before making impact, the rainbow-colored blur stuck her rear legs out in front of her to kick at the spider, but it suddenly leapt out of the way. Rainbow Dash flew outside the cave, unable to stop herself until she had gone well over thirty feet away.

The spider landed near Applejack, who decided to try her luck with kicking. It had worked for that other thing, after all. The apple farmer reared and bucked at the spider as hard as she could, knocking it backwards, but it quickly got back up. The spider then skittered towards her, snapping at her with its jaws.

“Agh! The darned thing bit me!” she exclaimed. Twilight, meanwhile, was determined to prevent another bite, and she levitated some nearby gravel into the air, dropping it when it was directly above the arachnid. With a final hiss, a puff of smoke appeared from beneath the gravel, along with what appeared to be a few pieces of string, which Rarity quickly ran over to grab.

“Applejack, are you okay?” Twilight asked, concerned. She, Rarity, Fluttershy, Ditzzy Doo and Pinkie Pie all gathered around the orange mare to inspect the area she had been bitten in. To their collective surprise, the spot was clear.

“Um, Applejack? Didn’t it bite you? Do you feel okay?” Pinkie asked. Her line of questions was surprisingly short.

“It didn’t leave a mark on me, but... ah feel, ah dunno, ah feel... weaker, somehow.” Applejack responded. Twilight furrowed her eyebrows, thinking about what kind of laws the physics in this place ran on. Just then, Rainbow Dash made her way back to the cave.

“What’d I miss?”

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After deciding that having an open entrance to the cave was not the best idea, the ponies all began to dig some dirt from the walls (with the exception of Rarity, who was “supervising”) and used it to block the entrance. More than once Ditzzy placed blocks in the wrong place, once managing to get confused and place several at the back of the cave. After she apologized and pointed to her lazy eye, Rainbow Dash muttered something about how no lazy eye would spin them around like that. Ditzzy didn’t hear her.

“Hey Twilight, what’s this?” Pinkie asked after they had finished blocking the entrance. The lavender unicorn walked over and looked at

what Pinkie was pointing to: a block of stone filled with several small black rocks.

"It looks sort of like coal," she answered as she began to break it. Once it shattered, it didn't produce a smaller version of itself as Twilight had expected, but instead a single piece of coal popped out and went into Twilight's saddlebag. She let out a "hmm" as she thought.

"Hey Ditzzy, do you still have that wood from the tree you knocked into?" The gray pegasus looked up at the sound of her name.

"Yeppers!" Nobody ever spoke to Ditzzy as much as these ponies had in the past day, and that put her in a good mood.

"Bring it here." The mail mare stood and trotted over to Twilight, depositing the wood on the ground. Twilight scooped it up and thought for a moment. *It would be best to use sticks instead of the entire block...* The unicorn levitated the block of wood and used magic to break it into several pieces of somewhat less sturdy wood. She then broke one of those into four sticks. Last, she stuck one stick straight into the coal, then abruptly dropped everything as a bright flash lit the cave.

Once the light faded, Twilight discovered four torches on the ground where her coal stick had been.

"How did you do that, Twilight? It was so cool! You were just breaking the wood then it got all bright and WHAM! There's more torches than sticks and they're already lit!" Pinkie exclaimed in a single breath.

"I didn't do anything," Twilight said. "Well, I broke it into sticks, but once the coal touched one of them it just kind of... happened."

"This is wonderful, darling! Now we won't have to keep our horns lit while we sleep!" Rarity said. The white unicorn then set about strategically placing the torches, hoping to make the cave seem a bit more stylish. Then the ponies all settled down to rest one more time, and they finally managed to sleep through the night.

# Chapter 3

## Something Wicked this Way Creeps

Pinkie Pie awoke to the sound of her friends talking. She yawned and stretched, feeling the cave's cold air surround her. Studying her surroundings, the party pony noticed that the others had broken several 1x1 holes into the entrance they had blocked off last night. Pinkie approached the other ponies.

"What are we talking about?" she asked.

"We're making plans to build some shelter. Sorry we started without you, but we couldn't wake you. You're a very heavy sleeper," Twilight answered.

