

# Hope from the Future

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*Ten years in the future, Equestria is now a post-apocalyptic world ruled by a dark entity. With Princess Celestia and the Mane Six gone, there was no pony left to stop this threat. Applebloom; now a grown mare and leader of the resistance, has decided to travel back to the past to prevent the catastrophe from happening, even at the cost of not returning to her own timeline.*

*Author's note: The story takes place between after Season 2 and before Season 3.*

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## 0 - Chapter 1

*"Ten years since that day...Life as we know was never the same again."*

The town known as Ponyville; the once populated place where earth ponies, unicorns and pegasus lived in harmony now lies in ruins, nothing more than broken memories of the past. The town hall where the citizens would gather to celebrate the Summer Sun Celebration every year was now a huge pile of broken rubble, most homes around the area were burnt to the ground or demolished while some remain intact but empty.

Not a single soul lives in this ghost town anymore; Sugarcube Corner no longer stands to serve the citizens its sweets and bakery made by the ever so cheerful Pinkie Pie and the owners Mr. and Mrs. Cake.

The trees from Sweet Apple Acres that has once grew delicious apples have all withered and died out, the barns and even the house were destroyed as if a tornado ran through it.

The Carousel Boutique where Rarity made countless dresses for her customers and friends was now gone, the only thing that remains were broken mirrors, scattered materials and pieces of the dress form mannequins.

The Golden Oak Library remains intact despite being a dead tree, inside there were empty selves, not even one book was left but only cobwebs.

The sky was now covered in thick, pitch-black clouds that blocked out the sun for years and without it, plant life cannot grow and the wildlife that Fluttershy took care of have died from starvation. A few however managed to survive and even made her cottage near the Everfree Forest a safe haven for them but even so, it is still hard for them to find food.

*"All of this happened when Princess Celestia, the beloved ruler of Equestria had suddenly passed away in her sleep. The news came as a huge shock not only in Equestria but to the entire world. Ponies; earth, unicorn and pegasus have all attended her funeral including many different races from across the globe. Her death had brought a great sadness to Equestria, Twilight took her death really hard and fell into a deep depression. How could somepony like Celestia; an immortal and powerful alicorn die all of a sudden, if they only knew the real truth behind her death...six months after the funeral, that is when everything came down."*

Elsewhere around Equestria, the crackling sound of a whip was heard as a dragon wearing black spiked armor was whipping a group of ponies who were chained up and dragging a large boulder from behind. The dragons were forcing them to build a statue; though unfinished, it appears to be a gigantic figure of some kind.

*"Equestria was soon taken over by an evil entity named Lucifer; ruler of the Underworld, lead an army of his minions out across the entire country and without Celestia to help fend off the invasion, all hope was*

*lost... Twilight and her friends tried to fight Lucifer but they perished before they could use the Elements of Harmony. Even Princess Luna and Cadance didn't stand a chance against him and they too perished. With no one to stop him, Lucifer became the tyrannical ruler of Equestria and enslaved the remaining pony population."*

Canterlot; the city where Princess Celestia once lived and ruled Equestria now in ruins, the castle lies in dead silence, not a sound was heard...

*"For years we have freed many ponies while at the same time trying to fight off Lucifer but to no avail, it was a fight that we weren't going to win and all hope seemed lost...until now."*

All of a sudden, an explosion from the castle echoed across the city as three ponies; all wearing full black suits with green vests and black masks came bolting out of the castle, a group of flying dragons were chasing after them into the empty streets.

"Don't let them get away!" shouted one of the dragons as he charged towards them with the others following from behind.

The three ponies spread across the streets as the dragons break into several groups to go after them. When two of the dragons swooped down to strike one of the fleeing ponies but to their surprise, the pony sprouted out wings hidden from the suit and flew up in the air, narrowly avoided the dragons who then crashed into a building when they weren't looking.

The other pony revealed to be a unicorn due to the horn sticking out from the mask, uses a magic spell to lift a pole from one of the buildings and hits the dragons with it like a baseball bat. The third pony took something from the vest and threw it at the last two remaining dragons, it looked like a small black ball but a net comes out from it and entangled the flying reptiles, causing them to land on the ground hard and trying to get out at the same time arguing with one another.

"Get off my tail, you moron!" one of the dragons yelled.

"Your claws are scratching my wing, stupid!" the other dragon spat back.

The trio ran out of the city limits and simultaneously jumps off the edge of the waterfall, the pegasus grabbed onto the earth pony and landed safely while the unicorn used a teleportation spell to reappear on the ground along side the two.

"That was close." Said the masked unicorn

"Tell me about it, do you still have it?" asked the masked pegasus, the unicorn who carried a small bag took out a dusty old book.

"Yep and intact too." The unicorn replied

"We better get back to Zecora and fast before those dragons come after us." The earth pony suggested as the two nods and headed off into the Everfree Forest.

Once the three arrived at Zecora's home, they entered to see the elderly enchantress mixing something in her cauldron, possibly her usual stew recipe or a potion.

"Ah you three have come back, I hope that you didn't get attacked." Zecora notices them at the door.

The three took off their masks and revealed themselves to be the Cutie Mark Crusaders; Applebloom, Scootaloo and Sweetie Belle now as fully grown mares.

"We did but we manage to lose them on the way here." said Scootaloo, her mane was slicked back and she has a scar across her right eye.

"It wasn't easy finding it, I can tell you that." said Sweetie Belle, not much has change for her with the exception of her mane which is more messier than what it used to look like when she was a filly. She pulls out the book and gives it to Zecora.

"We looked through it and it has the right spell." said Applebloom, her mane is much longer and styled in a similar fashion like her sister Applejack and a piece of her left ear was missing.

The door opens behind the three ponies as a tall but familiar dragon with purple scales and green spikes walks in carrying a couple of bags over his shoulders.

"Hey Zecora, I got some of the things you need." Spike said putting the bags down before he notices the three. "Girls, you made it out okay, did you manage to get the book?"

"Yes" said Scootaloo "Lucifer's minions spotted us but we took care of them."

"I was a little worried that you three would have gotten hurt or worse..." Spike said with a concerned tone.

"Here it is; The Time Traveling spell" said Zecora after finding the page "It says there that the spell can only work for a short amount of time, but the next page states that an limitless version will surely undo the crime. It requires a lot of energy for this to perform, so all we need now is a thunderous storm." Zecora explained to the group.

"Scootaloo, I want you to go out and find any thunderclouds, make sure it's a strong one." Applebloom gave an order to her pegasus friend.

"I'm on it." Scootaloo said before she flew out to the door.

"Sweetie Belle, you help Zecora set up the spell. Spike and I will go out and set up the lightning rods around the area." Applebloom said as they nod in agreement and head out.

Scootaloo searches through the skies for any signs of a thundercloud, even for a skilled pegasus like her it was difficult to find under the dark clouds that Lucifer cast over the country. Meanwhile Zecora and Sweetie Belle were outside making an outline on the ground that looks like a circle with ancient markings around it.

Applebloom and Spike were setting up the lightning rods at the highest spots around the Everfree Forest, then leading the wires towards the symbol on the ground where they planted more metal rods around the pattern. Scootaloo comes back in time with a big thundercloud that looked unstable, especially how its emitting lightning bolts at random.

"Thundercloud ready!" Shouted Scootaloo as she flies on top of it.

"I'm ready when you are, Applebloom." Sweetie Belle called out, her horn glowing with an magical aura.

"All the rods are aligned and ready to go." Applebloom informed the others and then gives Scootaloo the signal.

Scootaloo jumps up and stomps on the cloud repeatedly as lightning bolts struck down on the metal rods, causing massive amount of electricity to pass through the wires and onto the rods around the pattern. Sweetie Belle casts the spell at the pattern which glows brightly, the magical energy merges with the lightning from the rods and they all shot out from each direction into the center of the pattern. The chain reaction has caused a large portal to appear in the center, the gang gathered in front of the newly opened portal.

"It's set to go back to a few days before Princess Celestia's death." Sweetie Belle stated. "But there's something you need to know, the portal can only allow one pony in and..." she stops at the last sentence.

"And what?" asked Applebloom.

"Once somepony goes in...they can't come back." Sweetie Belle said looking down.

"Is this true?" Spike looked at Zecora who sadly agreed with Sweetie Belle.

"I'm afraid it is true, Spike" said Zecora "Question is, who would go in?"

The gang stood in silence for a moment upon hearing the ultimate decision of going back in time and never being able to return, this was a suicidal mission but they came this far to drop everything they worked for.

"I'll go." Applebloom said with a determined look.

"Applebloom!" said a surprised Scootaloo "If you go in there, you won't ever come back."

"I know that Scootaloo but for the past ten years, we had to endure this hell caused by Lucifer" Applebloom stated as she looks at her friends "He was the cause of all of this; Princess Celestia, our friends, our families....even big sis...." she nearly choked upon mentioning her deceased sister. "We cannot just stand there as he continues to make everypony suffer under his reign. That is why I made my decision to go back in the past to restore the future of Equestria!"

Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo looked at their comrade in tears hearing her speech, Applebloom walks towards them as she gives them a group hug.

"Sweetie Belle, Scootaloo, you been my best friends for years and it's been great spending the best moments of my life with the two of you." Applebloom tearfully hugs each of them.

Spike and Zecora watched this heart warming moment as the zebra wipes the tears from her eyes.

"I'm gonna miss you, Applebloom." cried Sweetie Belle.

"We'll never forget you" said Scootaloo wiping her tears away. "Cutie Mark Crusaders forever."

"Cutie Mark Crusaders Forever!" The three unitedly put their hoof's together as a sign of respect of the trio. Applebloom then goes to Spike and Zecora.

"Spike, Zecora, thank you for being there with me especially during these dark times." Applebloom said as she too gave them a hug.

"Goodbye Applebloom, tell Twilight that I missed her for me, will you?" Said the sad dragon which Applebloom nods.

"I've enjoyed the time I spent with you my dear, now you must go to make this future clear." Zecora smiled at her as Applebloom turns around and steps in front of the portal but not before looking back at her friends.

"Farewell everypony..." Applebloom said as she walks into the portal, which closes the moment she passed through, the red-haired mare finds herself falling down a dark tunnel which seemed endlessly until she notices a bright light below. Applebloom falls through and lands on a patch of green grass, she recognized the apple trees in front of her and all around the surrounding landscape, the few words that came out of her mouth that answered where she's at now was.

"Sweet Apple Acres..."

To Be Continued.

## 1 - Chapter 2

"Sweet Apple Acres..."

Applebloom couldn't help but gaze upon her childhood home; the apple fields, the barn house, the clear blue sky with the warm sunlight radiating on her face, a sight that she had not felt for so many years. Applebloom strolls while looking at the entire farm.

"It's been so long since I've remember what this place used to look like." Applebloom reminisces as she goes near an apple tree. "My family grew the best apples in Equestria, how I miss eating them."

This gave the yellow mare an idea.

"I guess it wouldn't hurt if I eat just a few of them." She turns around and bucks the tree, causing apples to fall to the ground. The moment she took a bite out of one, Applebloom literally cried with joy and ate the rest of the apples, leaving her with a full belly and a pile of apple cores next to the relaxed pony.

"I hadn't eaten like that in a while." said the satisfied patted her belly, suddenly she hears a couple of voices that were heading her way. Applebloom looks and see's her big sister Applejack walking with her filly self and their dog Winona.

"It's Applejack, me, and Winona...Wait, I can't let them see me like this, not yet!" Thinking fast, the future pony runs and hides inside the barn nearby. As Applejack and the younger Applebloom arrived at the farm, Winona stop as she catches a scent with her nose and she starts growling.

"Huh? What is it, girl?" asked Applejack as Winona runs towards the barn and barks at it, Applejack and her little sister soon followed. "Hey, who's in there?!" Applejack demanded.

Inside the barn, the older Applebloom was hiding behind one of the piles of hay. "Oh crap, I forgot Winona has a good nose!"

"That's it, I'm coming in!" Applejack opened the barn door, with the hiding pony trying to remain as quiet as possible, hoping that she does not get spotted. "Hey!"

On one of the piles of hay lies the grey pegasus Derpy taking a nap. "Five more minutes." Derpy talked in her sleep much to the annoyance of the farming pony.

"WAKE UP!!!!" Shouted Applejack as Derpy jumps up and flaps her wings in mid air.

"Ohh hey Applejack." greeted the crossed-eyed pony "I was having the most beautiful dream about a cloud raining muffins."

"Derpy, my barn isn't a place for you to sleep in, can't you take a nap on a cloud like Rainbow Dash does?" asked Applejack

"I did earlier but I got zapped by lightning a bunch of times." Derpy replied with a goofy smile. "I just thought sleeping here would be more quiet."

"Just go take a nap somewhere else, okay sugarcube?" Applejack kindly suggested "And not on a thundercloud this time."

"Alrighty then." Derpy said as she flies out of the barn but crashes into something.

"Sorry Applejack!" Derpy yelled out as she flew away.

"\*Sigh\* I just don't understand that pony." said Applejack before turning her attention to Applebloom and Winona "Come on y'all, let's get back in the house and make us something to eat."

"Good cus I'm starving." the younger Applebloom happily replied.

The older Applebloom slightly pokes her head out of the hay, watching her older sister and her present self leaving the barn. The younger Applebloom stops and turns for a moment but see's no one.

"Huh? Could have sworn somepony was just watching me, must be my imagination." and with that, Applebloom leave to follow her sister.

"Phew, that was close" said the elder Applebloom "I better put my mask on just to be safe, I can't let them know about me until I meet with Twilight Sparkle." she puts on her mask and quietly sneaks out of Sweet Apple Acres. Later that day, after Applejack finishes her meal, she and her brother Big Mac went out to the fields to gather some apples when she notices a pile of apple cores on the ground.

"What the? Hey Big Mac, are these your apple cores?" asked Applejack.

"Nnnope." The red stallion replied.

"You sure?" Applejack gave her brother a suspicious look.

"Eeyup." Big Mac replied honestly.

"Hmmm I know it wasn't Derpy, she would have leave half-eaten muffins instead" Applejack thought to her self. "Still, If I ever find the pony that ate our apples without our permission, leaving the cores behind and expect us to clean it up, I'll buck'em where the sun doesn't shine!" She said this while Big Mac looked on nervously.

Meanwhile at the residential area of Ponyville, Applebloom was hiding in the alleyway while watching other ponies passing by, some of them she recognizes like her school teacher Cheerilee, the disc jockey known as Vinyl Scratch and even the present Scootaloo who rode through the streets on her scooter. Under the mask, Applebloom smiles as she remembers how this peaceful this place was but now's not the time to reminisce.

"Twilight's place shouldn't be too far from here." Applebloom said as she comes out once the coast was



clear. "If I could get to her, I can tell her about the-"

Without warning, Applebloom bumps directly into Pinkie Pie who was carrying a cart containing a large strawberry cake from behind. Pinkie Pie stumbles back as the cart starts to roll back away from her, which then bumps into a small stone and causes the cake to go flying in the air. At the same time, Rarity was coming out of her boutique in a sparkling silver dress she had made.

"Oh just look how gorgeous this new dress is; forty-eight hours working on this magnificent piece but the results are just-" Rarity looks up and before she knew it, Pinkie Pie's cake lands and makes a huge mess all over the unicorn and her dress. "\*GASP\* MY DREEEESSSSSSSSSS!!!!" Rarity screams in horror and faints onto her couch.

"Oh no, my strawberry cake is ruined!" said Pinkie Pie who rushes towards Rarity, then she takes a quick lick of the cake from Rarity's horn. "Nope, it's still good."

"Your cake?!" Rarity sprung from her couch and glares at Pinkie Pie "My new dress is completely ruined and I worked so hard on it!" cried Rarity.

"It wasn't my fault, some pony bumped into me and I lost control on my cart" explained Pinkie Pie, who notices the masked pony not too far from where they're at. "Hey there he is!" she pointed out.

"Uh oh!" said Applebloom as she took off running.

"Hey wait, I never seen that pony before." said Pinkie Pie "I should get to know him and even throw a party for him!" She skips after the masked pony with Rarity following her. "He will pay for crimes against fashion!"

Applebloom takes a sharp left turn and then right at another path to lose them when she runs past Fluttershy, causing her to spin around and dropping the groceries she was carrying.

"Sorry about that, Fluttershy!" Applebloom shouted as she bolts off.

"How did that pony know my name?" Said a confused Fluttershy

"Hey Fluttershy!" Fluttershy turns and see's Pinkie Pie and Rarity. "Did you by any chance see a masked pony around?"

"Ummm y-yes I did, he went that way..." Fluttershy pointed at the direction where the masked pony headed to and the two ponies ran off. "Wait for me, please!" the timid pegasus followed her friends.

Applebloom sprints across town, through the alleyways and even in the open streets until she see's the Golden Oak Library just a few yards away. She quickly heads inside and shuts the door behind her, there she falls down to catch her breath.

"Damn..." Applebloom hyperventilates. "This really...isn't my day....but...at least I...made it to Twilight's place." She sits up and noticed how quiet the library is. "Twilight....Spike?"

Outside the library, the three ponies stop as they don't see any signs of the masked pony.

"Huh? Where did he go?" wondered the hyperactive pink pony "He couldn't have disappeared out of thin air."

"He seems really fast, we just weren't fast enough." said Fluttershy.

"Why couldn't you have used your wings to spot him from the air?" Rarity said to Fluttershy

"Umm...well I didn't think about that." Fluttershy nervously smiles.

"Hey gals!" The three mares heard Applejack coming along. "What's with all the commotion I've been hearing about? I've been trying to catch up with y'all but you kept running."

"We were trying to chase after this wierd-looking pony who wore a strange mask after he ruin that big delicious cake I was gonna share with you girls." Pinkie Pie explained

"Unfortunately that won't happen because Pinkie Pie's cake was all over me and my new dress" said Rarity "Oh how I want to wrap my hooves around his neck for this!" she growled.

"This is strange, earlier I found a pile of apple cores near one of my apple trees" said Applejack. "I'm beginning to think that this masked pony y'all taking about is the culprit behind this."

"But we lost him while chasing after him around town." said Fluttershy.

"Hey girls" The girls saw Twilight along with Spike and Raindow Dash, who both were carrying stacks of books for the purple unicorn. "What's going on? Why are you all at my place?"

"Some masked pony was causing a bit of havoc around town, he ruined my new dress with Pinkie Pie's cake!" Rarity explained.

"At least the cake was still tasty." Pinkie Pie responded.

"He sorta...bumped into me." Fluttershy stuttered.

"Apparently he ate some of my apples from my farm and left a pile of apple cores without picking them up" Applejack explained. "You didn't happen to run into him, did you?"

"Not that I know of" said Rainbow Dash "I was with Twilight and Spike carrying these books she just bought at tha new bookstore." Rainbow Dash puts the stack of books down besides her. "Finally, they were getting kinda heavy."

Spike drops the books on the ground as well. "Much better." he said before Twilight gave him an annoyed look. "What? They were heavy."

"So do you know where did this masked pony went to?" Twilight asked.

"No, we lost him on the way here and we don't have any idea where he's at." said Fluttershy.

"Girls! Girls! I found him! I found him!" shouted Pinkie Pie who was looking through the window. "He's inside Twilight's house!"

