Lily Petal snuggled into her husband’s shoulder as they rode through the cobble streets of Canterlot. It was midwinter, and very late in the night. The streetlights cast bright lights on the street, yet left the area around the beam in shadow. It was a lonely night, and there were no other ponies around. It had started to snow lightly, tiny flakes of snow drifting through the darkness, illuminated by the beams of yellow light. “I’m glad we took the taxi instead of trying to walk home,” said Lily, “It’s too cold to do anything but bundle up and let someone else do all the trotting.” She paused a moment before looking up into her lover’s face. Normally she was able to get at least a chuckle out of him, but tonight he had been acting unnatural, almost distant.

“Rusty? You okay?” She asked, peering into his eyes. It’s as if the words didn’t register for a second, before he shook his head as if clearing away the dazed expression he wore. “Hm…oh, yeah,” he responded, as if had just woken up “I..I haven’t really been feeling well for…for a while.” “Uh oh.” Responded Lily, “I hope you haven’t picked up some sickness from our trip…” Lily leaned back against Rusty, letting her legs rest on the seat.

The wind was blowing, but the taxi people installed windshields into their carriages every winter to block cold air from entering the cabin. The result was a tiny bubble of heat, the passengers’ body heat getting trapped inside of the cabin. Lily’s eyes started to get heavy as the impact of the day started to lay itself on her. She yawned, snuggling harder into his shoulder. She thought about where they had gone, and what have been making Rusty feel so bad. “Saddle Arabia was pretty foreign, maybe Rusty had picked up something from over there. But there were other places that could he could have gotten something. Maybe…maybe in…” but the night overtook her, and she drifted off to sleep, the road playing a soft lullaby under her head.

She woke to a gruff “Alright, here we are.” She stretched her forearms, yawning as she did so. She groaned a bit and hopped out of the carriage, wincing as her legs hit the hard sidewalk. She turned, waiting for her sweetie to hop out after her. He was still sitting in the taxi, wearing a silly grin on his face. She giggled “You’re looking better, maybe it was just some food disagreeing with you.” He didn’t respond, and stared straight ahead, still grinning like a crazy person. “C’mon, you weirdo.” She said with a smile, but with more of a confused tone than before, “let’s let the driver get back to his job. We’ve kept him long enough.” He still didn’t respond. She reached back into the carriage and led him out of the taxi by his hoof. He responded to touch, and she led him out onto the sidewalk, before trotting up to the stallion pulling the cart. “Thank you!” She said, paying him fifteen bits. “Hope that your husband feels better.” he responded, stashing the bits in his saddlebag before running off into the dark, wintery night.

Lily turned back to Rusty, who was still staring at her with that wide, peculiar grin. She got a series of chills up her spine. “Stop doing that. It’s creeping me out.” She scolded, half joking, but half serious. She didn’t know what was up with Rusty, he had been acting different ever since he said that he didn’t feel well back on the taxi ride. She waved hello to Windy Sands, who always took walks late at night. She waved back, and they had a pleasant encounter, talking about the trip that Rusty and Lily had just returned from. Or, as Windy told the Police later, she and Lily had talked. Rusty, as Windy put it, had “Just stood there, looking at me with that creepy smile.” As Windy Sands remembers, they said goodnight, and both she and the other couple went back to their respective houses, and Windy went straight to sleep.

That’s the last time anypony saw Lily and Rusty still alive. The two were found five days later, after somepony recalled not seeing either of them at work, and went to the police to investigate. Both died of extreme thirst, and had apparently not left their beds from the time that they went inside after exiting the carriage. They were both found wearing happy, almost blissful smiles.