"We need to cut some trees for wood to make the house," Applejack said. "With Twilight being able to break the wood into more wood like she did last night, I don't think we need that much."

"What about beds, darling? I don't want to spend one more night on the... *ground*," Rarity said, disgust in her voice.

"Well, if some of us gather supplies and some of us work on the house we could probably get this done a lot faster," Twilight said, always eager to help manage something.

"I should be out gathering stuff, because I'm the fastest flier in all Equestria!" Rainbow Dash exclaimed.

"I... I'd like to stay and help build, if that's okay with you... I don't want to wander too far off..." Fluttershy said.

"Well I *certainly* can't dirty my hooves with any of this menial labor! I would much rather *design* the home!" Rarity said.

"Ah ain't afraid of no dirt. Ah'll go with Dash and get some supplies," Applejack spoke.



"I wanna go out and gather stuff! There's got to be lots to see around here and I want to see it *all!*" yelled an excited Pinkie Pie.

"Um... can I stay and help build?" Ditzzy Doo asked hopefully. She knew her eyes might impair her building ability, but she would be more embarrassed hitting a tree headfirst again.

"Sure! And I'll stay and help Fluttershy and you build," Twilight concluded. With the arrangements made, the ponies (excluding Rarity) carefully began to remove dirt from the blockade. Once that was done, Rainbow Dash darted out and checked around for anything that could attack them. Seeing only a wide green plain dotted with trees, flowers and grass, the pegasus returned and informed her friends that it was safe to go out.

Twilight was the last to exit the cave, taking the torches with her.

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Pinkie Pie, Applejack and Rainbow Dash were all racing towards the nearest tree. One was eager to see it give off blocks like the one Ditzzy had hit. One of them was looking forwards to a job well done. The last was hoping to get there before the other two mares, racing them without their knowledge. She did indeed reach it first, and was going too fast to slow down before she impacted with it. It was a pleasant feeling to the chromatic blur, as she was expecting branches.

With no branches to be found, Rainbow Dash simply plowed straight through the leaves and managed to shear off a little under half of them. Turning, she headed back towards it, going much slower this time. Rainbow Dash managed to land at about the same time Pinkie and Applejack reached the tree.

"Didja get any wood yet?" Applejack asked with a small chuckle. Rainbow Dash glared. *She's only jealous because she can't go as fast as me. After all, I'm the Best Young Flier in Equestria!* As the pegasus sat consoling herself, seemingly in another world, Applejack walked up to the tree and bucked it. A small crack appeared. Bucking repeatedly enlarged the crack and finally a loud "pop" filled the air as a block of wood found its way into the apple farmer's saddlebag.

"That took quite a few bucks... this is gonna be a long day," Applejack said. She finished off the second block of the tree as Pinkie rattled on about how it didn't fall over. The orange earth pony had already accepted that this world was bizarre. She didn't like not knowing what might happen next, but she did know that obsessing over it wouldn't help.

"Need some help?" Rainbow Dash asked in a victorious tone as Applejack tried in vain to reach the highest blocks. The earth pony grumbled something and stood aside as her blue friend hovered close to the tree and kicked it repeatedly until it gave off another small block of wood. Pinkie, meanwhile, had moved on to a nearby pond and was testing the temperature. Finding it to be cool (but not too cool), she stepped in.

Several trees later, Applejack withdrew her own wood from her saddlebag and gave it to Rainbow Dash. The orange mare told the pegasus to take it back to the others as fast as she could. With a self-confident grin, Rainbow Dash was off.

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"When will the others arrive with the lumber? I'm simply *dying* to see my design come to life!" Rarity exclaimed. She had already had the others dig out the foundation (though Ditzzy had made a few mistakes that needed to be filled in) and the fashionista pony was waiting eagerly to begin construction.

"I think they'll be here soon," Ditzzy said, one eye focused on something in the distance.

"It's Rainbow Dash!" Twilight said excitedly. The purple unicorn was excited for this new experience, however unplanned it may be. The blue pegasus grew larger on the horizon and finally landed a few blocks away from Fluttershy. With a smirk, the blue mare pulled the wood out of her pack (a sizable amount, she thought) and dropped it at Twilight's feet. Twilight's horn glowed, and all of the pieces shattered into four smaller ones, each of them entering her pack.