"What?!" Twilight rushes into her home and saw the masked pony in the library. Before she could react, Twilight uses a spell to bind the mask pony and levitate her in mid air.

"Think that you could break into my house and steal my stuff?!" Twilight growled as Spike and the rest of the girls entered, standing besides her.

"Wait! Let me explain, I didn't mean any harm to you and your friends!" struggled Applebloom.

"The only harm you caused was my dress!" Rarity said in anger.

"And my cake!" Pinkie Pie added. "And it was a good one too."

"Twilight Sparkle, I came to see you, I have an important message to give you, please put me down!" Applebloom was having a hard time talking through her mask.

"If you think I'm falling for that trick, it's not happening" Twilight said as she brings the pony closer to her. "Now let's see who you really are under that mask."

Twilight grabs her mask and pulls it off of Applebloom's head.

"What the?" Twilight suddenly puts her down and releases the spell off of her.

"So that's what he- I mean she looks like." said Pinkie Pie.

"Why did you let her go, Twilight?" asked Rainbow Dash

"I don't know why but doesn't this pony look a little...familiar to you?" said Twilight as the girls take a closer glance at the unmasked pony.

"Now that you mentioned it, she does look somewhat familiar." said Fluttershy.

Applejack goes closer to the strangely-familiar pony for a better look; the orange eyes, the red mane and the light yellow coat. All of those fit the description of one pony as it suddenly dawns on Applejack.

"This...This can't be possible...i-is that you, Applebloom?" asked a surprised Applejack

"Hi...Big sis." Applebloom nervously smiles as the rest of the girls, including Spike gasped upon learning the true identity of this mysterious pony.

To Be Continue.

## 2 - Chapter 3

The time-traveling pony finds herself being surrounded by her sister and her friends, both surprised and confused about the situation.

"You really are Applebloom, as in Applejack's little sister?" Twilight asked.

"Yes." Applebloom answered. "I'm that Applebloom."

"How could she be Applebloom when she's only a filly and this one's a mare? Applejack, is she another relative of yours with the same name?" Pinkie Pie asks Applejack who shakes her head.

"No but it doesn't make any sense, I was with my sister earlier, there's no way there could be another Applebloom." said a confused Applejack

"Unless she's some kind of clone." The pink mare randomly suggested.

"No, no I'm not a clone, just let me clear up some things for you all; I'm from ten years from the future, I traveled back in time using a time traveling spell." Applebloom explained.

"A time traveling spell? That would explain why you look around our age, Applebloom" said Twilight "I remembered using one like that but that one could only sent me back for only a short period."

"The time traveling spell we used was an enhanced version that doesn't have a time limit but required a lot of power, so we-" stated Applebloom but before she could explain more about it, she was interrupted by Pinkie Pie.

"Ooh! Ooh! What's it like in the Future?! Are there robots? Are there skyscrapers that reach into space? Is everything made of chrome?! Hah? Hah hah?!" Pinkie Pie asks Applebloom a bunch of questions under a minute.

"I wish it was Pinkie Pie, otherwise I wouldn't have needed to come to the past." Applebloom said looking down with a depressed tone.

"Wait...Is something bad going to happen?" Twilight asks with a concerned look, which Applebloom nods.

"The reason I have traveled to the past is so I can tell you all something of grave importance" Applebloom lifts her head up as she looks at the Mane Six with a cold, serious expression. "Six months from now, The entire country of Equestria will fall into eternal darkness by an evil entity, who in my timeline rules Equestria with an iron fist and enslaved ponykind, the name of that entity is none other than Lucifer."

"L-Lucifer?!" said a shocked Twilight as the name rang a bell to her. "As in the dark lord of the

Underworld?!"

"The same." confirmed Applebloom.

"Pardon me if I sound ignorant but who the heck is this Lucifer fellow?" wondered Applejack while Twilight pulls out a history book from the top shelf and looks through the pages.

"I never heard of him." said Rarity.

"Me neither." Fluttershy quietly muttered.

"Hey Twilight, do you know who Applebloom is talking about?" Rainbow Dash asked Twilight.

"Yes I do" Twilight stops at a page and reads it out for her friends to hear. "A thousand years ago, before he became ruler of the Underworld, Lucifer was once an emperor of a barbarian dragon empire. Cunning and ruthless, Lucifer along with his army raid and conquered many countries until he tried to invade Equestria, he was however stopped by Princess Celestia who cast him into the abyss which later became known as the Underworld. She also placed a magic seal to make sure that Lucifer can never leave that place."

"But how could that be? How was Lucifer able to get out and invaded Equestria in your timeline?" asked Rainbow Dash as she looks at Applebloom. "Didn't we tried to stop him?"

"You have fought a brave battle but to be blunt with you, the six of you were killed before you could use the Elements of Harmony" Applebloom begins to inform the mane six of their demise. "Applejack was the first to go, Fluttershy was next, then Pinkie Pie and Rarity; Rainbow Dash and Twilight were the last two to fight against Lucifer but it was all in vain as the two of you have died in battle as well..."

The room was in brief silence as it took a moment to let this information to sink into the gang; the apocalyptic future of Equestria and the girls' unforeseen deaths. Rarity had a worried look on her face as the same goes with Applejack, Fluttershy was too scared to even think about it. Rainbow Dash curled her hoof as if she was making a fist in anger, even the usually-cheerful Pinkie Pie wasn't too happy about this. Twilight held onto Spike as she listens to Applebloom's story.

"The remaining citizens of Ponyville were wiped out after that, Sweetie Belle, Scootaloo, Zecora. Spike and including myself were the only survivors of the onslaught" Applebloom explained. "We formed a resistance group that we ironically called the Cutie Mark Crusaders, as a tribute to our old childhood club." She smiled a bit in an attempt to lighten the mood.

"What about Princess Celestia? Didn't she tried to seal Lucifer back?" a worried Twilight asked again.

"No...She never did." Applebloom replied sadly. "Six months before the invasion, Princess Celestia was found dead in her bedroom."

"WHAT?!" The girls including Spike exclaimed in unison.

"B-but that's impossible, w-what could have possibly killed her?" Said a stunned Twilight.

"We were shocked and confused at first, all of us thought that she passed away by natural causes which to me didn't make any sense at all." stated Applebloom "But years later, after we sent Spike on a mission to spy on the dragons about Lucifer, we learned that Lucifer had somepony killed Celestia for him while she was asleep. After that, Lucifer dispose of the assassin seeing that there was no use for that pony anymore, so we don't even know who it was."

"I'm a spy? That is so awesome!" said Spike before getting a cold look from Twilight. "Oh right, not the best time to get excited about." Spike awkwardly rubs the back of his head.

"Princess Luna took over her sister's place after her death but even she nor Princess Cadance stood a chance against Lucifer and they were defeated, Shining Armor was so heartbroken about Twilight and Cadance's death and the fact that he could not save them that he took his own life." Applebloom continues on showing a mix of sadness and anger in her tone as the others listen.

"After that, Equestria as we known had turned into a living hell to every pony; our friends, families, love ones and our homes are all gone because of him. For years, we tried so hard to take Lucifer down but each time, we could barely put a scratch on him!" Applebloom suddenly slams her hoof on the floor, making Fluttershy jump a bit, her teeth gritted and her body trembling with rage.

"Damn it! He's just too powerful!" Tears shed out from the angry pony's eyes. "I wanted everything to go back the way things were, before that bastard came and took everything away from us! I hate him....I hate him for causing all of this!" Applebloom was on the verge of crying, the others especially Applejack felt sympathy for her, they could see in the future pony's tear-filled eyes that she had suffered a lot through out these ten years.

"That is why...I traveled back to the past to make sure that these events never happen" sobbed Applebloom before turning her attention back to the mane six "Not only for me...but for Equestria."

"Applebloom..." Applejack goes to her side and puts her front leg around Applebloom's shoulder. "We can guarantee you that Equestria will have a future, a bright future." She gives her a heart-warming smile.

"Applejack..." said a comforted Applebloom as she wipes away her tears.

"Yeah, we're not gonna let some punk try to take over Equestria." said Rainbow Dash now determined. "He won't know what hit him!"

"If this Lucifer fellow thinks he'll come terrorize us, he has another thing coming!" Pinkie Pie joined. "Right Applebloom? Or should we call you Future Applebloom to avoid confusion with Present Applebloom? Ooh Ooh! How about Futurebloom for short?"

"Thanks, but I think I'll just stick with Future Applebloom instead." Future Applebloom chuckled a little.

"Applebloom, when will this assassin come to kill Princess Celestia?" Twilight asked

"Three days from now." Future Applebloom replied.

"Spike, I want you to write a letter to the princess about this, pronto!" Twilight tells Spike.

"I'm on it." Spike said as he starts writing down a letter.

"I want you all to keep this information between us, no other pony besides the princess should know about this otherwise it could put the entire future in jeopardy, got it?" Future Applebloom informs the gang.

"You have our word, sis." said Applejack.

"Cross my heart, hope to fly, stick a cupcake in my eye." Pinkie Pie said as she pokes her eye with her hoof.

"Thanks everypony" smiled Future Applebloom. "I knew I can count on you all."

Spike finishes writing the letter to Princess Celestia as he breathes fire to the scroll and blows the ashes into the air. Moments later, Spike belches out a scroll which he opens up to read it out loud.

"Dear Twilight, This new information you gave me sounds very serious and I like to discuss about our situation tomorrow when you and your friends come to Canterlot. Be sure to bring your time traveling friend over as well."

"It is getting kinda late so we should get some rest till tomorrow." suggested Twilight.

"Say Applebloom, would you like to spend the night at Sweet apple Acres?" asked Applejack "Seeing that you miss our home after all."

"Thank you Applejack, I would love too." Future Applebloom smiled.

As the rest of the group leaves Twilight's place, Future Applebloom stops and looks back towards Twilight. "Oh and Twilight, Spike from my time wanted me to tell you that he misses you." She said as she left with Applejack, Twilight smiles as she gave Spike an unexpected hug.

"Hey easy there, Twilight." said the little purple dragon.

Later that day as the sun sets, Applejack and Future Applebloom were walking together near the farm.

"Now remember, you can't tell you- I mean your younger self about you" said Applejack. "Knowing you- I mean her, she would ask questions non-stop."

"Yeah, I was quite a spitfire back then." chuckled Future Applebloom.

"Hey, I don't mean to get too personal but how did you lose a part of that ear of yours?" Applejack ask about her sister's partly disfigured ear, which Future Applebloom sadly looks down. "Err sorry, forget I ask."

They arrived at their home with Applejack entering first and Future Applebloom following her behind. There they met with the Apple family. "I'm home!"

"Welcome home sis!" the younger Applebloom runs to her older sister but then notices the other pony behind her. "Hey who's that?"

"Oh her, I like to introduce you to our cousin...cousin...." Applejack was trying to think of a name for her.

"Applelove" Future Applebloom called herself as she smiles. "I'm cousin Applelove, it's nice to meet Applejack's family, you must be her little sister Applebloom."

"That I am." Applebloom smiled back.

"And you are Granny Smith and Big McIntosh or big." She said at the two.

"Eeyup." replied Big Mac

"I never knew we had a cousin Applelove" said Granny Smith. "How come you never been to one of our Apple Family Reunion?"

"Well she-"

"I live at a country far, far away from Equestria." Future Applebloom interrupts Applejack, explaining about herself to Granny Smith. "And I've been very busy so I didn't really have time for any of the reunions."

"What happen to your ear, Applelove?" asked Applebloom who pointed out her cousin's ear.

"Applebloom, you know that's really rude of you to ask-" Applejack scolded her but the future pony stops her.

"No Applejack, it's alright" Future Applebloom said as she looks at her younger self. "If you want to know, lets just say that when somepony tells you not to play near heavy machinery, you better listen or this would happen." She pointed to her deformed ear.

"Yikes, that's gotta hurt, I'll be sure to remember that" said Applebloom "Sorry if I ask...."

"Don't worry about it, I get questions like that a lot." said Future Applebloom as she patted her present self on her head.

"So are you gonna join for dinner, Applelove?" asked the elderly pony.

"Yes, in fact Applejack said that I could stay here for a few days, so I can get to know the family." smiled Future Applebloom.

"Yay!" cheered Applebloom. "There's a bunch of things I want to tell you about."



“You can do that after supper, okay sugarcube?” Applejack said as her sister nods.

*“It's good to be home again...”* thought the happy future pony to herself.

The family soon had dinner together, with Granny Smith telling a funny story about an incident that happen at the farm when she was a filly. The others laugh at her story especially the often-quiet red stallion, Future Applebloom laughed along with them, she never laughed this much nor felt this kind of family bonding since she was a filly. Later at night time when everypony was soundly asleep, Future Applebloom was sleeping in the guest room but the mare was tossing and turning in bed. She was having a nightmare about her past; random images in her dream show the destruction of Ponyville as homes were ablaze and ponies were running from flying dragons. She see's herself running with Applejack through town while coming across the bodies of dead ponies.

“Don't look at them, Applebloom! Keep your eyes on me!” shouted Applejack.

It was like a war zone, ponies were being murdered left and right; one family was trapped in a burning home as the dragons kept them from escaping, a silhouette shows one pegasus having her wings torn off from her back before being killed and a couple of fillies met their doom when they were surrounded by a few dragons. Suddenly a dragon swoops down and bites down onto Applebloom's left ear, the young filly screamed as she was being lifted off her feet, Applejack grabs onto her tail and tries to pull her sister away but the dragon bit down on her ear so hard that it tore off the top part. Applejack kicked the dragon away from Applebloom as they took off running, the filly was crying in pain as blood drips from her now torn ear but there was no time to stop to mend the wound, they needed to run for their lives as quickly as possible. They were soon stopped by a gigantic shadow that resembles a dragon with glowing yellow eyes, Applejack yelled something out at the dragon but Applebloom couldn't make out what she was saying, in fact she couldn't hear anything as if the filly was suffering from the effects of shell shock. The gigantic dragon opens it's mouth as flame poured out and was heading straight towards Applebloom, Applejack kicks her out of the way as the filly watched her older sister being engulfed in flames.

“APPLEJACK!!!!!!” screamed the horrified filly. “NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!”

Future Applebloom woke up screaming at the top of her lungs, her heart beating like crazy and her body covered in cold sweat. Future Applebloom took a few deep breaths as she starts to cry, the door opens and the lights turn on as she turns to see the apple family awaken.

“Are you alright dear?” asked a concerned Granny Smith.

“We heard you screaming like bloody murder.” Said Applejack.

“Y-yes, I'm fine” replied Future Applebloom wiping her tear-filled eyes. “I just had a nightmare, that's all...”

“It must have been a really scary dream to make you scream like that.” said the young Applebloom.

“You ponies head back to bed, I'll stay with Applelove until she goes back to sleep” Applejack tells her family as they went back to their bedrooms. “Come on darling, I'll get you something to drink.”

The traumatized pony followed her sister into the kitchen where Applejack makes her a glass of milk for her to drink. Future Applebloom takes a sip of it and looks at her.

“Thank you sis” said Future Applebloom before looking down. “Sorry for waking everypony up.”

“Don't worry about it, remember when we woke up at the sound of granny banging pots together to scare away the timber wolves? You screaming like that was nothing compared to that.” said Applejack.

“Yeah...” Future Applebloom briefly smiled.

“Applebloom, dear....” Applejack sat down next to her. “That nightmare you had...was it what happen in the future?” she asked as her sister nods.

“Yes...it was” Future Applebloom took another sip of milk. “Applejack...there's something I want to personally tell you what I didn't tell the others.”

“What is it?” Applejack asked “Don't be afraid to tell me, sugarcube.”

“The reason why you never used the Elements of Harmony to defeat Lucifer....was because of me.” The mare sadly admitted.

“What?!” exclaimed Applejack.

“When Lucifer invaded Ponyville, his minions attacked our farm. Big Mac tried to hold them off but they ambushed and overwhelmed him and they got to Granny Smith after that. I was the only one left until you manage to get me out of there, soon we were running through town and everywhere we saw was death and destruction. One of the dragons grabbed onto me but luckily you pulled me away from it, though at a cost...” She explained, mentioning her disfigured ear.

“We thought that we would get out safe and sound but then...we ran into Lucifer himself...your friends were trying to fight him off but to no avail, I couldn't remember what you said to him, my mind was messed up from the sheer shock. Lucifer opened his mouth and breathed out a large stream of fire that was heading towards me, that's when you kicked me out of the way and...” Future Applebloom stops for a brief moment as the brutal image of her sister burnt to death flashed in her mind, her eyes widen in horror and tears started to pour down.

“Oh Celestia....I ran towards you and I....I could...barely recognize you...” Future Applebloom stuttered. “You looked up at me ....and you told me....to run away as fast as possible...I didn't want to look back but...I watched you die right before my very eyes, Applejack!” She wept. “I had to watch you die, If it weren't for me, you and your friends would have taken down Lucifer, it's all my fault that you and everyone died!” Future Applebloom broke down crying on her sister shoulders as Applejack hugged her.

“Applebloom, I understand what you are going through and I really do but you can't just blame yourself for what happen in the past” said Applejack comforting her traumatized sister. “You're alive because of me and now you traveled to the past to make sure that we won't suffer the same fate. In a way, you are not only saving me and our family but every pony in Equestria and I thank you for it.” Applejack smiles

as she gives her a handkerchief to wipe the tears away.

“Thank you, big sis.” Future Applebloom tightly hugs her sister back but outside the kitchen, the younger Applebloom was hiding and listening to their conversation. She was very shocked to learn that her so-called cousin is actually herself from the future and her story also brought her to tears. Applebloom quietly heads back upstairs and to her room where she lays back in her bed, leaving her worrying about the future.

“I hope the future...doesn't end up like that...” Applebloom said to herself as she falls asleep.

To Be Continued.

### 3 - Chapter 4

It was early in the morning at Sweet Apple Acres, the rooster crows at dawn as Future Applebloom was sound asleep peacefully in bed. The yellow mare wakes up upon hearing the rooster crowing a second time, lifting the blanket off of herself and getting out of bed, Future Applebloom gets herself ready to go to Caterlot with the others to meet with Princess Celestia. Despite being awake, she was nodding off a bit, she hadn't got much sleep since after the nightmare she had last night caused her to wake the entire household. Just as Future Applebloom was about to leave the room to see Applejack, she finds her filly self standing in front of the door way.

"Oh, morning Applebloom." She said to the young Applebloom.

"Applelove...can we talk?" Applebloom asked looking down sadly. "I have something I like to ask you."

"Sure, come on in" The mare moves aside to let Applebloom walk in. "So what's been bothering you, Applebloom?"

"Well...last night when you had that nightmare that woke us all up, I couldn't go back to sleep so I went down to get something to drink when I saw you and Applejack talking in the kitchen" Applebloom lifts her head up and looks at the mare. "You're not really our cousin Applelove; you're me from the future, are you?"

Future Applebloom was shocked to learn that her younger self overheard her conversation with Applejack last night about the day Lucifer invaded Ponyville and the demise of her family. No one but Applejack and her friends should have know about her identity as what it was originally planned, knowing she couldn't hide it anymore, Future Applebloom sat down with the filly and tells her the truth.

