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A Fortress of Friendship

Chapter 1: An unexpected teleportation

Twilight Sparkle had called her friends together to show them a strange object she had found while using a divining spell. The spell had been meant to track a precious artifact that had been lost on its way to the Canterlot royal treasury. Twilight did not think that whatever this…thing was is what Princess Luna had asked her to retrieve for her. Luna had said she had found it on moon during her imprisonment there. And though she disliked thinking about anything that she encountered when she had been Nightmare moon, the mysterious object had always baffled her and before she fully took her place at Celestia’s side, she wanted to learn what it really was. Applejack had been kind enough to allow her to examine the object in her barn, so that she did not have to draw unnecessary attention to it and herself. Unfortunately, word spread rather quickly and soon her all of her friends had arrived, eager to find out what the odd item could be. Spike had come along to help her record her findings and though at first he had been bored, he immediately perked up at the sight of Rarity. Typical Spike she thought to herself. Never missing a chance to show off in front of the fashion pony. She had been surprised however to find Zecora, a usually secretive zebra that lived in the Everfree forest, there as well. She explained that Applejack had sought her out for a remedy for Granny Smith’s hip. Zecora was intrigued by the bizarre object and asked if she could stay and find out what it was. Seeing no reason to decline, Twilight agreed and together they went inside the barn where the others were waiting. Rainbow Dash was tapping her hoof impatiently in the corner as she watched Applejack entertain the Cutie Mark Crusaders with tricks using her rope. Spike had seemingly floated over to Rarity’s side gazing at the white coated unicorn as she fussed over an embarrassed Fluttershy’s mane. Pinkie Pie was bouncing around the room ranting ideas of what the object could be to a very irritated looking Big Macintosh.

“So what do you think it could be huh? Maybe a magical space/time machine or oh maybe something that makes it rain chocolate like Discord did or oh, oh, oh maybe it’s a magical machine that makes it rain chocolate throughout space and time! We could make it rain chocolate in Ponyville FOREVER, would that just be super awesome?”

Big Mac let out (and probably not for the first time) an aggravated sigh “Eeyup” was all he said. Twilight used her magic to slightly amplify her voice as she announced,

“Hey everyone I am about to start to study this thing, so if you all give me some room I would appreciate it.”

The others nodded and made a space in the center for her. She then turned to Spike, only to find him deep inside a day dream, and if she knew Spike, it would be one about Rarity. After rapping him on the head, he grumbled a reply saying he was ready to get started. Twilight had tried to find any references to the foreign object in the library but had been unsuccessful. She was both excited and nervous as to what she was about to discover. Channeling her magic, she started to slowly examine the surface and was surprised to find it absorbing some of the magic’s power. Curiosity got the better of her and she pumped even more magic into the device. Suddenly there was a bright white-blue flash and several things happened at once. Everypony else in the room gasped as they were enveloped in the odd light with a red sphere at the center. The young fillies that had joined them jumped toward it saying, “Maybe we will get a time traveling cutie mark….”

Applejack and Rainbow Dash tried to stop them but were too late. Twilight attempted to gain control over what ever this thing was that was causing this chaos, but only fed it more power. Then without warning, the ponies, zebra and baby dragon felt a strange pulling sensation and were yanked toward the epicenter of the light, now completely blue. They felt weightless and giddy, Pinkie Pie laughing out loud despite the predicament. Or it could just be Pinkie Pie being Pinkie Pie. The last thing the purple unicorn remembered was standing in front of strange looking creatures that looked as shocked as they were for their sudden teleportation. Then Twilight surrendered to unconsciousness…

When Twilight came to, she found herself huddled near Fluttershy, who despite trying to comfort her, was more or less hiding behind her. Rainbow Dash was staring down a scrawny looking creature that seemed still fazed by her appearance. And if she wasn’t mistaken, Twilight swore she could see…tears forming in his eyes. Coughing, Twilight managed to say “W-what’s going on everypony?”

Her friends gave her a group hug, relived that she was ok. One of the creatures stepped forward.