"Oh, thank you, Rainbow Dash! This is a fantastic start!" Rarity squealed.

"S... start?" The best young flier's voice wavered. She was already worked to near exhaustion. What kind of a house had Rarity conceived?

"Oh, yes, you didn't think I would let the opportunity to use these resources to construct a mansion go to waste, did you?"

"Mansion? But... a normal house would be fine... we'll only be here a little while..." This earned Rainbow Dash a glare from Rarity.

"Rainbow Dash, all of my life I have wanted to live in a mansion. I *will* live in a mansion," Rarity said in a voice so harsh that Twilight, Ditzy and Rainbow Dash all cringed along with Fluttershy. Deciding to cut her losses, the blue pegasus took off and headed back to Applejack and Pinkie Pie.

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"Only a start?" Applejack asked in shock. Rainbow Dash nodded grimly. Pinkie Pie splashed in the pond in what she hoped was an equally grim manner. Since she was Pinkie and since she was splashing, it wasn't.

"She said it's going to be a mansion."

"What? Didn't ya tell her that we don't need no mansion?! We're only gonna be here fer a few days!"

"I tried. She gave me a look that makes Fluttershy's seem like a smile." Applejack recoiled at the thought. With a collective sigh, the trio went back to work. After finding that work was hard, Pinkie went back to splashing in the water.

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"No, dear, a little over... no, no, that isn't right... Ditzy, try closing one eye," Rarity said as she was trying to guide the wall-eyed mail mare. *Ditzy is a nice pony, but did she really need to help with the construction?* Finally, the gray pegasus was in position. "That's perfect, Ditzy! Set it down right there!"

The small block expanded and at last the second external wall was completed. Rarity stepped back to admire her work. *This will be simply fabulous!* she thought.

“Okay girls, now we can start on the third wall!” The others seemed much less enthusiastic about it. *Oh well*, thought Rarity, *I suppose some ponies just aren’t cut out for hard labor!* The white unicorn’s friends sighed and returned to work, building up the wall block by block. Just then, Rainbow Dash arrived with more wood.

“Hey, Rarity, how much more of this are you gonna need? We’re all getting really tired and we have to go out farther and farther to find more trees...”

“Oh, I don’t think I’ll need much more, darling. Just one more trip should finish this up!” Rarity already had a saddlebag that was filled with planks, and the girls’ packs were still mostly full.

“Couldn’t we... you know... finish it tomorrow?”

“We *could*, but that would leave a hole in it! And a hole would just invite all of those terrible creatures to come after us!” Rainbow Dash sighed and took off towards Applejack and Pinkie Pie for what she hoped was the last time.

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A very weary duo of ponies (and Pinkie Pie) were climbing over the last hill between themselves and their future home. Rainbow Dash had opted to walk back, her wings being sore. *I can practice my stunts all day long with no pain, but Rarity... Rarity is a slave driver.*

“All ah can say is that this better be werth it,” Applejack said. As the three mares arrived at the top of the hill, they saw that it was. The trio shared a gasp as they saw the mansion looming before them. The sun’s last rays of light were splayed out over a massive wooden structure, containing windows, balconies, doors, an array of torches, and through the windows they could see beds beckoning to them. In addition, there was a large hole in the ground where sand had been that morning. As could be expected, they rushed inside and slammed the door behind them.

“Rarity! This is amazing!” Pinkie Pie exclaimed as she bounced around examining everything. There were paintings on the walls and though they were on hastily-made wool canvases they still looked

spectacular. One of them depicted Ponyville at sunset, another showed a huge lake.

“Why thank you, darling! I worked so hard on it!” This earned her a collective glare from Ditzy, Twilight and even Fluttershy. “I mean, we worked so hard on it!”

“Rarity? Where’d ya get all this? All we gave ya was wood and you make... paintin’s? Beds? Chests? Well, the chests ah can see making, but where’d ya get all the rest a this? And what about the glass fer windows?”