"You got me, kiddo" Future Applebloom confesses to her. "I'm you from ten years now."

"There's a bunch of things I want to ask you but after hearing your story about what happen to our family...I don't think I even want to know more." lamented Applebloom.

"A young filly such as yourself shouldn't think about things like that" stated Future Applebloom "Believe me, the things I've witnessed during those years made me wish I hadn't."

"You don't think all of this will come true, will it?" The worried filly looks at her future-self with sad-filled eyes.

"Applebloom...I came here to make sure this won't ever happen, I want you and every pony to have a long and bright future." Future Applebloom calmly explains to her before smiling to the filly. "So you don't need to worry about it, can you do that for me?"

"Alright" Applebloom replied, feeling somewhat better. "Just one question though; did you ever get your cutie mark?"

"I'm sorry but that's something I cannot tell you" Future Applebloom informs her as she brushes her younger self's mane. "I can't go and spoil things for you."

"Awww." groaned a disappointed Applebloom.

"Don't be disappointed, you'll be able to get yours when the time is right." said Future Applebloom. "Is Applejack awake?"

"Yeah, she's in her room getting ready." replied Applebloom "She asked me to see if you were up so you could go with her to Canterlot."

"I better get ready as well" The mare said. "Oh and can you keep this little conversation strictly between us, you cannot tell any pony about what you heard last night."

"I promise." Applebloom agreed.

Future Applebloom smiles as she leaves the guest room to check on Applejack, she stops at the door but before she was about to knock, the door opens and slams Future Applebloom to the wall as Applejack comes out.

"Huh?" Applejack moves the door and see's her pinned against the wall. "Whoops, sorry about that, Applebloom."

"No worries." said Future Applebloom as stars floats around her head, then she shakes it off and stands up. "We should get going so we can meet up with the others, are you ready?"

"Yep" said Applejack. "Let's go."

Future Applebloom follows Applejack as they said their goodbyes to their family and left Sweet Apple Acres to meet up with Twilight and the others. The gang heads to the train station and boarded on the one heading to Canterlot, the train starts moving as the group settled down in their rooms. As hours pass by, Future Applebloom quietly watched the passing scenery by the window, she was thinking about how to break the news to Princess Celestia. For Future Applebloom, it's been so long since she last saw the princess, ever since the funeral she attended with her family and friends. She could never forget that sad day, Twilight was so heart broken by her death that she was left in a depressed state for months, Spike once told her that Twilight lost the will to study and even gave up on researching magic. Then Pinkie Pie skips pass by her but then skips back a couple of steps and saw the gloomy mare.

"Hey, what's with the long face, Applebloom?" asked the pink-colored mare.

"Huh?" Future Applebloom snaps back to reality and see's Pinkie Pie. "Oh...well it's been so long since I've last seen Princess Celestia, so I'm kinda nervous about breaking the news to her."

"Ohhh well I know how to fix that, how about we do a little role play" suggested Pinkie Pie. "I'll be Princess Celestia and you'll be you."

"Ummm okay, if that helps..." said Future Applebloom as she takes a deep breath. "Princess Celestia, I have some devastating news from the future to bring you-"

"Oooh what happens in the future? Will there be a new princess or prince? Does Twilight Sparkle get married to a handsome colt?" Pinkie Pie overreacts with her acting, causing Future Applebloom to hoof palm herself.

"Pinkie Pie, please be serious about this." demanded Future Applebloom.

"Oops, sorry about that, guess I got a little carried away." said the embarrassed Pinkie Pie.

As the two continued with their role playing, Applejack was talking with the girls about the nightmare Future Applebloom had last night and her sobbing confession.

"Poor Applebloom..." muttered Fluttershy.

"To think that she would carry such a burden for so long, I can't imagine the pain and suffering she had to endure." said Twilight.

"With us gone and no pony left to protect Equestria, it can do a whole lot on any pony..." Applejack sadly said.

"Why don't we do something for Applebloom?" suggested Rarity.

"Yeah, to raise her spirit up" Rainbow Dash agreed. "It's better than being gloomy all the time."

"That's a great idea but you all have to remember that Applebloom has wounds that could never heal" Twilight informs the girls. "Mental wounds are a lot different from physical wounds so let's not do something that reminds her of the future she lived in, it could trigger a post-traumatic episode."

The girls nodded in agreement as they meet with Future Applebloom and Pinkie Pie who they finish role playing with dissatisfying results.

"Sorry Applebloom, I guess I don't do a very good Celestia." Pinkie Pie apologizes.

"It's alright Pinkie, I figured that talking to the princess herself would be better." said Future Applebloom.

"Say Applebloom" said Applejack "Me and the girls were talking and Rarity here suggested an idea that would make you feel better."

"Like what?" Future Applebloom raise an eyebrow.

"Like shopping for a new outfit for you, my dear" suggested Rarity as she stands next to her. "You have been wearing that uniform since you arrived so I thought it would be good to give you a make over."

"I don't know about that..." doubted the future mare.

"Oh come on, it'll be fun" Rarity insisted "We'll get you something formal to wear like a new dress and even a mane-do, after all you do want to look your best when we see Princess Celestia."

"Just give it a shot, Applebloom." said Applejack.

"Well...if you say so, I'll do it." Future Applebloom agreed.

"Oh this is gonna be so wonderful." cheered Rarity.

"Hey Applebloom" Said Pinkie Pie as she was holding a small red ball "This fell out of your vest, what does this do? does it bounce really high?"

"No Pinkie Pie, that's a-" before the future mare could finish, Pinkie Pie drops the red ball as the room started to fill up with red smoke, causing the ponies to cough and gag. "Pepper \*Cough\* Bomb!"

"MY EYES! IT STINGS!" yelled Rarity.

"MY NOSE FEELS LIKE IT'S ON FIRE!!!" cried Rainbow Dash.

"IT'S GETTING ON MY TONGUE AND IT BURNS!" Twilight coughs.

"DAMN IT, PINKIE PIE!" Shouted Applejack.

"Whoops, my \*cough\* bad." chuckled Pinkie Pie.

"Oh dear, I don't feel so..." a dizzy Fluttershy falls down and faints.

Twilight quickly uses her magic to open the windows to clear the room of the pepper smoke. Later that day, the gang finally arrives at Canterlot where Rarity grabs Future Applebloom and takes her all around the city; from mane salons to the dress shops. The others catches up with Rarity who was coming out of one of the dress shops and from the look on the unicorn's face, she was excited to show the girls.

"Girls, I want to proudly introduce to you, the new Applebloom." Rarity moves aside as the girls saw Future Applebloom coming out in a beautiful green gown and her mane styled to where it covers up her deformed ear.

"Wow!" the astonished five ponies said in unison.

"Doesn't she just look fabulous?" asked Rarity.

"Applebloom, you look really beautiful." complimented Applejack.

"You really think so?" asked Future Applebloom as she blushes.

"Yeah, it's like you're a completely different mare" said Rainbow Dash.

"Ooh Ooh Applebloom, I want to know if you ever got your cutie mark? If so, can we see it?" asked

Pinkie Pie.

"No can do, that is classified personal information," informed Future Applebloom.

"Oh come on, just a little peek?" pleaded Pinkie Pie who tried to look up her dress but Future Applebloom pulls herself away from her.

"Pinkie Pie, I can't do that!" she exclaimed. "If I somewhat show you or any pony my cutie mark, especially if my present self were to find out, it could cause serious consequences in the time line."

"Applebloom is right" Twilight agreed. "It's best that we don't find out, her younger self doesn't have hers yet and revealing it too soon could create a time paradox."

"Time paradox?" questioned Pinkie Pie.

"I'll explain it to you on the way to Princess Celestia." said Twilight as the gang make their way to the royal castle, the purple unicorn tries to explain her eccentric friend about what a time paradox is but it only confuses Pinkie Pie even more. Once they arrived at the royal castle, the gang enters the throne room where they see Princess Celestia awaiting.

"We're here, Princess Celestia." greeted Twilight.

"Thank you for all coming" said Princess Celestia. "May I speak with the one who claimed to have come from the future?"

"That would be me, your highness" said Future Applebloom as she walks up to Celestia and bows to her. "I'm Applejack's younger sister Applebloom, I've traveled ten years from now to warn you of the upcoming events."

"It's an honor to meet you, Applebloom." Princess Celestia happily replied. "The letter Twilight sent to me the other day briefly describes of these horrid events you have told her, I would like to hear the full story from your own words."

"Yes, I'm prepared to tell you everything I know, Princess Celestia" said Future Applebloom as she begins to tell the Princess of the bleak future of Equestria in graphic details; From Celestia's death at the hands of an assassin, the invasion led by Lucifer who escaped from the Underworld, the demise of the mane six, the enslavement of pony-kind and finally the country being cast into eternal darkness. "And that's all there is to it, your highness." Future Applebloom finished.

Princess Celestia expressed a mix of shock and sadness from hearing Future Applebloom's story, she never imagined the thought of Equestria turning into a dark place to live in, especially the part about her assassination. The compassionate alicorn gently places her hoof on the pony's shoulder.

"Applebloom, I'm sorry that you went through such an ordeal." Princess Celestia said with a comforting tone. "You've grown into a very brave pony who's willing to do everything to save Equestria from a horrid fate."



"Thank you, Princess." smiled Future Applebloom.

"I never thought the day would come when Lucifer plans on taking over Equestria once again" the princess said with a serious expression. "I've used the Elements of Harmony a thousand years ago to create the seal in order to prevent him from escaping the Underworld."

"But if the seal is still intact, how was he able to get out?" wondered Twilight.

"It's possible that the seal itself could be losing it's power since I'm not connected with the Elements of Harmony anymore" stated Princess Celestia. "And as Applebloom said, he had some pony do his dirty work to eliminate me before the seal finally broke."

"Lucifer must have known about it and used it as an advantage" said Applejack "But it doesn't explain how he could contact that pony to pull off the perfect crime while still imprisoned."

"Princess Celestia, did Lucifer possessed any magic abilities?" Twilight asked her mentor.

"When I fought against Lucifer that day, he was capable of performing dark magic at a scale that almost rivaled mine" Princess Celestia explains to the ponies. "But he had one weakness that turned the tide of the battle and that was the light from the sun."

"The sun...of course!" exclaimed Future Applebloom as she finally realizes something. "That's why Lucifer blocked out the sun in my time, he knew it would weaken him so if he kept Equestria in total darkness, he would remain at his most powerful peak, that's why we could never beat him..."

"Back when he was a barbarian emperor, Lucifer attacked the countries he targeted at night." informed Celestia. "I was able to use the sun to weaken him enough to seal him away."

"Do you think the reason he could contact some pony from the outside is because of the current condition of the seal?" questioned Twilight "It's likely that some of his magic could have seep out of it but still keeping Lucifer in."

"That is a possible theory, Twilight" said Princess Celestia. "But if we need all the answers to our questions, the first priority is to catch the assassin who is the only connection with Lucifer."

"The only problem is that we don't know who it could be, even Applebloom's knowledge about the assassin's identity is unknown." said Twilight.

"Girls, I think I may have an idea but I'm going to need all of your help to pull this off." the princess suggests as she begins to explain her plan to the girls, which the mane six and Future Applebloom agreed and started to work on their secret plan.

Two days have passed as it was night time at the castle, the royal guards were patrolling the area for any signs of intruders but unaware to them that a cloaked pony had already passed through them and entered the castle. Sneaking across the hallway, the assassin avoided the passing guard and heads towards the door leading to Princess Celestia's room, slowly opening the door and taking a look inside to see the princess already in bed sleeping. The pony carefully walks inside her room without trying to

make any sudden sound, once it was close enough to Celestia, the pony lift its hood to reveal a greenish-gray unicorn mare; her almond-shaped eyes were a bright shade of green and her wavy mane jet-black with a silver streak across. She takes out a small dagger with a dark purple blade from her cloak and uses her magic to lift it above the princess, the unicorn takes a deep breath and closes her eyes as she strikes the blade right down on Princess Celestia's neck but when she did, a loud squeaking sound was heard.

“Huh?”

The unicorn pulls the blade out and to her surprise, there was no blood. Confused by this, she pulls the covers off and saw that it was not the princess in bed but a life-size doll that looks exactly like Princess Celestia in every detail. The unicorn suddenly realizes that this was a trap and before she could run off, the door shuts itself and a crimson-colored collar was latched onto her neck by a passing rainbow blur. The lights were turn on and she see's the mane six along with Princess Luna and the royal guards in the room. The unicorn tries to use her magic to escape but nothing was coming out of her horn.

“Don't even try, that is an anti-magic collar used for delinquent unicorns such as yourself” stated Princess Luna. “Your magic abilities are disabled, I also hear by place you under arrest for the attempted murder of Princess Celestia.”

“But...this is impossible, how did you know what I was going to be here?” wondered the shocked unicorn.

“We were alerted by an anonymous source about the plot to kill my sister so Twilight and her friends here set up this trap in case you decided to sneak in the castle” explained Luna “Now state your name, assassin!”

The Unicorn decides to remain silence and turning her eyes away much to the dismay of Princess Luna.

“If that's how it's going to be, so be it.” said the night princess as she turns to the royal guards. “Guards, take her down to the dungeon this instant, I want Shining Armor to interrogate her tomorrow morning!”

The royal guards surrounded the unicorn who reluctantly gives herself up as there was no chance of escaping, they placed shackles on her legs and took the unnamed unicorn out of the room. Twilight looks at the dagger that the unicorn dropped on the floor and lifts it in mid-air to have a better look.

“So this is the weapon that killed Celestia in Applebloom's timeline....” said Twilight. “It doesn't look like any normal dagger.”

“Because it isn't” the group turns to see Princess Celestia with Future Applebloom by her side. “The blade on that dagger is laced with a powerful toxin called Silent Violet, one drop of this poison is enough to wipe out an entire city population.”

“Silent Violet?!” said a surprised Twilight. “But I thought the flowers that produced this poison was extinct years ago.”

"I thought so as well, since I had to wipe them out so that no pony would suffer from it's effects." stated Princess Celestia. "But apparently some manage to survive and the assassin got a hold of one."

"I'll dispose of this dagger for you, sister." Princess Luna insisted as Twilight hands her the dagger. "We can't let this fall into the wrong hooves."

Princess Celestia nods as her younger sister leaves to get rid of the poison-coated weapon, then she turns to Twilight and her friends.

"All of you have done a fantastic job preventing a great tragedy." said Princess Celestia. "But now we should get some rest for tomorrow."

The gang agreed with the princess as they left to their room to sleep for the night, even though they have successfully prevented Princess Celestia's death from the unnamed unicorn, Future Applebloom had a troublesome feeling that something wasn't right about this at all. The next day, the girls were awake and eating breakfast at the royal dining hall but the future mare just couldn't shake that unease feeling she had since last night, all she could think about was what was going to happen next now that Celestia is alive. Applejack notices her sister wasn't eating and was a bit concerned about her.

"Hey sis, something bugging you?" Applejack asked. "You haven't touched your plate."

"Oh...I'm just not that hungry right now, you can have mine if you like." said Future Applebloom as she gives her plate to Applejack.

"Suit yourself." said Applejack as she wolfs down on Future Applebloom's plate.

Just then, the girls see Shining Armor coming into the dining hall.

"Shining Armor" said Twilight as she happily goes to greet her BBBFF (short for Big Brother Best Friend Forever) "It's good to see you again."

"Hey little sis." smiled Shining Armor. "It's great to see you again too."

"Princess Celestia told me that you went to interrogate that unicorn, have you made any progress?" asked Twilight.

"I did but she refuses to say anything to me." Shining Armor informs her. "She won't tell me her name even after I threaten her that she would receive a life sentence."

"That unicorn sounds more stubborn than a mule." said Applejack.

"How do we suppose to get her to talk than?" wondered Fluttershy.

"I say we make her talk by force." suggested Rainbow Dash.

"I don't think that would work that way, Rainbow Dash" said Twilight "Beside she could be hiding something from us."

"We know she has connections with Lucifer." said Rarity

"There has to be a way to convince her to spill the beans." said Pinkie Pie.

"I would like to have a word with her" suggested Future Applebloom as every pony turns to her. "I know of a way to get her to talk."

"You must be the pony that Princess Celestia told me about, the one who came from the future" said Shining Armor. "Applebloom, was it?"

"Yes" Future Applebloom nodded. "If you let me talk to her, I could get her to tell us about why she tried to kill the princess."

"Hmmm I guess it's worth a shot, after all you did prevent the assassination attempt." said Shining Armor. "Alright, I'll take you to the dungeon to talk with her."

"I'm going too." insisted Twilight.

"Me too." Rainbow Dash includes herself.

"We might as well go along with you, sis." said Applejack.

"Okay but just so you know, the dungeon is not a place for the faint of heart" Shining Armor informs them. "So don't stay there for too long."

With that, Shining Armor and the gang leaves the dining hall with Pinkie Pie dragging the scared Fluttershy from behind. Soon after, they arrived at the dungeon with Shining Armor leading them, they came across a hall way of prison cells filled with criminals and the worst kinds of ponies. A few of the inmates holler and whistled at the girls passing by, which causes Fluttershy to get even more nervous being at a place like this but they soon stopped when Rainbow Dash threatens to kick their sorry asses if they whistled at them one more time. Shining Armor stops at the only prison cell that was away from the populated area.

"This is where we keep her in" said Shining Armor "Normally this cell is made for the most dangerous types of prisoners but since her crime is a special case, it's best that we keep her in here for her own safety."

Shining Armor's horn glows as he unlocks the doors and opens it, there they saw the sulking unicorn sitting by the corner of the room with shackles on all four of her legs. She lifts her head up and see's the girls coming inside.

"I'll give you an hour to get her to talk." said Shining Armor as he closes the doors.

"Oh my, I don't like being at this awful place at all." Fluttershy stuttered.

"Don't worry, you saw me how I handled those prisoners and besides, she won't do anything to us as

long as she has that collar on." said Rainbow Dash.

"Well...I guess you're right." said Fluttershy feeling a little comfortable.

The unicorn silently stares at the group as Future Applebloom goes to her and sits down to talk.

"Okay here's the deal; We all know that not only you tried to kill Princess Celestia but you also have connections with the one who told you to kill her." said Future Applebloom. "Does Lucifer ring a bell to you?"

The name brought the attention to the unicorn but she still remains quiet.

"We like to know how you were able to contact with Lucifer because he's still sealed in the Underworld, If your still wondering why your assassination attempt failed, well it is because of me" informed Future Applebloom. "I was the one who told Princess Celestia that you were coming."

"What?!" the unicorn breaks her silence. "It was you? but how did you-"

"Know about this? Believe it or not, I came from ten years from the future after you successfully killed Princess Celestia, that act alone caused a terrible event to happen to the entire country of Equestria six months after." said Future Applebloom

"A terrible event?" questioned the unicorn, now looking a bit concerned.

"Lucifer was able to break free from the Underworld and led an army to invade Equestria, first by destroying Ponyville, then Canterlot and the rest of the country soon followed." Future Applebloom continued. "No one was able to stop him, not Princess Luna, Princess Cadance or even these girls here who hold the Elements of Harmony. With Princess Celestia gone, Equestria as we known was cast into eternal darkness."

The unicorn quietly listens to the future mare's story.