“Well mate, you seemed to have stumbled into our base, and unless you have a real good reason why you are here, I am afraid a… interrogation will be in order.”

Dash’s eye’s narrowed as she shouted “Why, it’s not like we meant to come here, and it sounds like you are hiding something and don’t want us to know about it.”

The one with sun glasses shook his head.

“No mate, if anything, we are protecting you from all this, trust me you do not want in on what we are doing…”

Rainbow Dash flew up next to him so they were standing eye to eye.

“Oh yea?” She asked challengingly.

He frowned and said “If you are so set on finding out what we are up to, we will tell you, but in return you will all take our places…”

Dash looked confused.

“Wait so you’re telling me that you will let us in on what you are doing and then let us be in charge of it?”

He nodded.

“Wow, if that’s the case then you are the worst spy ever.”

Suddenly a voice called out from across the room.

“That may be because he is not a spy that is my career, madam.”

The speaker appeared out of nowhere and was stylishly dressed with a mask covering most of his face. Before Dash could comment a reply, a slurred voice rang out from a distant hallway.

“Aye lads, what are ye all standing around fo-”

His one eye widened in shock as he rubbed at it trying to make sense of the scene before him.

“Ah, I supposed I might of wee over did it a bit too much today on the drinking today eh Scout?”

Scout mumbled as he blinked away tears that had been falling without his knowledge, “N-no Demo, we are all seeing the same thing, Spy and Sniper have been chatting these horses up for a while…”

Applejack walked over and stood in front of Scout saying “And just who are ya calling a stallion?”

Scout hadn’t had much look with girls back in Brooklyn, and seemed to be having only worse luck with the other worldly pony variety.

“Umm… no one just that loud mouthed one with the rainbow mane, that’s all”.

Dash instantly flew over to him and slammed him against the wall. With eyes burning with outrage, she said in a whisper barely loud enough for the others to hear “Say that again…”

He flinched and mumbled “Never knew a broad could move so fast.”

Before Dash could proceed to pound him into pulp on the wall, Applejack intervened.

“All right sugarcube, he didn’t mean anything by it, now why don’t you come back over here, you know how fighting always freaks Fluttershy out…”

Dash glared daggers at Scout before turning to her friend.

“B-but Applejack he called me a-”

Applejack held up a hoof.

“Come on now Dash, all you’re doing is making a filly of yourself, now come on back over to the others, and don’t make meh have to hog tie you up now, ya hear?”

Dash and Applejack stared at each other for a moment until Dash gave in and sighed.

“Alright fine but I am warning you, next one who calls me a stallion gets it…”

She grumbled before floating back over near Applejack. Sniper chuckled, and jested “I guess rainbows really do make Scout cry” and then turned to Dash, “So do we have a deal?”

With a nod of agreement from the others she turned to him.

“Yea, so spill.”

Over the next few hours, Sniper, Spy, Demo, and a slightly bruised Scout explained to them their situation and how they were fighting their rival, the RED team.

“Alright mates, now you all get to pick your classes.”

Dash called scout, saying that anything Scout did she could do, and do it at *least* 20% cooler. Applejack took engineer, saying her experience with farm equipment would give her an advantage. Big Mac picked the heavy class, since he was the only one that could lift Heavy’s weapon with ease. Fluttershy selected the medic class naturally as healing others was what she enjoyed most. Twilight Sparkle decided on sniper because she didn’t really have much actual combat skills and this way she would be as far away as possible from battle. Rarity became a spy in admiration of his good fashion choice. Spike was a solider due to his surprising fortitude and his stories of impressing women. Pinkie Pie jumped (or in her case bounced) at being a pyro saying the flame thrower could be used to bake a lot of cupcakes at once(despite the others telling her that wasn’t what it was for). Zecora, who until this time had remained a silent observer, claimed the Demoman class, as it allowed her to experiment with her more explosive brews. That all being decided, their new mentors led them out to learn the basics of their jobs. Twilight could tell that it was going to be a long week…