“Oh, that’s an interesting story! You see, Ditzy here had just come back down for another stack of wood when she spotted a sheep in the distance. The poor dear was a bit eager to make its acquaintance and rushed towards it. Well, that eye of hers acted up and she rammed into it. As soon as she hit it the sheep was tossed back and it dropped a pile of wool! Never one to pass up an opportunity, I had her... ‘convince’ a few more sheep to part with their wool and I used it to create the marvels you see before you!”

“Okay... what about the glass? Twilight, you explain this one!” Rainbow Dash said hastily, hoping to avoid another lengthy story.

“You remember how I burst into flames when I got angry at Pinkie that one time with the hydra? Well, I got angry at Rarity this time... sorry about yelling at you, Rarity... while we were standing on some sand. It turned to glass from the heat! You guys probably saw the big hole outside, right? Well, we dug up some sand and placed it where the windows are now and I heated it up.”

“That’s so cool!” Pinkie squealed.

“Well, enough of this! Girls, would you like to see your rooms?”

“Yes!” they all cried in unison. Twilight, Ditzy and Fluttershy had built theirs, but they were eager to sleep indoors for once. Ditzy, however, took a quick detour. The mail mare opened the door and stood there, watching the sun set.

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“... And here is your room, Rainbow Dash!” Rarity said, excited to hear what Rainbow Dash thought. It was similar to the other rooms, but there was a rug made of rainbow-colored wool in the floor.

“It’s great, Rarity! Perfect!” Just then, a loud boom sounded as an explosion rocked the mansion.

“Where’s Ditzzy?” Twilight asked. The ponies rushed downstairs.

# Chapter 4

## Here Today, Spawn Tomorrow

Twilight was the first to round the corner after exiting the stairwell. She gasped at what she saw: there was a large hole blown in the house where the door had been, and the explosion had also created a large hole in the ground outside. But most horrifying of all was what she *didn't* see: Ditzzy Doo. The others lined up beside Twilight as they made it down the stairs, all needing a moment to take in the site.

"Where's Ditzzy?" Twilight, Rainbow Dash, Fluttershy, Applejack and Pinkie Pie cried in unison.

"Where is my beautiful wall?" Rarity cried in despair. The others glared at her. "I... I mean, where is Ditzzy?" As soon as the unicorn finished her insincere second shout, a hiss filled the room.

"Uh... what's that?" Rainbow Dash asked.

"I can't see! The explosion destroyed the torches around this wall!" Twilight said. The source of the hissing soon made itself visible, stepping into the light and still heading towards the mares. Fluttershy was slightly relieved to see that the hissing was not a spider but an odd green creature. It walked on four legs and it appeared to have no arms. Its eyes were pure black, its mouth turned down in an equally dark frown.

"Maybe... maybe it knows what happened to Ditzzy?" The yellow pegasus asked hopefully. The creature was now only a few blocks away and still didn't stop. The creepy being was headed straight for Applejack.

"Ah don't think so, Sugarcube..." The creature got so close it touched Applejack and the orange mare held her breath. Suddenly, the green thing began to flash and inflate. "What're ya..." but Applejack was cut off by a loud boom, exactly like the one they had heard earlier. When the smoke cleared, she was gone along with the creature, leaving nothing behind save a small pile of powder and a stack of wood in a crater.

The remaining mares stared in horror before bursting into tears.

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Applejack groaned and slowly opened her eyes. *Whatever that thing was it gave me one heckuva headache!*, she thought. Standing, the applebucker noticed the absence of a house around her.

“What the hay? Did that thing blow up the whole darn house? And where’re my friends?!” Applejack was usually a very calm pony, but faced with this situation was sent into a panic.

“Applejack!” came a cry. The orange pony turned hopefully and saw Ditzzy Doo sitting on top of a nearby tree, watching her.

“Ditzzy? Where the hay is everypony? Where are we?” Ditzzy shrugged.

“I dunno. I woke up where you are now and my head really hurt. I flew around until it felt better then I landed on this tree and then you appeared right there and you woke up and starting talking to me.”