"I've seen what Lucifer did in my time; he massacred thousands of ponies, many fillies didn't have a chance to grow up with their parents because they're dead, none of them can led a peaceful life and the ponies that survived ended up becoming slaves for his own sick amusement. One of his minions tore a part of my ear off when I was a filly, my sister saved me in time but she and her friends were later killed by Lucifer." explained Future Applebloom who kneels down close to the imprisoned unicorn, expressing more sorrow as she continues on with her story.

"I had to watch my own sister die right before my very eyes, I lost my family and my home that day. I didn't get to grow up with them because they're gone, my surviving friends also lost their families as well and they were never the same after that." Future Applebloom sadly tells her. "So please for the sake of Equestria....tell us why you did this?"

The unicorn was brought to tears after hearing Future Applebloom's sad story, she would never thought her actions would affect the lives of every pony in Equestria. Now riddled with a mountain of guilt, the unicorn looks at Future Applebloom with remorse in her eyes.

"Alright.....I'll tell you." the unicorn was now ready to tell the girls. "My name is Emerald Gemstone and the reason why I tried to kill Princess Celestia....is because Lucifer forced me against my will."

To Be Continued

## 4 - Chapter 5

"Against your will?" questioned Twilight.

"That's right..." Emerald replied.

"Okay I'm confused now" said Rainbow Dash. "You try to kill Princess Celestia yet it wasn't in your intentions to do so?"

"Like I said earlier, I was forced into doing this." the imprisoned unicorn reminded her.

"Can you explain to us why Lucifer's making you do this, if that's alright with you?" asked Fluttershy.

"This is important, Emerald" said Future Applebloom. "We want to know how you were able to meet with Lucifer."

"I'm ready to tell you everything but just so you'll know, it's a long story." Emerald informs them.

"Ooh I like long stories." said Pinkie Pie as she mysteriously takes out a bag of popcorn and eats a hoof-full.

Emerald takes a deep breath and starts to tell the gang her story. "It all began years ago at the town of Trottingham; where I grew up with my mother Garnet Gemstone, my father left us when I was just a foal so it was just me and her living together."

### ***\*Flashback\****

Emerald as a filly was drawing something on a piece of paper, just as a bluish-grey unicorn mare comes in the room, with clear-blue eyes, a wavy mane similar to Emerald's only silver with a black streak across and a cutie mark that resembles three golden rings. Emerald looks over to her mother just as she finishes her drawing to show her; it was herself and Garnet with the background filled with flowers. Garnet smiles at the drawing and the two hugged each other. The scene changes to where Garnet was using her magic to create a silver necklace with three sapphire gems, Emerald helps by applying polish to give them a sparkling shine, they sold the necklace to a wealthy customer who gave them a bag filled with golden bits in return.

*"My mother worked as a jewelry designer, since she designs high-quality jewelry like necklaces, tiaras and such, our home served as a jewelry shop." Emerald explained "The money she earned also paid my tuition to a school I went to study magic."*

At school, Emerald was in class taking notes but as the teacher had her back turned, a paper ball hits her head. She looks back to see two snobby fillies snickering at her, Emerald growled a little before going back to taking notes.

*"Even though I was doing good in that school, unfortunately I never made any friends there. Most of the ponies there were rich and snobby, I was the only "poor" pony there."*

Later after school, Emerald arrived back home with her head hanging down, her mother was working on a bracelet when she notices Emerald coming inside but seeing her depressed like that, Garnet puts the bracelet down and goes to her.

"Emerald dear, what's a matter?" asked Garnet.

"It's those ponies at that school" Emerald sadly tells her mother. "They were picking on me because I'm not wealthy like they are."

"That's just awful" said Garnet. "you shouldn't let them get to you, Emerald."

"Mom, I know you want me to improve my magic but how could I do that when I can't make any friends?" worried Emerald.

"Listen, I'm sure you'll find some ponies to make friends with" Garnet comforts her. "It just takes time, that's all."

"You sure?" asked Emerald.

"I'm sure of it, Emerald." Garnet smiles and hugs her.

*"My mother knew how to make me feel better when I'm down, even if we weren't rich, we still had each other. Weeks passed by and I still had no luck getting along with the other ponies, I learned that I didn't need to make friends with a bunch of shallow ponies. Improving my magic skills was my top priority and I got my mother to support me...but one day after I came home from school..."*

"Mom, Mom, guess what?" Emerald came inside with her report card, looking really happy. "I passed my first test and I got a perfect score!"

"That's great, honey" Garnet smiled as she looks at her daughter's report card. "I'm so proud of you, Emerald. Tell you what, I'll make us something special for this occasion, does that sound good?"

"Oh yes!" said the excited filly.

Garnet leaves to the kitchen as Emerald held onto her report card with glee, but all of a sudden she hears the sound of a few plates breaking along with a loud thud coming from the kitchen, followed by utter silence.

"Mom?" Emerald waited for a response but there was none. Now worried, Emerald ran to the kitchen to see her mother laying motionless on the floor with pieces of dinner plates scattered across the floor.

"MOM!" she ran to Garnet's side and shakes her in an attempt to wake her up but it was no use, something was wrong with her mother as the filly could do nothing but cry. Soon after, Garnet was taken to the hospital where Emerald waited anxiously in the other room, she saw the doctor coming towards



her and judging by the grim expression on his face, it was not looking good at all.

"Emerald, I'm afraid I have some bad news about your mother..." The doctor tells her.

"W-whats wrong with my mom?" asked the worried filly.

*"The doctor told me that my mother had been diagnosed with leukemia; lately I've noticed how tired and weary she had become, at first I thought it was because she was working too hard but I never thought the cause of it was from an illness. She must have had it for some time and was unaware of the symptoms. My heart sank when he told me that her illness was at an advanced stage and my mother wouldn't have much time to live."*

Emerald breaks down crying upon hearing the grim news as a nurse tries to comfort the sobbing filly. The scene fades back to their home where Emerald was taking care of a bedridden Garnet; who looked very sickly and pale. The filly gives her mother a bowl of soup for her to eat, Garnet tries to lift the spoon up using her magic but it stops in mid air and drops down into the bowl, splashing some of the soup on herself. Emerald uses a napkin to clean up and eventually helps feed her sick mother.

*"Because of my mother's condition, she couldn't make new jewelry so we had to sell what little jewelry we had left before she became ill and use the money for her treatments. It was hard for me to see mother like this, it became even harder at school as well...."*

Emerald was silently strolling across the hallway when she walked pass the two snobby unicorns who were making life in school for her miserable, they stop talking when they noticed the depressed filly.

"Hey it's the poor pony." whispered the amber-colored filly with the silky golden-blond mane.

"I don't know why she's even in this school, it surprises me that let some peasant like her attend here." whispered back the light-purple filly with the magenta mane styled in a ponytail.

"Tell me about it" said the amber filly. "Oh! You wanna know what I heard, that filly's mother who runs that jewelry store downtown came down with a severe illness so she can't make any more."

Emerald's stops at her tracks when she hears the two mentioning about her mother.

"If you ask me, I wouldn't wear any of those cheaply-made piece of crap she makes" snickered the light purple filly. "I would throw those in the trash if my dad ever tries to buy any from that place, you could say her becoming sick was the best thing to happen in Trottingham."

Their words struck a nerve deep into the green unicorn, her rage was building up like a spark igniting a forest fire. For them to talk about her mother like that especially when she's sick, it was like kicking mud to her face. Emerald turns around and glares fiercely at the two fillies.

"Take...that...back!" growled the angered unicorn.

"Oh what will you do? Run back to your mommy and tell on us, oh wait, she can't!" The light-purple unicorn laughed at Emerald; who finally snaps and suddenly tackles her tormenter to the floor.

"DON'T YOU EVER TALK ABOUT MY MOTHER LIKE THAT!!!" roared Emerald as she pummels the arrogant unicorn, with each strike causing significant damage to her face. The amber unicorn tries to pull the enraged filly off her friend but Emerald shoots a small magical blast from her horn that struck her in the eye.

"MY EYE!" screamed the amber filly as she held to her injured eye.

Emerald continues to beat down on the light purple unicorn until her hoof struck the horn with enough force to break the tip of it right off.

"MY HORN!" cried the unicorn when she see's her chipped horn on the floor. "YOU BROKE MY HORN!"

Emerald snaps out of her fury state and backs away from the injured unicorn; her face now riddled with bruises and sobbing over her broken horn. Realizing what she had done, Emerald ran away from her frightened tormenters and hid herself in the fillies restroom, where the ashamed filly curls herself in the corner. Later that day, Emerald left the school as she sadly walks back to her home, the sky darkens and rain poured down on the dishearten pony.

*"I was expelled from school because of that incident. I didn't had the courage to tell my sick mother what happen that day, it would only break her heart to know that I was kicked out for starting a fight that resulted in breaking the horn of another filly. The way that they were talking about her really pissed me off, what heartless pony talks about one's mother especially when she's terminally ill? At that time, I was at my lowest point in my life..."*

Once Emerald arrives back at home, the depressed filly came inside dripping wet from the rain so she heads to the bathroom to dry herself off. She goes to her mother's room to check on her only to see her sound asleep in bed, thinking about it, it was best not to wake her up especially at a time like this so she leaves to her own room. Emerald closes the door upon entering and drops to the floor as she cries her heart out; the thought of her hopes and dreams were now shattered and on top of that, her mother was going to die soon. Nothing could possibly get any worse...

"As I lay in my room knowing that my life was going to be over, then out of the blue..."

Suddenly the lights in the room shuts off, the crying filly lifts her head up to see shadows creeping around her room. Alarmed and filled with fear, Emerald quickly ran towards the door but by now, the shadows have already enveloped her room, she cannot escape and finds herself lost in total darkness.

"Mom! MOM!!!!!" screamed Emerald.

"She cannot hear you, little one..." A mysterious voice echoes from the darkness.

"W-who's there?!" asked the frighten filly, looking around frantically to know where the voice came from.

Out of nowhere, she saw a pair of gigantic, glowing yellow eyes with slit pupils appearing from the shadows, followed by a sadistic-looking grin with rows of sharp, jagged teeth. Emerald screams and falls back seeing the horrifying face staring down at the terror-stricken filly.

"It's just you and me, Emerald." the face spoke to her.

"W-who...w-what are y-you?" Emerald stammers. "and how did you know my name?"

"If you must know, I am called Lucifer" the being introduced himself "and how do I know your name? the answer is simple; I've been watching you for some time now."

"Y-you have?" questioned the frighten filly.

"Oh yes, I can sense sadness and despair from you" Lucifer explains as his face reappears behind Emerald, startling her. "Your dreams of learning magic trampled over and worse of all, your poor mother's life hanging by a thread. It's really a shame to happen to a pony such as yourself, full of potential. That is the reason why I am here to make you an offer."

"An offer? Emerald asked, interested in what kind of offer it was.

"I have the power to make your wish come true, like say getting rid of the illness that has stricken your mother" Lucifer stated. "It would be like she never had it in the first place."

"You would do that?" said the surprised filly.

"All you have to do is sign your name on this little contract here" said Lucifer as a scroll appears in front of Emerald and opens itself, along side was a black quill pen. "But before you do, there's something you should know; after you sign your name on the contract, you'll have to do something for me in return."

"Like what?" Emerald asked curiously.

"That I cannot tell as you are too young" stated Lucifer. "But I will return in ten years when you are mature enough to perform this task, that way you can enjoy your restored life with your mother and hopefully your magic abilities will be stronger by then. So do we have a deal?"

Emerald stood silently as she thinks about this long and hard; her life was already going down the drain and her mother was near death's door, she couldn't let that happen to her. Her horn glows as she lifts the quill pen and signs her name on the dotted line. The contract rolls itself up as it and the quill disappears.

"You made a wise decision, Emerald." grinned Lucifer "I'll see you again in ten years..."

His face soon fades back into the darkness with his haunted laughter echoing through the young unicorn's mind. Then suddenly Emerald wakes up and finds herself in bed, she looks over to the window and see's that morning sun had already rise.

"How did I get in bed?" wondered the confused filly. "Was it all a dream?"

As Emerald gets out of bed, she hears the sound of whistling coming from the kitchen. She thought to herself "*It couldn't be...*" as shes run out of her room and to the kitchen. To Emerald's surprise, she saw

her mother; now looking healthy and energetic as she whistles and making breakfast. Emerald was left speechless as Garnet notices her at the door way.

"Morning, Emerald" greeted Garnet as she makes a plate of pancakes for her daughter. "Care for some pancakes?"

"Mom...are you okay?" asked the surprised filly.

"Of course I am, dear" Garnet replied "to be quite honest; I've never felt this healthy before, it's almost like if I was never sick to begin with, strange is it?"

A tear ran down across Emerald's cheek but this time, it was from joy as the filly smiles for the first time in a while. She goes to her mother's side and hugs her as tightly as she can. Garnet was a little surprised to see her little girl crying and embracing her as if she has missed her for a long time, without asking any further questions, Garnet hugs her back.

*"After I signed that contract, the illness that my mother was suffering from had vanished. The doctor was completely baffled when they did another check up to find out she was no longer sick, my mother got me reinstated back to the school after learning the truth about my expulsion. The two fillies who bullied me were forced to apologize to me and they got punished instead. From then on, I felt like my life was going to be better this way."*

### **Ten years later.**

Emerald; now a grown mare with a cutie mark that resembles a book of spells, was working at a local library, she was busy stacking the shelves with books. Just as she finishes, Emerald spots a young colt trying to reach up the shelves for a book but it was out of his reach. She levitates the book down for the colt who happily takes it and thanks her as he leaves.

*"After I graduated, me and my mother moved to Manehattan where I worked as a librarian. I love to read books about magic spells which I practice on my spare time. Everything seemed normal for a while but a week before then, I had an unexpected visit..."*

At night, Emerald was working late at the library signing some important documents, just as she could finish with the last one, all of the lights in the library suddenly shuts off. Emerald uses a light spell from her horn only to see the entire place covered in pitch-black darkness; a familiar scene that the unicorn would never thought to see again. She turns only to see the huge golden eyes staring down at her.

"Hello Emerald" greeted Lucifer as his sickening smile appears. "Long time, no see."

"You...I remembered you!" Emerald stuttered. "Y-you're Lucifer!"

"Oh good, I was getting a little worried that you've might have forgotten about me" He said "After all, it has been ten years since we've last met."

"Wait...it hasn't been ten years already, has it?" questioned Emerald.

"I'm afraid so, Emerald" informed Lucifer "And since that you've have grown so much, now is the time to repay me."

"And..h-how would I repay you?" asked Emerald, worried about what it could be.

"As part of the deal to save your mother's life" the gigantic face leans closer towards Emerald as he whispered in her ear. "the task I want you to do...is to slain Princess Celestia."

"WHAT?!" gasped the horrified unicorn. "You want me to murder the ruler of Equestria?"

"That's correct." said Lucifer. "A deal's a deal after all, so will you take this task?"

"No...." Emerald answered coldly. "I won't do it, I refuse to perform such a horrible act for you!"

Suddenly, Emerald felt her neck being grabbed by a hand coming out from the shadows with a vice-like grip, lifting the struggling mare off the floor and brought her closer to the monster's face.

"I like to remind you that when you signed that contract years ago, you are obligated to follow what order I give you when I return. In other words; **I OWN YOU!!!**" Lucifer yells at Emerald with malice in his voice.

"B-but this wasn't part of the deal" protested Emerald. "you never said that I would have to kill any pony for this, especially if it's Princess Celestia herself!"

"As long as I have that contract, you will do as I tell you and if you refuse to follow my orders; I will take your mother back to the Underworld with me!" Lucifer threatens Emerald who was now paralyzed with fear. "If that happens, I'll make sure that she will suffer a slow, agonizing torture that not even death would end her misery!"

Lucifer drops the terrified unicorn as the shadows around her began to fade away.

"You have about seven days to kill Princess Celestia or your mother will be mine for all eternity..." warned Lucifer as he disappears within the shadows, leaving Emerald completely devastated about his ultimatum.

*"I was left with no choice but to follow Lucifer's orders, starting with finding a way to kill Princess Celestia. While exploring at an orchid field outside from Manehattan, I've made a stunning discovery of finding a couple of Silent Violets growing in a narrow crevice. I thought these flowers were eradicated by the princess after a terrible tragedy that claimed half the population of a small town years ago; everypony thought that it was caused by a mysterious plague but they later found out it was caused by the flowers that grew into their water supply. The worse part of it was that the poison of the Silent Violets is untraceable, so I took some of the flowers back home with me where I laced the blade of a dagger with it's poison, making it a perfect weapon for an assassin. This was not an easy task for me to do and to be honest; I hated every minute of it...But I hated the thought of losing my mother again, it was either the princess or her..."*

The flashback ends with Emerald holding the poisonous blade and the scene fades back to the dungeon

where she is now locked up.

"And that's the end of my story..." Emerald finishes her confession to the ponies.

"That's...one of the saddest stories I ever heard." said Twilight, who felt pity for the tragic prisoner.

"You poor dear..." said a stunned Fluttershy "we never knew that you've had such a rough life."

"I guess we jumped to conclusions a little..." Rainbow Dash said, feeling sorry for Emerald. "We're really sorry that we believed you were some heartless assassin."

"Same goes for the rest of us." Applejack sadly agreed along with Rarity and a crying Pinkie Pie.

"No, I should be the one who's sorry, for bringing the lives of every pony in danger because of my actions" said Emerald who started to cry. "I've made a terrible mistake in the past and now my mother is going to suffer because of me..."

"Don't blame yourself for this, Emerald." Future Applebloom tries to comfort the sobbing unicorn. "You were only a filly at the time and you had no idea that Lucifer was taking advantage of your misfortunes."

"You're from the future, right? I want to know what happened to me after I successfully killed Princess Celestia?" Emerald asked her.

"You won't like what I'm about to tell you but after you killed the princess, Lucifer disposed of you and possibly your mother as well when he decided that you were no longer any use for him." explained Future Applebloom.

"What....." uttered the shocked unicorn in disbelief. "H-he used me from the very beginning?"

"I'm afraid so, Emerald." Future Applebloom admitted "I'm sorry you had to hear that but it's the truth."

For a brief moment, Emerald silently held her head down. She never imagined that Lucifer had been using her as a pawn for his evil scheme this entire time, Emerald finally lifts her head up and looks at the gang with teary eyes.

"Can you ponies do something for me?" requested Emerald.

"What is it?" asked Twilight.

"It has been four days since I last spoke with Lucifer, I want you all to go to Manehattan and make sure that he doesn't get to my mother." Emerald pleaded with them. "I don't want her to suffer because of my mistake."

"We'll do it for you, Emerald." replied Twilight "and thank you for telling us every you know about Lucifer."

"It's the least I can do..." said Emerald.

Then they heard the prison cell doors opening as they saw Shining Armor standing by.

"Time's up." Shining Armor informed the mares.

"Thanks again, Emerald" said Future Applebloom. "We'll make sure your mother is safe and sound."

Emerald silently nods in response as she watches the gang exiting her cell, leaving the isolated unicorn by herself once the cell doors were shut.

*"Mother...I hope to Celestia that monster doesn't get to you in time."* Emerald said to herself as a tear drops to the floor.

To Be Continue.

## 5 - Chapter 6

The gang follows Shining Armor out of the dungeon after their interrogation with Emerald; learning that in the past, she made a deal with Lucifer as a filly in order to save her mother from a terminal illness but in return, Emerald was forced into assassinating Princess Celestia when Lucifer threatens to take her mother with him to the Underworld if she refuses. Once they were finally outside and away from the taunting prisoners much to the relief of Fluttershy, the royal guard captain closes the door behind and turn his attention to the mares.

"Did you get the prisoner to talk?" asked Shining Armor.

"Yes, we have" Future Applebloom replied. "She told us everything we wanted to know, from who she is and why she tried to kill the princess."

"What did she say?" He asked again.

"Her name is Emerald Gemstone; a librarian from Manehattan who as a filly signed a contract with Lucifer that in return of curing her severely ill mother, she had to kill Princess Celestia as part of the deal." Future Applebloom explained to the royal guard captain.

"But she had no idea that Lucifer tricked her into doing this" Twilight added "When she signed the contract, Lucifer didn't tell her what he wanted her to do for him until he returned to her years later."

"Yeah, it wasn't her fault" said Applejack "Can't you just let Emerald out?"

"Hmmm that is a plausible story but because of last night's incident, I cannot let her out of the dungeon." stated Shining Armor.

"What? Why not?" Twilight asked.

"Twilight, she broke into the castle and tried to murder Princess Celestia" Shining Armor informed his sister "Not to mention she had a deadly weapon in her possession, even if she was forced into doing it as you said, this alone is a very serious crime."

"So there's really nothing you can do?" worried Twilight.

"I'm sorry but this is up to the high counsel now" said Shining Armor "They have already plan on having her trial in a few days."

"Wait a minute, can't Princess Celestia do something about this?" Rainbow Dash protested.

"She can't because the high counsel wants this to be a fair, unbiased trial so its pretty much out of her jurisdiction" Shining Armor explained "Plus they want to make an example of Emerald, unless there were some pony to testify on her behalf, she could spend the rest of her life in prison."



"What if we bring Emerald's mother here?" suggested Rarity "That way, she could at least speak for her at the trial."

"That's a great idea, Rarity" said Twilight before turning to her brother "Emerald requested us to bring her mother here to safety, she feared that Lucifer would get to her if she failed to assassinate the princess."

"If you want to prove her innocence, I suggest you hurry before the day of the trial" suggested Shining Armor "I have to get back to guard duty. Good luck Twilight, I'll inform Princess Celestia about this new information."

The royal guard captain leaves to go back to his post while the gang heads out to the train station, booking the one heading to Manehattan, the girls waited patiently in their room as the train take them towards their destination. Applejack remembered the time that as a filly, she lived in Manehattan with her relatives but had a hard time fitting in with their upper class lifestyle and was homesick. Thanks to the sonic rainboom that was caused by Rainbow Dash, Applejack witnessed a rainbow that stretch across the sky from Manehattan to Ponyville, convincing her that she truly belongs to her home at Sweet Apple Acres and thus earning her cutie mark when she returned. The gang quietly pondered about this whole situation, like how to explain to Emerald's mother that her daughter is being put on trial for the attempted murder of Princess Celestia. Pinkie Pie's mind however was at a much different place, she was thinking about what flavor frosting she would like to try out at Manehattan.

"Say, sis." Applejack said to her sister, breaking the silence in the room.

"Yes?" replied Future Applebloom.

"There's something I've been meaning to ask you about, like what's going to happen to you If we succeed in thwarting Lucifer's plan?" asked Applejack.

"Now that you mention it, there is something I've never got to tell you all" said Future Applebloom with a grim expression.

"The spell that we use to open the portal to the past, the drawback for it is that once some pony gets through, they cannot return back to their own time line....which means that if we do succeed, there's a chance that I may disappear from existence."

"What?!" Applejack exclaimed "Now what in the world would make you think that?"

"Applebloom may have a point, Applejack" said Twilight. "Has any pony ever heard of the butterfly effect?"

"No but I like the idea that it involves butterflies." said Fluttershy.

"Does it involve a bunch of butterflies doing some silly effects?" asked Pinkie Pie.

"No Pinkie Pie, the butterfly effect is a theory that a single occurrence, no matter how small, can

drastically change it's outcome." Twilight explains to her friends.

"What?" a confused Pinkie Pie tilts her head.

"Let me put it in a way that you'll understand; if somepony goes back to the past where you are thinking about throwing a party and that pony convinces you to not to throw a party, then there won't be any party to begin with, thus missing out all of the fun and games." Twilight explained to her pink friend.

"Ohh I get it now!" Pinkie Pie somewhat gets what Twilight told her. "But why would any pony not want me to throw a party?"

"What Twilight is trying to say is that if we prevented Lucifer from taking over Equestria, the future in my time will change and I would disappear as a result." Future Applebloom informs them. "But that hasn't happen yet since we prevented Princess Celestia from being killed and that is what's bothering me."

"Hold on, your saying that even though we've stopped the assassination, it wasn't enough?" Said Rainbow Dash.

"I'm afraid so, Rainbow Dash" Future Applebloom replied. "Even if Princess Celestia is still alive now, there's no telling what would happen next. We already changed the course of history, so the worse case scenario would be if the seal that kept Lucifer at bay breaks much earlier than six months."

"Equestria might be doomed if that happens..." Fluttershy stammered.

"Not as long as we're still alive and breathing" Rainbow Dash countered. "Besides we still need to clear Emerald's name once we find her mom."

"Finding Ms. Gemstone won't be the only hard part when we arrive in Manehattan" said Rarity "Can you just imagine how she'll react when we tell her what her daughter has done?"

"She'll be very heart broken..." uttered Fluttershy.

"Ms. Gemstone deserves to know the truth" said Future Applebloom "After all, Emerald is counting on us to make sure she is safe from Lucifer."

The next day, the train arrives at Manehattan where the gang sets out to find Emerald's mother. Due to the size of this cosmopolitan city, the gang had to split up to find where she lives. Some of them were asking the civilians about Ms. Gemstone while others got distracted by sight seeing; like Pinkie Pie had her face pressing against the window of a bakery shop watching the baker applying frosting to a large but rather delicious looking cake. Applejack see's her drooling on the window as she grabs her fluffy tail and pulls her away.

"Come on Pinkie Pie, this is no time for sight seeing." muffled Applejack.

"Awwwwwww...." groaned the disappointed pink pony. "I wanted to taste that cake."

After searching high and low, the gang gathered around at the nearest water fountain.

"Any luck, girls?" Twilight asks her friends.

"Nope, sorry Twilight." replied Applejack. "I had to keep Pinkie Pie from raiding the bakery."

"But their cakes looks so delicious." whined Pinkie Pie.

"I couldn't find anything" said Rainbow Dash "There's so many building that I can't tell which one is the right place."

"Sorry dear, I wasn't that much help" Rarity admitted. "They have so many beautiful dresses that I couldn't resist."

"I talked to a couple of ponies for any information but none of them could give me an answer." said Future Applebloom.

"Ummm girls...." Fluttershy suddenly spoke. "I did saw a jewelry store a couple blocks away that says "Gemstone's Jewelries", I think that could be it."

"Can you show us the way, Fluttershy?" asked Future Applebloom.

The timid pegasus nods as she leads the group to a small building with the sign that reads "Gemstone's Jewelries". Upon entering the store, there was no pony at the counter but Rarity's eyes were instantly glued to the wide selection of fine-crafted jewelries.

"Oh what fascinating details, I could really use some of these for my dresses" said the amused unicorn as she gazed at a golden tiara with diamonds on it. "Do you think this would go with a pink gown or a blue gown?"

"Save it for when Equestria isn't hanging in the balance, Rarity" said Rainbow Dash. "How come there's no pony is at the counter?"

Twilight notices the desk bell on the counter and rings it.

"Hello?" Twilight called out but doesn't get a response, she rings the bell again. "Is any pony there?"

"Let me do this, Twilight" Pinkie Pie insisted as she rings the desk bell a bunch of times in the tune of one of her songs. "You-stomp-your-whole-self-in, You-stomp-your-whole-self-out, You-stomp-your-whole-self-in-and-you-stomp-yourself-about. You-do-the-Pony-Pokey-and-you-give-a-little shout-"

"Hold on, I'm coming!" a voice shouted out from the back room.

"That's-what-I'm-talking-about!" Pinkie Pie finishes with a big smile on her face as Twilight facehoof.

The door to the back room opens as Garnet Gemstone steps out while polishing an opal pendant, she sets it down and goes to the counter where she see's the seven mares in her store.

"Sorry about that, I was finishing with this brand new pendant I just crafted." Garnet explained.

"Are you Garnet Gemstone by any chance?" asked Twilight.

"Why yes, I am" Garnet replied. "Is there anything I can help you ladies with? If you need something for a special occasion, I would highly recommend the- "

"Actually we're not really here for jewelry" Twilight interrupts her. "We're here on a different matter, it involves your daughter Emerald."

"Are you friends of her?" Garnet wondered.

"Not exactly, we met her a couple of days ago" said Applejack. "If you don't mind us asking, can you tell us a bit about Emerald?"

"My daughter is a kind mare, a brilliant one to be exact but she can be a little....reclusive at times" Garnet explains as she sadly admits at the last part. "The poor dear had a really rough childhood when we lived in Trottingham, the ponies at the school she went to constantly picked on her, which was why she never made any friends. I thought that if we moved here in Manehattan, she would have at least meet some pony or two to hang out with but she preferred to spend her time at the library instead."

"When was the last time you talked with her?" asked Twilight.

"It was five days ago, she told me that she was going to Canterlot for an important business meeting, why do you a-" Garnet stops when she saw the dire look on their faces, the older unicorn knew something was wrong. "Wait...did something bad happen to Emerald?"

"Ms. Gemstone..." Twilight goes to Garnet as she's about to give her the bad news "This maybe hard for you to believe but your daughter didn't go to Canterlot for a business meeting, the truth is she is currently imprisoned there."

"What?!" said the stunned unicorn. "What did Emerald do to get locked up for?"

"A few days ago, Emerald broke into the royal castle and tried to assassinate Princess Celestia but she was caught." Twilight sadly explained. "They're going to have a trial for her in a few days."

"No...My daughter is not an assassin!" Garnet cried in disbelief. "She would never think about taking another pony's life, let alone the princess of Equestria!"

"I'm sorry you had to find out this way but there's a reason why she did this" said Twilight as she tries to calm the distraught unicorn. "We spoke with her the other day and she told us why she tried to kill the princess, it was because she was forced into this against her will."

"Forced to?" Garnet wondered. "Who would do this to Emerald, who would forced my daughter into committing a heinous crime?"

"Do you remember ten years ago when you came down with a severe illness?" asked Future Applebloom.

"Yes, the doctors told me I wouldn't have much time to live but one day I woke up completely healthy, they said that they must have made a mistake when they checked on me and thought I had a fever instead." said Garnet.

"That wasn't a misdiagnose, Ms Gemstone" said Future Applebloom "You did had a terminal illness but it was your daughter that cured you."

"But how was she able to do that?" asked Garnet.

"When your daughter was a filly at the time, she met with an evil entity named Lucifer; who took notice of her misery when she knew that you were going to succumb to your illness. He tricked Emerald into signing a contract with him that in exchange of your health, he wanted her to kill Princess Celestia in return" Future Applebloom explains to Garnet. "And the worst part is that if she fails to complete the task, Lucifer will take you away from your daughter and torture you for all eternity in the Underworld."

Speechless, Garnet sat down quietly to let this shocking discovery sink in, she never thought that her daughter would keep a secret such as this from her and now her life is on the line.

"I know this is a big shock for you but your daughter really cares about you, she couldn't bear the thought of losing you when you were sick and she's worried that Lucifer will get to you" said Future Applebloom. "Emerald didn't want any of this to happen and we promise her that we will take you to a safe place where Lucifer cannot get to you."

"If I agree to come with you, can I at least see my daughter when we get to Canterlot?" Garnet requested.

"We will, Ms. Gemstone." replied Future Applebloom. "The trial won't start until two days so we should head to the train station and back to Canterlot, we can't afford to waste any time."

"Ms. Gemstone, we want you to speak on Emerald's behalf on the day of her trial, if they find her guilty, she could spend the rest of her life in prison." Twilight informs the middle-aged unicorn.

"I'll do everything I can to clear my daughter's name" said Garnet. "I can't let her be taken away from me as she doesn't want the same thing happen to me."

"Well what are we waiting for, let's go back to Canterlot." said Rainbow Dash.

The others agreed with the rainbow-mane pegasus as they exit the store but not before Garnet closes and locks the shop up. She follows the gang back to the train station as they booked a trip back to Canterlot and while on their way, Future Applebloom tells Garnet of her life story in the dystopia future, all because of one terrible act that the lord of the Underworld forced Emerald to do.

"Dear Celestia, I'm sorry you had to go through a terrible ordeal" said Garnet. "If only I had known what Emerald was getting herself into, I could have talked her out of this. To think that the future of Equestria

would fallen because of me..."

"Don't blame yourself Ms. Gemstone, this is all Lucifer's doing and he used Emerald as his personal pawn from day one." Future Applebloom reminded her.

"But do you really think that Lucifer could be stopped once and for all?" worried Garnet.

"If it means restoring Equestria to its former glory rather than turning into the nightmarish hell in my time, I want to make that a reality." said Future Applebloom as she closes her eyes. "Right now, we are the only ponies who will change its future for the better..."

### ***\*Future Applebloom's Flashback\****

Applebloom as a filly was strolling across the ruins of Ponyville, a year had pass since its destruction along with Equestria, her injured ear had healed since then but was left disfigured. Applebloom still couldn't get over the fact that the once beautiful village was reduced to an empty town, as if she was still in a bad dream that the filly wished she could wake up from but would never go away. The filly arrives at the destroyed remains of her home at Sweet Apple Acres, there she stops near the three marked graves of where her family was buried; her grandmother Granny Smith, her older brother Big McIntosh and her older sister Applejack. Gazing at their graves in silence, the memories of their deaths still haunted the poor filly, especially when she witnessed her sister's demise at the hands of Lucifer. She could never forget the image of Applejack being alive for a short time after she was burnt beyond recognition, nor her last words to Applebloom was for her to run as far away as possible. It made her sick to her stomach every time she remembers that day, her eyes quickly fill with tears as Applebloom starts to cry over the lost of her family.

"Applebloom." said a familiar voice from behind.

Applebloom lifts up her head and turns around to see Zecora standing behind her.

"Have you been following me, Zecora?" asked the crying filly.

"Spike told me that you were going alone, you know that I couldn't let you go out here on your own." said Zecora.

"I know but I just wanted to visit my family..." said Applebloom as she tried to hold back her tears. "It's been a year since ponyville was destroyed, every pony I knew and cared about are gone..."

"You still have your friends Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo, they share the same pain that you are still going through." said Zecora.

"Zecora...why did this had to happen?" Applebloom tearfully pleads to the zebra for an answer. "It's just not fair that Applejack, her friends and my family had to die like this...I hate that monster Lucifer, none of this would have happen if he had never existed in the first place!"

The filly cries her heart out over the grim reality of this horrid world, knowing that her older sister and her family will never be there with Applebloom to watch her grow up or experience the joys of life. The zebra

enchantress places her front leg around the heart-broken filly, comforting her as she let Applebloom mourns over the lost of her family.

"One of these days, I will make sure that Lucifer will pay for his crimes..." sobbed Applebloom.

The flashback ends with Future Applebloom standing quietly alone with her thoughts.

"Applebloom, Applebloom" said Rainbow Dash trying to get her attention. "Hello, earth to Applebloom."

"Huh?" Future Applebloom opens her eyes and see's Rainbow Dash besides her. "Oh sorry, what is it, Rainbow Dash?"

"We're about to get something to eat, want to come?" she asked.

"Sure, I am a little hungry." said Future Applebloom as she follows Rainbow Dash and the others to the dining hall.

Meanwhile as night falls at the dungeon, Emerald was sleeping peacefully inside her cell, despite the situation she got herself into. She is now facing a potential life sentence for the attempted assassination of Princess Celestia, but the only thing in her mind right now is her concern about her mother's safety. She hopes that Twilight and her friends would get to her in time before Lucifer; thinking about him made Emerald wish she never made that deal with dark lord years ago.

*"Emerald....Emerald"* a voice spoke. *"Wake up, Emerald."*

The unicorn wakes up and looks around in her cell, wondering where the voice came from.

*"I'm terribly disappointed in you, Emerald."* said the voice.

"Lucifer?" said a frighten Emerald. "How...where are you?"

*"I'm communicating through your thoughts, nobody else can hear me but you"* Lucifer explained *"I see the situation that you are in and I am not happy at all."*

"I was doing exactly as you told me to do but I got caught" Emerald argued. "Somepony knew I was going to kill Princess Celestia and now I'm going to be on trial because of you!"

*"You only have yourself to blame for not carefully completing the task as part of the deal."* said Lucifer.

"To hell with the deal!" snapped the green unicorn. "You've use me from the very beginning, Lucifer. You wanted me to do your dirty work by signing that contract and even if I did succeed, you were going to dispose of me and my mother like trash. Well guess what; I'm through with you, Lucifer!"

Lucifer respond to this with a sickening laugh that sent a cold shiver across the unicorn's spine.

*"You poor, naive little pony..."* chuckled the dark lord. *"What did you really think you were getting yourself into? Your mother is still alive thanks to me and now you want to quit? Normally I would kill you"*

*right on the spot but that would be too easy for me, I prefer to watch others slowly suffer mentally and physically. Which is what will happen to you when they find you guilty on the trial and the best part about it; you will lose both your mother and your freedom..."*

Emerald froze with fear at the thought of spending the rest of her life in prison while her mother suffers in the Underworld, with no chance of ever seeing her again.

*"You are the only pony who is my connection to the outside world, the seal may be weakening now but it still prevent me from leaving the Underworld." said Lucifer. "But I can use you as my vessel with my magic thanks to the contract, oh what a show it will be when the trial begins and your mother happens to be there when they bang the gavel down on the guilty verdict. I will personally enjoy the despair look on your dear mother's face when she will never see you again!"*

The sinister laugh of the dark lord echoed inside the terrified unicorn's mind, as it slowly fades away from her, Emerald's body trembles with anger and she suddenly slams both her front legs against the wall.

"BASTARD!!!" yelled Emerald as she furiously bangs on the wall, the enraged unicorn continues to take her rage against the metal wall for a short time until she finally stops and falls to the floor in tears.

"Damn you, Lucifer..." Emerald whimpers to herself. "Oh Celestia, what have I've done..."

To Be Continue.



## 6 - Chapter 7

Emerald was sleeping quietly inside her cell despite that it was already ten-thirty in the morning, she couldn't blame herself though, not after her confrontation with Lucifer last night. The way he torment Emerald of her upcoming trial and the possibility of losing her mother haunted the distraught unicorn, the hooves on her front legs were still sore from beating against the wall when she was angered by the dark lord's words. A lot has gone through her mind since her imprisonment, like how she would convince the court that she didn't had any choice but to murder the princess or face the consequences from the lord of the Underworld. Would they believe her story about being tricked into making the deal with Lucifer or dismiss it as some excuse to garner sympathy? She hears the sound of the cell door opening that woke her up, Emerald looks with her half-open eyes to see a royal guard standing in the doorway.