“Well, whatever. Where’s everypony else?” Ditzzy shrugged again. Applejack sighed. “We’d better start lookin’ for ‘em. Wait... Ditzzy, what were you doing before you got here?”

“Flying?”

“No, before you woke up.”

“Oh! I was standing in the doorway watching the sun set when this green thing walked up and starting hissing. Well, it got struck by lightning and I thought it was sad so I gave it a hug to cheer it up then it inflated like a balloon and made this loud noise and then I was here!”

“The same thing happened to me... without the sunset or the hug or stuff like that, but the same darn thing did it to me...” Applejack thought for a moment. Creatures that exploded and then teleported you? This was an odd world. “Well, let’s go find ‘em, then.” After a short while, the duo came upon a familiar-looking hill, beyond which lay the mansion. “There it is!”



Applejack shouted as she and her gray companion raced towards it. Applejack was still amazed that they had managed to find it in the dark.

"Applejack, do you hear crying?" Ditzzy asked. Applejack cocked her head and sped up.

"Yeah... that thing better not have hurt any of 'em!" Upon reaching the wall where the door had previous been and entering, Applejack found that her friends didn't seem to be harmed.

"Why're y'all cryin'?" Applejack asked, already thinking the answer would have to do with her disappearing.

"Applejack! Ditzzy!" the mares cried in unison, rushing over to their friends.

"We were so worried that you had died because that thing exploded and left that huge crater there and then the stuff you were holding was in there and it seemed like you were gone for good so we all started crying because we had lost a friend, not that you aren't our friend too, Ditzzy, but then you opened the door and walked in and we all stopped because you're ALIVE!" Pinkie exclaimed in a single breath, leaping into the air with joy as she finished speaking.

"So... if that thing didn't kill you, what *did* it do?" Twilight asked Ditzzy and Applejack. Ditzzy's eyes began to wander in thought.

"Well... it just moved us. We woke up and our heads hurt and we were a long way from here," the mailmare said. Twilight pressed a hoof to her chin, then saw a set of glowing red on the horizon.

"We can worry about that later. I think we need to repair that wall." Her friends all turned to look as she pointed towards the distance spider. "Now," Twilight said as it began to crawl closer.

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One narrowly avoided fight later, the group of ponies were finally ready to sleep in their newly repaired mansion. Rarity had been terrified at the makeshift job they had done (just blocking the hole off completely, not even adding a door for fear that something might find its way through), but

relented once the spider was less than twenty blocks away and had picked up two friends while moving closer.

Before the mares all settled into their beds, each gave their rooms a proper look over. Rainbow Dash's floor had a rainbow colored "rug" made of wool set into the floor. Twilight's room contained several bookshelves, though none of the books contained anything. Derpy had a painting of a muffin on her wall, and she kissed it before getting into bed. Pinkie Pie's room had an all-pink carpet, Applejack's had a painting of an apple tree, and Fluttershy's had pictures of several animals. Rarity's room was simple yet elegant, being made of plain wood but containing plenty of makeshift furniture.

Finally, one by one, the ponies drifted off to sleep.

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The mares all awoke to the sight of an early-morning sun streaming into their windows. The sky was still partly gray, and they could see several monsters roaming about. All of them kept observing, not leaving their rooms. Frightened yet enraptured by watching the creatures roam about (the spiders, the creepy green things, the other green things that walked on two legs, and skeleton versions of the two-legged things).

Finally, as the sun rose and the ponies had given up hope of being able to exit their home, the skeletons and zombies burst into flames. The mares stared in shock as the beasts slowly burned to a crisp, some leaving behind small amounts of items. The ponies exited their rooms with perfect timing so that it seemed as if they had choreographed waking up, then proceeded to tell each other about what they had seen.

"Guys! It was so cool! I was looking out my window at all these monsters and..." Rainbow Dash started, only to be cut off by Applejack.

"Then the sun came up and they all set on fire!" the applebucker finished.

"But the spiders are still there," Twilight said. Fluttershy still seemed frightened at the thought of spiders, but gained a bit of comfort from the walls around her.

"And the green thingies!" said Ditzy.