"Emerald Gemstone, you have a visitor." said the stoic guard.

"A visitor?" wondered the half asleep unicorn.

The guard moves aside as Emerald see's her mother standing in front of the door way.

"Mother?" said Emerald who's eyes were now fully open and she rise from her bed.

"Emerald" Garnet smiled as she walks into the cell and embrace her daughter in her arms. "I'm so glad that you are alright."

"Mother, I'm so sorry I lied to you about that business meeting trip" Emerald tearfully apologizes to her. "The truth is that-

"You don't have to explain to me, dear" Garnet cuts her daughter off in mid sentence. "The ponies who brought me here have already told me everything."

"So...you don't blame me for what I did?" Emerald stuttered.

"I know it wasn't your fault, dear" said Garnet. "You were only trying to save me from dying a long time ago."

"I just couldn't bear the thought of losing you when I was a filly" Emerald sadly stated. "You're the only pony that meant everything in my life growing up, I was so stupid to fall for Lucifer's game and now I'm going to spend the rest of my life locked up because of him."

"You're not going to be lock up, Emerald" said Garnet. "I'll speak on your behalf at the trial, hopefully me and the others will try to convince the council into clearing your name."

"You'll do that for me?" asked Emerald.

"Yes dear, you were there for me in my time of need and now I want to do the same for you." Garnet

smiled.

"Thank you, mother." said Emerald.

"Visiting time is over." the guard notifies them.

"I'll see you tomorrow at the trial, Emerald." said Garnet as she hugs her again before leaving. "Just hang in there for me, okay?"

"I will, mother." Emerald replied.

The guard closes the cell door as he escorts Garnet out of the dungeon, it was hard for the middle-age unicorn to see her daughter kept in prison like some dangerous criminal, not to mention having an anti-magic collar around her neck and shackles on all four of her legs. She knows Emerald isn't some cold-blooded murderer who tried to take the life of Princess Celestia, things would have been different if they knew the real truth behind the assassination plot. Meanwhile at the royal castle, the Mane Six and Future Applebloom were in the throne room talking with Princess Celestia about Emerald.

"Did my brother tell you about the prisoner while we were away?" asked Twilight

"Yes, Shining Armor has informed me about the pony who attempted to take my life" said Princess Celestia. "Now I know that Lucifer had used her for his own twisted game, to think he would stoop so low into tricking Emerald into committing such a heinous act as a filly is beyond vile."

"But even if you knew she is innocent, why can't the council just drop the case?" asked Rainbow Dash.

"As ruler of Equestria, it is my duty to maintain the balance of peace and order in this country." Princess Celestia explains. "The council's purpose is to prosecute those who have tried to disrupt that balance in order to prevent chaos, even my authority to them is limited especially the case Emerald is facing now. I know this sounds hard for you all but that is how the law works here, as much as I want to help, there's nothing I can do."

"This is unfair, Emerald shouldn't be found guilty of something she had no control over" protested Pinkie Pie. "It's like having me arrested for making a souffle that deflated during an earthquake!"

"How is that a crime?" asked Fluttershy.

"Exactly!" exclaimed Pinkie Pie.

"If we're going to show the council that Emerald isn't a danger to everypony, having Ms. Gemstone taking the stand might not be enough to convince them." said Twilight.

"Say, how about we have Applebloom here speak on her behalf as well?" suggested Applejack.

"You want me to take the stand?" asked Future Applebloom.

"That's a great idea, Applejack" said Twilight before speaking to Future Applebloom. "You're the only

pony who has seen what Lucifer has done in your time, with yours and Ms. Gemstone's testimony, we could get them to clear Emerald of all charges."

"Since you put it that way, it's worth a shot" said Future Applebloom. "I'll do it but don't forget that we still have to keep an eye out on Lucifer."

"Which is why I'm going to ask Shining Armor to put a barrier around Canterlot on the day of the trial, that way, Lucifer cannot enter the city to get to Ms. Gemstone." said Twilight.

"Speaking of, shouldn't we check on her to see if she's finish with her visit with Emerald?" suggested Rarity.

"We could have been there with her for support but....that dungeon is just too scary for me." Fluttershy whimpered.

"She did wanted to go alone Fluttershy, so you don't have to worry about those awful prisoners harassing you." said Rarity.

"You girls go on ahead, I'll stay with Princess Celestia." said Twilight as she watches her friends leave the palace.

"Why didn't you want to go with your friends, Twilight?" The princess asks her student.

"Because there's something I want to discuss with you in private" Twilight replied with a troubled look on her face. "Princess Celestia, ever since Applebloom arrived in this present time line and warned us of the dystopian future of Equestria, it had me thinking about all the challenges we've faced before; Nightmare Moon, Discord and Queen Chrysalis, all of them are nothing compared to Lucifer. Applebloom told us the course of history has changed and because of that, there's a possibility of him getting out earlier than six months which will put the entire country in danger. So I ask you this, will we have a better future?"

"Twilight, I believe we have been given a chance to prevent our world from falling to the clutches of Lucifer thanks to Applebloom" said Princess Celestia as she stood next to Twilight. "But if what she said is true, the only way we could defeat him is by using the elements of harmony."

"Yes but even so, everypony should be prepared" Twilight said while looking at one of the stained glass depicting the mane six defeating Nightmare Moon with the Elements of Harmony. "Lucifer might be the most powerful enemy we have ever faced..."

The scene cuts to the next day in Canterlot, the city was surrounded by a protective magic barrier cast by Shining Armor, he and the royal guards had the court house surrounded for security measures as they await for the trial to begin. Two guards were escorting Emerald towards the building as they opened the door for them to enter, taking her across a hallway that leads into a court room with a rather large bench which holds not only one but six seats. The mane six along with Future Applebloom and Ms. Gemstone watched from the public seating as the guards places Emerald on a platform in front of the bench, Princess Celestia and her sister Luna were sitting at a balcony with a couple of guards standing by their sides.

"Poor Emerald..." Fluttershy said quietly. "Did they really have to chain her up like that?"

"This is a trial after all, Fluttershy" Rainbow Dash reminded her. "By the way, when is this going to start?"

"When the council arrives" said Twilight. "They will serve as both judges and jury for this case so we can't let her down."

"All rise for the royal council." the guard announced as everypony stood up.

The door opens as six ponies came into the court room; the first that entered was a stern-looking unicorn mare named Integrity; she has a tan-colored coat with long light blonde mane and wore glasses that shows her blue eyes. The other members who followed her were Honorable Silver; a tall ivory unicorn stallion with a robust built, his silver mane was short but appears to be thinning and has brown eyes. Misty Twister; an azure-colored pegasus mare with violet eyes and medium-length deep-blue mane. Summer Oath; a gold-colored pegasus stallion with green eyes and short black mane. Swift Flame; an orange earth pony stallion with yellow eyes and a red spiky mane. And the last member Scarlet Crimson; a red earth pony mare with steel-colored eyes and her dark-red mane styled in a braided pony-tail, all of them took their seat at the tall bench.

"Psst, hey Twilight." whispered Rainbow Dash to Twilight.

"What is it?" Twilight whispered back.

"I know that pegasus there, that's Misty Twister!" said Rainbow Dash.

"Who?" Twilight raise her eyebrow.

"Misty Twister, she's a former Wonder bolt" Rainbow Dash almost squee with joy. "I can't believe she's actually here!"

"Can you save your fangirlism for later, we're in a court room!" Twilight quietly scolded her friend.

"Please be seated" said Integrity as every pony sat down, she and the other council members look down at the unicorn in shackles. "This court is now in session, can the defendant state her name for the court?"

"My name is Emerald Gemstone, your honor." said Emerald.

"Emerald Gemstone, you stand on trial on the charges of breaking into the castle with the intent to assassinate Princess Celestia" Summer Oath stated. "How do you plea?"

"Not guilty..." replied Emerald.

"Since you've choose to plea not guilty, can you explain to the court why we should acquit you of the charges you are facing?" asked Scarlet.

"The reason being is because I was forced into committing this crime against my will" Emerald explained to the council. "My intention to take Princess Celestia's life was not of my own, your honor."

"Even so, you did sneak into the royal castle at night with a weapon in your possession." Swift Flame stated.

"And according to the report by the royal guards at the time of the arrest, the weapon was a dagger laced with a deadly toxin from a flower known as Silent Violet" informed Misty Twister. "I like to remind the court that the Silent Violets were eradicated by Princess Celestia herself after the Berberville tragedy fifteen years ago, how were you able to find these flowers?"

"I found a couple of them growing in a narrow crevice outside of an orchid field." answered Emerald.

"The poison from the Silent Violet flower is known to be untraceable, so you intent to use it to not only murder the princess but to make it look like she died from natural causes, is that correct?" asked Honorable Silver.

"Yes your honor..." Emerald sadly admits.

"Earlier you said that taking the princesses life wasn't in your intention" mentioned Integrity. "if so, who gave you the order to kill her?"

"The one who ordered me to assassinate Princess Celestia was none other than the lord of the Underworld himself, Lucifer." Emerald told the council as the court was interrupted by the spectators upon mentioning Lucifer's name.

"Order! Order in the court!" demanded Integrity as she bangs her gavel down and the room goes silence. "You said that it was Lucifer who gave you the order?"

"Yes but he forced me to do this" said Emerald. "When I was a little filly, my mother was struck down with an illness that would have claimed her life but then Lucifer appeared in my room and offered me a deal that in return of her full health, I had to do something for him in ten years. When ten years have pass, Lucifer returned to me and told me to kill the princess, he was going to take my mother away from me if I refused, I had no choice."

"I find that hard to believe" said Scarlet Crimson who seem to be skeptical of Emerald's story. "We know that Lucifer has been sealed by Princess Celestia a thousand years ago, what make you think that he was able to get out of the Underworld just to tell some pony to murder the princess?"

"She's telling the truth, your honor" shouted Twilight as every pony in the courtroom turn their attention to the purple unicorn. "And I have proof of her innocence!"

"And what proof do you have that would back up her story?" asked Scarlet. "I'll remind you that we won't tolerate sudden outbursts like that in this courtroom."

"Oops, sorry about that" said an embarrassed Twilight. "Anyways, I have two ponies here who will tell the court that Emerald was forced to assassinate the princess against her will. Sitting with us is

Emerald's mother Garnet Gemstone and Apple bloom who has traveled ten years from the future to warn us about Lucifer. If you let these two speak on her behalf, they will prove that Emerald is a victim, not a criminal."

The council quietly discuss about Twilight's recommendation to each other before making a decision.

"Very well, we'll allow it" said Integrity. "Which one of you two will take the stand first?"

"I will." Garnet spoke up as she head towards the stand and sat down.

"Ms. Gemstone, can you tell the court about your daughter Emerald?" asked Honorable Silver.

"I've always known Emerald as a smart and good-nature pony, I've raised her myself ever since my husband left us when she was just a foal" Garnet explains to the courtroom. "As a filly, Emerald did very well in school but she never made any friends there. She was picked on by the other students because we were the only "poor" family as they put it."

"I see, has she ever displayed any strange or violent behavior when she was a filly?" Honorable Silver ask Garnet again.

"No, your honor" said Garnet. "Emerald was never in anyway violent or capable of hurting any pony, but..."

"But?" said Integrity wanting to hear more.

"There...was this incident in school that got her expelled for a short time, she attacked two students that resulted in breaking one of their horn's off." Garnet tells them as her daughter sadly lowers her head from that incident.

"So you admit that Emerald is capable of this kind of violent behavior?" questioned Integrity.

"No, I didn't say that" Garnet denied that claim. "Besides, I was-"

"How dare you accuse Emerald of being violent when she's not" Pinkie Pie interrupts Garnet as she berates the council. "She wouldn't hurt a fly!"

"Pinkie Pie, what are you doing?!" said a worried Twilight.

"Sister, it appears that one of Twilight's friends is causing a scene." Princess Luna whispered to Celestia, who looks a bit concern about where this was going.

"We all know Emerald is innocent and you council members are rushing into judgment by twisting up Ms. Gemstone's words" Pinkie Pie continues to scold the council. "There's a saying that goes "If the horseshoe don't fit, you must acquit!", which what you so called "judges" should have done since this case has started!"

"Young lady, you are out of order!" exclaimed Integrity as she was getting annoyed by the pink mare's

antics.

"No, You're out of order!" argued Pinkie Pie who pointed at Integrity and then at the spectators. "They're out of order! The cotton candy machine is out of order! Even this muffin I'm holding is out of order!"

"Not the muffin!" cried Derpy from the back of the courtroom.

"THIS ENTIRE COURTROOM IS OUT OF ORDER!" yelled Pinkie Pie before she was suddenly tackled and pinned down by Rainbow Dash.

"I apologize for my friend, your honor" Rainbow Dash chuckled nervously while restraining Pinkie Pie. "She gets a little wacky when she eats too much sugar, I promise this will never happen again."

"We'll let this pass but if she does this again, we'll have her charged with contempt!" warned Misty Twister.

"Got it, by the way, love your work as a Wonderbolt." praised Rainbow Dash as she drags Pinkie Pie away, leaving the former Wonderbolt flattered but confused.

"Looks like somepony's a fan of your past career." Summer Oath said to Misty Twister.

"Can we please continue with the trial?" suggested Misty Twister.

"Right" Integrity agreed. "Ms. Gemstone, you were talking about the incident in your daughter's school, do you had any reason that justified her actions at the time?"

"My daughter was constantly harassed by those two fillies at that school, I would have dealt with that problem earlier if I wasn't bedridden." Garnet explains to the council as her tone became serious. "During that time, Emerald was taking care of me and the stress from school made it worse for her. She had reached her breaking point when those two were making nasty remarks about me being sick and it could have happen to any pony in her position! How would any of you feel if somepony made negative comments about a member of your family who's suffered from a severe illness?"

The courtroom was filled with the spectators talking and agreeing with Garnet's last statement, Integrity bangs down her gavel again to silence the courtroom.

"May I ask what kind of illness you had at the time?" Integrity asked Garnet.

"I was suffering from Leukemia, the doctors told me that I wouldn't have much time to live" answered Garnet as she continues with her testimony. "But one day, I woke up feeling completely healthy, like I never had the illness in the first place. After I was better, I talked with the school about Emerald's situation and they reinstated her back in while the two fillies who bullied her got punished instead. For all these years, I thought it was a misdiagnose and had a severe fever this whole time, but that was until I learned from Applebloom and her friends about Emerald's deal with Lucifer. I know in my heart that she wanted to help me get better and that she was unaware of what that deal came with when she signed the contract. And that's why I believe she is innocent of this crime, that is all I have to say in my closing statement."

Emerald smiles at her mother as Garnet finishes her testimony and walks back to the public gallery, she has gain the public's support but she wasn't sure if her mother's statement has convince the council. Integrity adjusts her glasses as she begin to speak.

"From Ms. Gemstone testimony, it seems that the defendant does not have any history of violence or criminal behavior but that still doesn't explain how Lucifer manage to slip pass through the seal." stated Integrity.

"Your honor, I've have the answers to that question" Future Applebloom stand up as everypony turn their eyes towards the yellow mare. "Let me take the stand so I can explain to everypony about it."

"Very well." said Integrity as the court watches Future Applebloom goes and sat at the stand.

"Your friend there says you came from the future, is that correct?" asked Swift Flame.

"Yes, I traveled ten years from the future using a spell that me and my comrades found in Canterlot, which in my time is now in ruins" said Future Applebloom. "Right now, I'm only a filly in this present time.

"I see, can you explain to us about how Lucifer was able to get out of the Underworld?" Integrity asked the time-traveling pony. "We want to hear every detail about it including your thoughts on the defendant and the state of Equestria is now in your time."

"In the future, Equestria is in a hellish state that was cast by Lucifer himself when the seal that kept him imprisoned wore off six months from now but before then, Emerald did succeed in murdering Princess Celestia in her sleep." said Future Applebloom. "But I had no information about the identity of the assassin until I came here to warn Twilight, her friends and the princess."

"What happen to the defendant in your time after she succeed in assassinating Princess Celestia?" asked Scarlet Crimson.

"Lucifer dispose of her and her mother when he decided that Emerald was no use for him." said Future Applebloom as the spectators gasped at the statement. "He knew that the seal was slowly weakening and Lucifer used his dark magic to project a shadow version of himself to take advantage of Emerald's misery. Lucifer cannot kill Princess Celestia himself because she knows that sunlight is his weakness, so he tricked Emerald into killing the princess for him by making a deal that saved her mother's life."

"So you believe that Emerald is more likely a victim than a perpetrator in this case?" questioned Honorable Silver.

"Yes, Lucifer played Emerald as a pawn to his evil plan to take over Equestria the day he made her signed that contract, which is why she should not be found guilty of something she had no control over." stated Future Applebloom. "And if it would please the court, I have something to say for my closing statement."

"Go right ahead." said Integrity as Future Applebloom nods and turns towards the public with a serious yet sad expression.



"I've witness atrocities committed by that monster in my time; He murdered countless ponies in cold blood including my family, wiped out entire villages and subjected the surviving population to brutal torture and slavery for his own amusement" Future Applebloom sadly explains to the public of the dystopian future. "You could not imagine how many mass graves I've encountered traveling across Equestria, I had to bury my own family who I watch get slaughtered as a filly...along with the rest of the citizens of Ponyville after it was destroyed. I didn't get a chance to grow up with my family, I had to do whatever it takes to survive in the harsh and dark world Lucifer has brought upon. And if you still think that Emerald is guilty of being a puppet of Lucifer, then you have no sense of justice at all..."

The moving words from the future pony brought the entire courtroom in utter silence, some were brought to tears including a few members of the council, especially the stern Integrity who quickly wiped the tears off her cheeks as Future Applebloom got off the stand and sat back down with the spectators next to her sister.

"Good job there, sis." whispered Appleback.

"This court will take a thirty-minute break as the council will now go into deliberation to decide on the fate of the defendant." stated Integrity as she and the council members leave the courtroom.

A half hour has pass since the council left the courtroom for deliberation, the gang waited anxiously for the council to return for the verdict. Pinkie Pie was biting on her hooves as Fluttershy and Rarity tries to calm her down, Garnet was just as worried as everypony else, hoping that her daughter wouldn't get life in prison for the crime she was forced into doing. The council finally arrives back in the courtroom as everypony silently awaits to hear their ruling.

"After hearing the testimonies from the defendant's mother and Applebloom, the council has reached a verdict" said Integrity as she begins to announce the verdict. "This court finds the defendant Emerald Gemstone not guilty of all charges and shall be free to go."

She bangs the gavel down as the guard unlocks the shackles and the anti-magic collar off of Emerald, who felt like a tremendous weight has been lifted off her shoulders. As nearly everypony leaves the courtroom, Emerald was met with joy as Garnet hugs her.

"Mother!" chuckled Emerald, feeling a little embarrassed from her mother hugging her tightly.

"I'm just so happy that your not going to be locked up anymore, Emerald." said Garnet who nearly cried with joy.

"I'm just glad this whole trial thing is all over." said Rarity.

"Yeah, I couldn't imagine them giving you the guilty verdict" added Fluttershy. "That would have been an awful thought..."

"I want to thank you all for supporting and helping me out in this case." Emerald smiles to the gang.

"Hey, that's the first time I've ever seen you smile" said Pinkie Pie. "You look much better than that

gloomy look you had earlier."

Emerald laughs a bit from Pinkie Pie's comment but stops when she see's Princess Celestia and Luna coming towards the gang, the green mare instantly bows for the princess as she lifts her head up and looks at Celestia with remorse.

"Princess Celestia, I personally want to apologize to you for my actions, it was a horrible and inexcusable choice I made and-" Emerald tries to apologize to her before she was cut off by the princess who place her hoof over her shoulder.

"There's no need to apologize to me, Emerald" said Princess Celestia with a gentle yet forgiving tone. "I have no hard feelings for you since I now know the truth behind the assassination plot."

"Thank you, Princess Celestia" smiled Emerald. "Its an honor to hear that you've forgiven me."

"Hey Emerald, how about I bake a cake for you to celebrate your acquittal?" suggested Pinkie Pie.

"That actually sounds delightful, I would love to have some- ahh!" Emerald suddenly felt a sharp pain from her head.

"Are you alright, dear?" asked her concerned mother.

"I think I may have a migra- AHHHH!" Emerald screamed as she fell to her knees and clings onto her head, her body shakes violently as the pain in her head became more intense by the second. They notice something flickering from Emerald's horn, a flame black as night swirls around her head before it encircles her entire body, the others back away to avoid the dark flames that surrounds Emerald.

"What's happening to Emerald, what kind of spell is this?!" Twilight watched in confusion.

"This spell is not from her..." said Princess Celestia.

Emerald continues to struggle with the burning pain from within her head, her eyes turns black as shadow-like flames fires from her horn and spreads out across the ceiling. The flames around Emerald disappears and she collapses on the floor with Garnet running towards her side, the others watched in horror as Fluttershy hides behind Rainbow Dash, who was just as scared like the rest of the gang. Then they heard the sound of a haunting laughter that struck a cord to Future Applebloom.

"That laugh..." uttered the stunned future mare. "Oh no....it's him!"

"You don't mean..." said Applejack as her sister nods in response.

"I should have known you were behind this, Lucifer!" Princess Celestia said angrily.

"Its been a very long time since we've last met, Princess Celestia." The face of Lucifer appears from the shadows, his golden eyes looking down upon the terrified spectators including the council members themselves who stood in complete disbelief, the alicorn princesses however were the only ponies who weren't intimidated by Lucifer's presence.

"But this is impossible, how was he able to bypass the barrier?" wondered a shocked Twilight.

"He must have known Canterlot was on high alert so he used Emerald as a vessel to get inside the barrier" Princess Celestia explained to Twilight. "This is what I expected from a coward such as yourself, Lucifer!"

"Stick and stones, Celestia" mocked Lucifer. "As much as I like to take my vengeance upon you, that opportunity will have to wait as I have personal business to attend to..."

The dark lord sets his eyes on Garnet who was stricken with fear while holding on to her daughter, Emerald slowly wakes up as her eyes went wide in terror upon seeing Lucifer above the ceiling. A green ball was thrown at Lucifer's face that catches him off guard as it explodes on impact, the dark lord was startled by this as he sees Future Applebloom guarding the two unicorns.

"Leave them alone!" Future Applebloom hissed at Lucifer.

"Ohh you must be the time-traveling pony who spoiled my plans to the princess" Lucifer smirked. "Quite a performance you've made for the court, considering that you described the future where I ruled Equestria to be rather fascinating."

"There won't be a future for a monster like you!" The yellow mare growled at the dark lord.

"Equestria will soon fall into my hands when the seal completely fades away and the land shall be cast into eternal darkness!" warned Lucifer as his face disappears within the shadows and a swirling vortex with a glowing green light appears in the ceiling, catching everypony by surprise as it begins to suck everything up from the courtroom. Princess Celestia and Luna quickly use a spell on all the ponies including themselves to protect them from being consumed by the vortex.

"Hold on, everypony!" shouted Twilight as she and her friends held onto anything that was bolted to the floor.

The sheer force from the vortex was destroying the entire courthouse while the city of Canterlot was struck by a massive earthquake, the citizens went into a full-blown panic as buildings around the area started to crack and fall apart. In the courtroom, the strength of the vortex was increasing by the second as the princesses were having a hard time maintaining the spell to keep everypony safe. Future Applebloom was holding onto both Garnet and Emerald; who watches everypony struggling including the princesses as the room was being demolished by Lucifer's vortex. Feeling responsible for what she has caused, the green unicorn closes her eyes and focuses her magic on the barrier surrounding herself.

"Emerald, what are you doing?!" shouted Future Applebloom.

"I'm going to close the vortex...by throwing myself in!" Emerald responded.

"What?!" exclaimed Future Applebloom. "You can't be serious about this, are you?"

"I'm the reason why Lucifer's here" Emerald stated. "I'm his only connection to the outside world and if I

remain in the Underworld, he cannot use me to get pass the seal!"

"No, please don't do this Emerald!" protested Garnet as she grabs her daughter's arm.

"I'm sorry mother, I brought all of you into this because of the mistake I made in the past" Emerald looks at her mother with sad-ridden eyes. "And now is the time to repent."

Emerald uses a spell to shatter the magic barrier, leaving herself defenseless as the unicorn looks at her mother for what appears to be the last time she'll ever see her.

"Farewell, mother..." smiled Emerald as she frees herself from her mother's grip and was taken in by the vortex's powerful current.

"EMERALD!!!" cried Garnet who tried to reach up to her but was held back by Future Applebloom.

The others watched in shock as Emerald was sucked into the vortex, which causes it to close in on itself and the shadow above the ceiling disappears. The earthquake that rocked Canterlot quickly dies down but the damage has been done; nearly a quarter of the city had been destroyed along with the courthouse as a result. The spell that shielded the others from Lucifer's vortex wears off now that it was over but Garnet however was left deeply saddened from her daughter's sacrifice, she cries out her name several times before the heart-broken mother weeps on Future Applebloom's shoulders. Later that day, as the city was being repaired from the devastating attack from Lucifer, the gang were at the castle listening to Garnet talking with Princess Celestia.

"Princess Celestia, you have to get my daughter back" pleaded the grief-stricken mother. "You just have to, I know for a fact that she is still alive and I just don't know what to do without her."

"Garnet, I understand your pain and as much as I want to help you, the city of Canterlot needs me" said Princess Celestia who was consoling Garnet. "I'm sorry that I can't be much of help for you at the moment..."

"But..if you can't rescue Emerald, then who will?" wondered Garnet.

"We will." said a determined Twilight.

"You want to help rescue Emerald?" Garnet asked the gang.

"Yeah, you can count on us." said Rainbow Dash.

"It would be shameful to leave Emerald alone in whatever dreadful place Lucifer is keeping her." added Rarity.

"Oh Thank you all for accepting my request." said Garnet.

"Yay, we're going on a rescue mission!" cheered Pinkie Pie as she jumps up and down.

"This won't be any normal rescue mission" stated Princess Celestia as Pinkie Pie stops jumping and the

others listen to her dire warning. "I must warn you that the Underworld is a dark and evil place, with dangers beyond any ponies imagination that would make the Everfree Forest look tame in comparison, so I urge you all to be extremely careful while traveling in that place."

"We will, Princess Celestia." nodded Twilight.

Princess Celestia leads the gang to a chamber where she uses her horn to magically open the door, taking out the box that contains the Elements of Harmony.

"I want you to take the Elements of Harmony in the event that you encounter Lucifer and if possible, use it to defeat him once and for all" said Princess Celestia as she gives them to Twilight and her friends. "Now that you are prepared, I'll shall open the doorway to the Underworld."

Princess Celestia closes her eyes and emits a red magical energy from her horn, the gang watches as they see a large red portal with a dark center opening up in the middle of the hallway. The Mane Six and Future Applebloom stood in front of the portal as they looked back at the princess and Garnet.

"I wish you all good luck to you on your journey" said Princess Celestia. "May the Elements of Harmony protect you."

"Please bring Emerald back safe and sound..." pleaded Garnet.

The gang nods to the princess and Garnet's words as they step into the portal, which closes itself after they all entered to start their journey into the Underworld to rescue Emerald from Lucifer. Little did they know that they are in for a big surprise when they get to the darkest place the pony world has ever known.

To Be Continued.

## 7 - Chapter 8

*"The Underworld is a dark and evil place, with dangers beyond any ponies imagination that would make the Everfree Forest look tame in comparison."*

The cautionary words from the alicorn princess lingered in Twilight's mind as she and her friends make their way through the portal, even though they knew the mission to rescue Emerald from the clutches of Lucifer will be dangerous, they could not ignore her mother's tearful plea to bring her back from the Underworld. What the dark lord did at Canterlot was unforgivable; using Emerald as a vessel to bypass the barrier and destroying parts of the city in the process, the violet unicorn is determined to make Lucifer pay for his crimes not for Emerald or Future Applebloom's sake but for Equestria as well. Seeing the end of the tunnel straight up ahead, Twilight and her friends steps out from the portal as they finally arrive in the Underworld; a shadowy realm that resembles a gigantic, endless cavern deep beneath the outside world of Equestria. The air was damp and faint echoes of bone-chilling wails was heard from across this nightmarish place, causing most of the mane six to tremble with fear.

"Dear Celestia..." uttered a shocked Rarity.

"This place is really dark and scary..." whimpered Fluttershy as she hides behind Rainbow Dash.

"Oh come on, it ain't that bad." Rainbow Dash looked over to her scared friend.

"Then why are your legs shaking?" Applejack pointed out to the multicolored pegasus legs which were trembling.

"Uhh it's just cold here, that's all." replied Rainbow Dash.

"Girls, I know that your all scared but lets not forget that we came here to find Emerald" Twilight reminded her friends. "We gave our word to Ms.Gemstone that we will bring her back."

"Your right, Twilight" said Applejack. "We can't let Ms. Gemstone down."

"Yeah, beside we been through worse before." said Rainbow Dash.

"There's no spooky place that stop us" said a confident Pinkie Pie. "Even if it's the Underworld itself!"

"We should keep our guards up, who knows what kind of creatures lurks in the Underworld." suggested Future Applebloom.

The others nods as Twilight uses her horn to create a light source and leads the gang into a dark tunnel. While traveling down further through the passageway, the ponies discovered claw markings on the walls and several bones of unknown creatures scattered across the ground. The gang continued their path down despite the frightening scenery and the sound of bloodcurdling yowls until they saw a dim light at the end of the tunnel, Twilight turns the illuminating spell off and they follow the light which led them into

another area; A deep-red river that appears to extend as far as the Equestrian sea with a dense fog obscuring the view ahead.

"Where are we now?" wondered Applejack.

"I have no idea, I can barely see anything with this fog." said Twilight.

"Leave that to me" said Rainbow Dash as she flies up and circles around the area, collecting just enough to clear up a path which reveal the shore. Once Rainbow Dash lands down, the others catches up with her as they notice an old, wooden boat nearby.

"Oh good, we can use this boat to cross this river." said Applejack.

"But who would leave a boat at a place like this?" wondered Fluttershy.

"Who knows, as long as we don't have to swim across the water." said Rarity.

When the group got closer to the boat to use it, they found a skeleton of what appears to be a dragon and a long paddle by it's side.

"So much for that idea." said Rarity disgusted by the remains.

"It looks like this boat once belong to some dragon." said Applejack.

"Lets just toss these old bones out of the way and get on the boat." suggested Rainbow Dash.

"Who are you calling old bones?" the skeleton suddenly spoke, causing the ponies to jump back as the skeleton rises up, stretches his arms out and cracks his neck. "Oooh that was relieving, I needed that nap."

"Who...or better yet, what are you?" asked Twilight.

"What am I? You ponies act like never seen a living skeleton before" the skeleton replied. "But If you must know, my names Charon, I'm the ferryman that escorts the departed through the river Styx and you ponies don't look dead to me."

"Because we're not." said Rainbow Dash.

"Ooh since your all bones, mind if I do this?" Pinkie Pie takes out a pair of small mallets and plays with Charon's ribs like a xylophone.

"Hey quit that, my rib cage is not an instrument!" Charon scolded the giggling pink mare.

"Actually, we're here to find a pony who like us is not deceased" said Twilight. "Did you happen to see a green unicorn with a black and white mane?"

"HmMMM not that I recalled" said Charon. "I would have seen a pony like that and I have a good

memory."

"I see but let me ask you another question, do you know where Lucifer is?" asked Twilight.

"Of course I do, I know the Underworld like the back end of my tail" Charon answered. "But if you ask me, I wouldn't go near him with a 20 ft pole even when he's in a good mood, Lucifer is an evil son of a b-."

"We get it" Twilight interrupted. "Can you at least help us cross this river so we can get to where he's at?"

"Only if you pay a toll, a dragon like me got to make a living in the Underworld." said Charon.

"Shoot, I didn't bring my bit bag with me." Twilight said to herself.

"Here you go" said Pinkie Pie as she hands Charon several bits. "I always keep an emergency bit stash in my mane."

"Alright ponies, hop on aboard." said Charon as he and the gang step on to the boat. "This is gonna be a long ride."

Charon uses his paddle to row the boat across the river Styx and into the thick mist ahead, it took them about at least half an hour to pass through the mist as they traveled towards a clearer path. As time passes by, the gang were trying to keep themselves busy knowing that the boat ride was going to be long. Fluttershy was staring at her reflection in the river when suddenly a hoof came out from the water, causing the yellow pegasus to scream and fall back as she and her friends watches a stallion earth pony with two empty eye sockets trying to climb on the boat.

"Help me..." the stallion pleads to the horrified ponies. "Help me!

Then another hoof grabs onto the boat as a unicorn mare with stitches all over her body tries to reach for the group.

"Get us out of this place!" the unicorn cries out to the gang.

Charon suddenly whacks the two mutilated ponies with his paddle, causing them to let go and sink back into the river.

"Stop rocking the boat before I kill you again!" growled the ferryman.

"Charon....just what were those ponies?" asked a horrified Applejack.

"They looked like something out of a horror novel." stated a quivering Rarity.

"What you just saw were the souls of the damned, those who have committed sins in their lives spend their time wondering endlessly in this river" the skeleton dragon explained. "The worst part of this job is that they always try to get on this boat thinking that they could be saved, its annoying."



"I kinda feel bad for them..." said Twilight staring at the water.

"I don't, these souls have done a lot of bad things while they're alive" said Charon. "But you ponies don't seem the type who would end up here when you die, you should considered yourselves lucky."

Pinkie Pie curiously gaze at the river when she takes a deep breath and was about to dunk her head in.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you." warned Charon which made Pinkie Pie stop.

"Why's that?" asked the pink mare.

"I once fell into this river a long time ago and I ended up looking like this, all bones no thanks to these bloody souls." said Charon.

"On second thought, I prefer to keep my skin intact." said Pinkie Pie who backed away from the water.

"How far is it from Lucifer's place?" asked Future Applebloom.

"The trail leading to where he's at is not too far from here" the skeletal ferryman replied. "But you will have to go through several places to get there, the first will be the Fields of Punishment and after that is the Forest of Fear."

"Fields of Punishment?" asked Applejack.

"Forest of Fear?" asked Rainbow Dash.

"The Fields of Punishment is where those who caused tremendous pain to others in their past lives suffer a karmatic fate for eternity and the Forest of Fear is where your worst nightmares comes to life" Charon described the details. "The last time I was at the latter, I couldn't sleep for a week."

"We're willing to take that risk." said Future Applebloom.

"The start of the trail is straight up ahead." Charon informs the gang as the boat reaches to shore and the ponies steps out.

"We'll take it from here, Charon" said Twilight. "Thanks for helping us cross the river."

"All in a good days work" said Charon. "Good luck finding your friend, you're gonna need it especially if you encounter Lucifer."

And with that, the skeletal ferryman paddles the boat back to the river as the gang continues their journey through the depths of the Underworld. Soon after, they find themselves near an enormous black canyon that stretches vastly across the area. When the group reach towards the cliff side, they look down at the bottom of the canyon and witnessed something that horrified the ponies; souls of the deceased being subjected to brutal torture methods by demonic creatures near a river of lava that flows across the canyon, their screams of agony echoes through out the chasm as the gang watches in horror.

"This must be one of the places Charon told us about, the Fields of Punishment..." said a stunned Twilight.

"Oh...my..." gasped a wide-eyed Fluttershy.

"I think I'm going to be sick..." said Applejack who turn green.

"This is beyond horrible!" exclaimed Rarity.

"It's like something out of a very scary dream" stated Pinkie Pie. "Only that we're not sleeping!"

"There is absolutely no way we're going down there!" said a nervous Rainbow Dash.

"Rainbow Dash is right, it's too risky to follow the path leading down below" said Future Applebloom. "Our only solution is to find a short cut across the canyon from above."

"And how are we going to do that?" asked Applejack. "Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy are the only ones who can fly over it."

"Which gives me an idea" said Future Applebloom as she explains her plan to the gang. "Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy will scout the area from the air, I'll give them each a smoke ball so that if they do find a safe spot, they can use it to signal us while Twilight conjures a spell to teleport the rest of us to that area."

"Can you do that for us, Twilight?" pleaded Pinkie Pie. "We really, really don't want to go down there!"

"I'll try but it will drain a portion of my magic transporting five including myself in a far distance." stated Twilight.

"Better make this count, we can't afford to make any mistakes" said Future Applebloom. "Rainbow Dash, Fluttershy, are you ready?"

"As always." Rainbow Dash said proudly.

"Well..I guess I am ready..." stuttered Fluttershy.

Their plan begins with the two pegasi taking off into the air after Future Applebloom gives them the smoke balls, Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy searches the area from a bird's eye view while trying to avoid watching the horrid scene from the bottom of the chasm. Fluttershy tries her best to ignore the cries from the tormented souls, while Rainbow Dash reminds her friend that they are beyond their help in order to keep her mind focus on the plan. The two notice an area at the end of the canyon leading to a dead forest, seeing nothing suspicious or any dangerous creatures around, Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy threw the balls on the ground which causes them to emit a huge amount of light-green smoke into the air. Meanwhile at the other side of the Fields of Punishment, the gang sees the smoke signal from afar.

"They made it" informed Future Applebloom. "Now's your cue, Twilight."

"Right, here goes nothing." Twilight's horn lights up and focuses her spell on the others as they instantly disappear in a flash of light. Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy waited patiently at the other side hoping that the plan work, then they saw the rest of the gang reappearing near them.

"You made it" cheered Fluttershy. "I was a little worried that the spell wouldn't work out and...I don't want to think about it..."

"That took a lot of magic to perform." said Twilight who looked a little weary.

"You did good, Twilight" said Future Applebloom as she pats Twilight on the back. "Are you still gonna use your magic after that spell?"

"Yeah, I'll be fine" Twilight replied before turning her attention to the trees nearby. "It looks like this is the next place to go, the Forest of Fear."

"Isn't that the place Charon told us about, where your worst nightmares comes to life?" asked a shivering Fluttershy.

"It can't be as bad as the Everfree Forest, can it?" questioned Pinkie Pie.