"It's a good thing we built this home, darling! Who knows how many of those things could have reached us otherwise?" Pinkie Pie then spoke up, managing to kill the excited mood.

"I'm hungry," she complained. After she spoke she got a worried expression, a face not often seen on Pinkie Pie. "Did anypony get something to eat yesterday when we were out there?" the party pony asked hopefully. One by one, the others shook their heads. "Well we have to eat *something*! This means we'll have to go out there and get something to eat!" Oddly, Pinkie seemed to brighten at the idea of going out there and having to see the monsters up close.

"Maybe not! Twilight, darling, can you see if you've regained enough strength to take us home?" Rarity asked. Twilight nodded and closed her eyes as the mares grouped around her (with the exception of Ditzzy, who had no idea that the spell required close proximity to the caster). After Rainbow Dash yanked the gray pegasus closer, the familiar mist began to encircle them.

"Heehee! This tickles!" Ditzzy said. Rarity quickly hushed her, not willing to risk breaking Twilight's concentration. With a bright flash, the group felt wind on their faces.

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"It worked! It... didn't work," Twilight said. Though they had indeed been teleported, they were now on top of the mansion. "Uh, Rarity? Please tell me there's a secret door up here so we can just climb back inside." The purple unicorn was eyeing the few monsters that hadn't dispersed nervously.

"I'm afraid not, Twilight."

"It's no big deal. I can just fly back in and... oh, right," Rainbow Dash said as she realized that her solution only benefited one of them (or three, if Fluttershy and Ditzzy followed suit).

"But wait! We can still reach the balconies!" Rarity exclaimed as she inwardly marveled at her genius design. Peering over the edge of the roof, Applejack seemed uncertain.

“That looks like an awful big fall, Rarity...” she said. They were, in fact, around twenty blocks from the balcony that Applejack was above.

“Well, it’s either that or... nothing,” Twilight said.

“We could lift you to slow your fall,” Rainbow Dash said, gesturing at the other two pegasi. Applejack shrugged.

“Let’s get this over with.”

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One safe return into the home later, the ponies hastily destroyed two blocks of their patch job at the front of the house and replaced it with a door. Then they set all of their supplies in chests, knowing that blocks of wood wouldn’t do them any good while they were looking for food. Rainbow Dash, ever eager to rush head-first into something, led the way out. Applejack followed close by.

Once all of the ponies had exited, Twilight sighed. *If I hadn’t tried that stupid spell, we wouldn’t be in this mess. It’s like living in the Everfree Forest!* Continuing to mentally berate herself as the group cautiously continued towards a clump of wild grass, the unicorn was taken by surprise when everypony else stopped, bumping into Applejack. Looking ahead, she noticed what had frozen them in place: two spiders were glaring at them, seemingly ready to pounce.

Rainbow Dash flapped her wings, preparing to charge the arachnids, but Applejack grabbed her tail with her teeth.

“Oh no ya don’t! Don’t go chargin’ ‘em! You’ll just make ‘em bite ya!” The orange mare had gained more experience than she should have talking with the pegasus’ tail in her mouth, only being partially muffled by it. Rainbow Dash settled back down to the ground, but charged ahead as soon as her friend released her tail. Accidentally bumping into a spider without hitting it, the pegasus winced in anticipation of pain from a bite.

To all of the ponies’ great surprise, nothing happened. The spiders simply stared at her without making an aggressive move. Slowly, all of the group but Fluttershy moved forward. The massive tarantulas continued to

stare, but didn't attack. Pinkie Pie bit down on the grass, causing two things to happen. The first was that she was suddenly less hungry. The second was that seeds popped out. As her friends continued staring at the spiders suspiciously, Pinkie put a hoof to her chin. *Seeds... I think I know how we can get some real food!*

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Spike sighed as he peered out of the library's window. Twilight and her friends still weren't back after two days, and the baby dragon was very worried. Twilight had said it would only be a few hours, but already 48 had passed. Shrugging, knowing that Twilight could find a solution to any problem, he returned to what he had been doing: covering for his friend.

"Dear Princess Celestia..." Spike said aloud as he began his second letter.