"We can't be so sure about that" said Rarity. "It does seem a bit spooky to me."

"But it also leads to where Lucifer is at" stated Future Applebloom. "We'll just have to take this path since there's no other way around it."

Future Applebloom heads to the entrance of the forest as the others follows her from behind, despite being exhausted from having to teleport herself and her friends at a far distance, Twilight uses her illumination spell to guide them through the Forest of Fear. The woods was unlike the Everfree Forest near Ponyville which were thick with plant life and inhabited many dangerous creatures, the decaying trees in the area were warped in distorted positions that in a slight angle, they look somewhat alive from their point of view.

"It's awfully quiet for a place like this in the Underworld." said Twilight.

"It's too quiet if you ask me" said Future Applebloom. "Something about this forest doesn't seem right..."

Unbeknownst to the group, a smoky mist was seeping out from the trees as it begins to fill the forest and slowly creeping up behind the unexpected ponies. The mist catches up with the gang who finds themselves within its grasp and the first thing they heard was a loud, terror-filled scream coming from Rarity.

"Rarity!" Twilight turns to see Rarity panicking.

"GET AWAY FROM ME, GET AWAY FROM MEEEEEE!!!" screamed Rarity who in her eyes, sees a gigantic mud-like monster covered with trash trying to grab her but the white unicorn trots rapidly to avoid it.

"What in the world is gotten into-" Applejack stops in mid-sentence as she finds herself at Sweet Apple Acres, which was reduced to a dried up wasteland and now infested by a pack of timberwolves. "What the..."

The timberwolves set their eyes on the frightened earth pony and started to chase after Applejack; who in reality was running around in circles in the forest much to the others' confusion. Fluttershy blinks for a second and when she opens her eyes, she was back at her cottage but what the pegasus saw made her jaw drop; the Everfree Forest burning in a sea of flames along with the woodland creatures she cared for, causing Fluttershy to scream at the top of her lungs as she tries to run away only for Rainbow Dash to catch her.

"Fluttershy, there's nothing there in this forest that's-" the scenery changes around the prism-maned pegasus who finds herself near Cloudsdale, which was crumbling right before her very eyes. She flew over there in a desperate attempt to save her hometown, only to fall straight down as her wings wither and break apart.

"NOOOOO, SOME PONY HELP ME!!!" cried Rainbow Dash who fell to the ground believing that she was falling from the sky.

Pinkie Pie on the other hand had a nervous look on her face as she was on the stage of a comedy club, only that the audience were not laughing at her jokes and threw food at the pink mare. While they torment Pinkie Pie about her performance, their cruel remarks brought the cheerful pony into tears.

"Stop it, stop it, STOP IT!!!" shouted Pinkie Pie as she tries to shield herself from the projectiles.

"What's happening to every pony?" worried Future Applebloom.

"It's this mist" stated Twilight. "Charon said this place brings your worst nightmares to life, this mist must be what's causing them to experience it!"

"We got to snap them out of it before we get-" Future Applebloom goes silent as the mist took effect on the yellow earth pony, her eyes widen with horror as the forest around her changes into something she would have never thought to see again; the destruction of Ponyville. Everywhere around her were corpses of the slain civilians, dragons hovering above the town and setting homes on fire. Future Applebloom turns to run but stops when a familiar figure stood in her way; an severely burnt earth pony with bones protruding out of her flesh and strands of her blonde mane hanging down over her lidless green eyes.

"A-Applejack?" stammered Future Applebloom, frozen with fear.

"Why....." Applejack spoke with a hiss while glaring at her sister. "Why didn't you save me and the rest of our family?"

"I.....I....." The yellow pony choked by the words of her deceased sister.

"Everypony would still be alive if a weakling such as yourself didn't interfere." the burnt earth pony

harshly taunts her as others who've died in Future Applebloom's time appear behind Applejack.

"No...no, that's not true" cried Future Applebloom, backing into a pile of rubble as the undead ponies swarms around her with no way out. "You....you don't mean that, you gave your life to save me, I couldn't do anything as a filly, even if I tried...."

"I should have left you back at the farm where granny and Big Mac met their demise, as far as I'm concerned, a pathetic pony like you is no sister of mine..." Applejack said coldly as she and the others moves closer to the frighten pony.

"Applebloom" a voice echoed in her mind. "Applebloom...APPLEBLOOM!"

A jolt of electricity shocks Future Applebloom's body, causing her to snap out from the nightmarish illusion and back to reality where she sees Twilight who cast a magic barrier around them to shield against the mist.

"Twilight?" The yellow mare said a bit dazed. "What did you just do to me?"

"I use a lightning spell hoping that it would disrupt the effects of the mist, it looks like it work though" Twilight explains. "Are you feeling alright, Applebloom?"

"Y-yeah, for a moment I thought I was..." Future Applebloom pauses for a second about the horrid illusion she endured but quickly brushes it aside. "Never mind that, use the same spell on the others and fast!"

Twilight nods as she lowers the barrier and fires a wave of lightning bolts at her friends, one by one they were struck by the bolts which shocks them out of the fear-induce illusions and finally came to their senses.

"What the?" said a confused Rainbow Dash. "Wasn't I just-"

"We'll explain later, right now we need to get out of this forest as fast as possible!" shouted Twilight as she and the rest of the gang ran through the woods while avoiding contact with the mist. Seeing the exit straight ahead, the ponies sprints out of the forest and stop to catch their breaths.

"That....was the worst thing I've ever experienced!" Rarity exclaimed.

"Your telling me..." Applejack agreed with the fashionista pony. "I was almost close to becoming timberwolf chow."

"No ponies were laughing at my jokes, they were even throwing food at me and not the good kind!" Pinkie Pie sadly stated.

"Cloudsdale was falling apart and there was nothing I could have done about it..." said Rainbow Dash with her head down.

"It got to me too..." Future Applebloom admitted. "If it weren't for Twilight's quick thinking, we would had

a permanent stay at that forest."

"Don't let it get to you, they were only illusions meant to trick you into thinking they were real" Twilight explained. "Now that we're out of the forest, our last stop is to go where Emerald is being held at..."

"Lucifer's place..." said Future Applebloom as she and the others discovers a towering dark castle on the horizon. The castle stood on a rocky platform with a bridge that stretches half a mile across a ravine which unlike the Fields of Punishment, it was completely bottomless and not a shed of light can be seen within its void.

"We made it..." said Twilight, relieved that they arrived at their destination.

"There's no turning back from this point, its time that we confront Lucifer and make him pay for what he's done." Future Applebloom said as the others share the same determination of the future pony.

The gang leaves the forest area and makes their way towards the dark lord's castle, on the bridge were statues of gargoyles holding crude-looking weapons with blood-lust expressions that made Fluttershy and several others unease by their presence. They arrive at the giant door which Twilight uses her magic to open it and upon entering, the castle interior designs were enough to them sick to their stomachs; hundreds of bones and skulls of ponies and different species were hung up on the walls and even used as furniture. Rarity faints from the sight but Applejack catches her before she could hit the ground, despite being disturbed by the grotesque scenery in the main hall, the gang went up the stairs and goes through a long hallway where they see several doors on each sides and a huge metal door at the end.

"Hmmm, something tells me that Lucifer is in here!" Pinkie Pie goes to one of the doors hoping that Lucifer would be inside but as she opens it, a red light flashes out along with sounds of agonizing screams. She instantly closes the door with her face turn completely white and her mane standing up.

"Nope...not in there" squeaked Pinkie Pie. "In fact, lets not open any of these doors and just go to the one at the end of the hallway instead."

"That would be a good idea..." Twilight agreed.

Taking Pinkie Pie's suggestion, the group heads to the end of the hallway and carefully opens the metal door to reveal the throne room of the dark lord. To their surprise, the room was rather empty as Lucifer was no where to be seen, they were expecting to see him sitting on the large black throne with a pentagram symbol at the end of the room. Twilight notice something different about the throne as there were several bars underneath the seat like a cage, but what caught her attention was that inside of that cage was a familiar pony. Twilight went closer for a better view and there she finds Emerald sleeping inside with a chain collar attached to the bottom of the cell.

"Emerald!" shouted Twilight, causing the sleeping unicorn to wake up.

"Huh? H-hey, what are all of you doing here?" asked a surprised Emerald.

"We're here to rescue you, sugarcube." informed Applejack.

"Your mother was really worried about you, especially after you got sucked up in that vortex." said Fluttershy.

"Once we break you out, we can finally leave this dreadful place and-" Rarity spoke before Emerald cuts her off in mid sentence.

"No! Don't do that!" yelled the frightened unicorn.

"Why not? Don't you want to go back to Equestria?" asked Twilight, confused by Emerald's sudden outburst.

"Y-you don't understand, all of you need to get out of here before he comes back!" warned Emerald.

"We can't just leave you here, Emerald" said Rainbow Dash. "Not after what we went through just to find you!"

"Please listen to me, you have no idea what Lucifer is capable of and if he finds you here, he'll-"

*"Well...well...well, what have we here? A group of ponies attempting to rescue this poor, imprisoned unicorn, how very noble..."* A familiar voice suddenly interrupts Emerald, the alerted gang looks around but doesn't see anyone in the room.

"Oh no..." Emerald whimpers in fear.

"Lucifer..." growled Future Applebloom.

"Where is he? I don't see him anywhere!" said Rainbow Dash.

"Lucifer, it's time that you stop hiding in the shadows and reveal yourself this instant!" demanded Twilight.

"As you wish..." a shadowy mist seeps out from all corners of the room and gathered towards the throne, the gang watches as the mist takes shape of a figure sitting on the throne and materializing into the lord of the Underworld's true psychical form; A dragon with scales black as pitch and golden eyes that emits a calm but murderous glare. Lucifer had a scar across his right eye and his spikes were flowing black flames that runs down from head to tail. He wore crude-looking armor made of leather, metal and even skulls on his shoulders that gives him the look of a barbarian king. Even when sitting down on his throne, Lucifer's size was equal if not greater than the spirit of chaos Discord and clearly towers over the ponies. Emerald backs herself into the corner of the cage like a scared animal, the gang however maintained their stance against Lucifer despite his intimidating appearance.

"Here I am..." The dark lord grins.

"Applebloom, is that really him?" whispered Applejack.

"Yes, I can never forget that sadistic mug of his..." Future Applebloom replied.

"Now that you've finally shown yourself, we demand that you release Emerald to us or else!" Twilight warned Lucifer who doesn't seem to be impressed by the unicorn's threat.

"You honestly believe that I would just hand you what is already mine? In case you ponies have forgotten, Emerald has already signed the contract that in turn for her mother's complete health, her body and soul is considered property of mine." Lucifer explains to the group with an arrogant smirk.

"What right have you to say that Emerald is your property?!" protested Rarity.

"Emerald isn't just some "thing" you can claim!" yelled Fluttershy.

"That's just wrong, you can't own somepony and treat them like dirt!" Rainbow Dash argued.

"Oh, you mean like this?" Lucifer says this as his finger points down directly at Emerald, who suddenly felt an extremely painful electric shock pumping through her entire body. Her agonizing screams were loud enough to be heard from outside the castle, a sick smile appears on the Underworld ruler's face as he tortures the defenseless unicorn mercilessly for several seconds before finally stopping, causing her to collapse to the floor as Emerald cries from the excruciating pain inflicted on her. Twilight and her friends were in complete and utter disgust when Lucifer sadistically laughs at Emerald's misery.

"Hear that? That's the sound of music to my ears." Lucifer crooned in a state of bliss.

"You...you heartless monster!!!" shouted Twilight, angered by the sick enjoyment Lucifer displayed while torturing Emerald, she uses her magic to equip the Elements of Harmony on herself and her friends. Just as they prepare to make their move against the dark lord, Lucifer aims his finger at Emerald with the intent to hurt her.

"Uh uh uh, I would think twice about using the Elements of Harmony on me, unless you want to bring this pathetic unicorn back to Equestria as a corpse." Lucifer warns the Mane Six who reluctantly stands down, knowing well that they didn't want to see Emerald being tortured again or worse.

"I know all too well about the Elements of Harmony; the greatest weapon in Equestria, it was your princess who used it to lock me away in this damned world..." Lucifer continued, showing a hint of resentment against the alicorn princess. "For centuries, that accursed seal Celestia placed upon this realm has prevent me from accomplishing my goal to take over Equestria."

"And when the seal's strength began to diminish, it was the right opportunity to carry out your plan to exterminate Princess Celestia before then, isn't it?!" Twilight countered.

"While I cannot leave the Underworld psychically but with the seal's current state, my powerful magic can still pass through. All I had to do was to search for the most miserable pony out there and convince them to do my bidding..." bragged the dark lord.

"That's where you found Emerald, you promised her a better life by tricking her into signing your contract and having her kill Princess Celestia for you." said an enraged Future Applebloom. "Even so, you still planned on tossing her aside like a broken toy!"



"To tell you the truth, I look down on all forms of life and see them as nothing more than mere objects to be used, just like this pathetic unicorn you've traveled so far to rescue." Lucifer's foot kicked the bars of Emerald's cage, scaring the tormented pony and further provoking the enraged group.

"Vile beast!" hissed Rarity.

"How could you be so cruel?!" scolded Fluttershy.

"You're beyond despicable!" shouted Applejack.

"I oughta kick your scaly @\$@ for that!" barked Rainbow Dash.

"Yeah, he's a big bully who enjoys hurting ponies for fun!" Pinkie Pie exclaimed.

"You are the true embodiment of evil, Lucifer! I know now that you have no redeeming qualities, you take a delight of causing sorrow and despair to anyone that you encountered! You deserve to be wiped out from this world, you barbaric bastard!" Twilight yelled at the dark lord, using a word she never thought to use even in anger.

The room went silent as Lucifer's expression turns cold from Twilight's outburst, causing the dragon to rise from his throne and taking several steps towards the gang with an icy glare. Twilight bravely stood face to face against the lord of the Underworld with no intent of backing away despite his intimidating size, which came as a shock to Emerald and even Twilight's friends who were worried about what could happen next. The two silently stared at each other for a brief moment before a smirk formed on Lucifer's face.

"The determined look in your eyes shows you have no fear of me, despite knowing what I'm fully capable of and that little speech of yours displays a strong desire to challenge me." Lucifer responded. "You're exactly like your princess, Twilight Sparkle. Never in my life would I encountered another pony with the same resolution as Celestia, since you and your friends went through so much trouble to get here, how about I make a deal with you?"

"What kind of deal?" Twilight wondered, confused by the dark lord's sudden change of attitude.

"I'll release Emerald to you with the contract null and void, making her a free pony so she can be reunited with her mother but under one condition; I want you to use the Elements of Harmony to erase the seal for me..." Lucifer stated his deal to the gang.

"What?!" Twilight gasped along with the others, including Emerald.

"You do want to bring Emerald back home safely, don't you? Unless something bad happens to her if you refuse, can you just picture how heart-broken her mother will be when she finds out that her only daughter has died, thus making your mission all in vain. So what's it gonna be?" The dark lord asked with a smug demeanor, leaving the violet unicorn to decide on accepting his deal or not.

"Don't do this, Twilight! Lucifer is trying to trick you into freeing him!" protested Future Applebloom.

"Please don't give into his demands, I don't want all of Equestria to suffer because of me!" Emerald cried out.

"You got to listen to me, the future in my time is already ruined because of him, I don't want the same thing to happen in this timeline" Future Applebloom pleaded with Twilight. "Think about it, there has to be another way around this..."

"I know of one way, Applebloom..." said Twilight as she turns around to face the dark lord. "Lucifer, I've made my decision; I accept your deal."

"You've made a wise choice, Twilight." Lucifer smiled.

"Are you out of your mind?! You realize that Equestria is now in danger because of-" Twilight quickly hushes Rainbow Dash and gathered her friends in a small circle to whisper something important to them.

"Ohhhh okay, I see where your going at, are you sure this plan will work?" asked Applejack.

"Yes, it's our only chance, so lets do this." Twilight replied as her friends agrees to follow her plan.

"Whatever you ponies are chatting about, it can wait..." Lucifer said as his patience was wearing thin.

"Sorry about that, can you show us where the seal is located?" Twilight asked the dark lord.

Lucifer nods and agreed to show the ponies the location of the seal while at the same time, he releases Emerald out from her cage as part of the deal. The black dragon leads the group down to the lowest floor of the castle; an underground cavern where they see a glowing symbol on the ground that bares a striking resemblance to Princess Celestia's cutie mark, the gang notices the signs of the seal's strength fading away as there were hairline cracks all over and the light shining from it was dimming repeatedly. Twilight and her friends gathers around the broken seal as they activate the Elements of Harmony, the mane six levitates in mid-air and uses the Elements power as the cracks around the seal spreads out. Once the light from it finally dies out, the entire seal shatters to pieces like glass and the shards quickly vanishes into thin air. Emerald and Future Applebloom watches the six creating a portal in it's place which shows an image of Equestria at night time, Lucifer stood by with a satisfied smirk as he sees Twilight walking towards his way.

"The seal is broken and we opened a doorway back to Equestria" Twilight informs the dragon. "Now we want you to return the favor."

"Very well" Lucifer replied as the contract with Emerald's name appears in his hand, he then tears it in two and the pieces burns to ashes. "Consider yourself free, Emerald. You are no longer of any use for me."

"I...I don't know what to say to this..." Emerald stuttered, she wasn't sure whether to thank Twilight and her friends for releasing her or to scold them for breaking the seal and letting the lord of the Underworld into Equestria.

"You can thank us later, Emerald." said Future Applebloom who winks at her, letting the unicorn know of what they were doing.

"At last, after being sealed for a thousand years, I can now truly leave the Underworld and bring eternal darkness to Equestria!" boosted Lucifer while standing in front of the portal. "And I have you ponies to thank for, I'll spare your lives for now since I need an audience to witness the destruction firsthand!"

The dark dragon laughed maniacally as he steps through the portal, hoping that the first thing he wanted to do was to destroy the nearest town he could find. But what Lucifer did not expect to happen next was that the moment he passes through the exit, he finds himself at a grassy field far away from any populated area and to make matters worse; the sun was still out and there were no clouds in sight.

"What?! NO, THIS CAN'T BE!!!" the dragon shouted in disbelief.

"What's wrong, Lucifer? Can't stand a little sunlight?" Lucifer turns around to see Twilight and the others stepping out from the portal which disappears upon exiting.

"You...You tricked me!" Lucifer growled at the violet unicorn.

"Princess Celestia told us about how she was able to defeat you before, the reason why you wanted to eliminate her in the first place was because of her power to control the sun, which makes you completely vulnerable!" Twilight clarified.

"Then that deal I made with you, you set this up, didn't you?!" Lucifer exclaimed.

"When we used the Elements of Harmony, not only we broke the seal but when we created the portal leading us out here, I used a spell to create that image of Equestria at night, knowing you prefer attacking countries at your most powerful state and you fell for it" The unicorn explained with a smirk on her face. "Oh and one more thing, that portal was a one-way exit, which mean you can't crawl your way back to the Underworld."

"You can't hide in the shadows anymore, Lucifer, it's time that you pay for your crimes!" said Future Applebloom.

Having been fooled by the protege of Princess Celestia, the dragon makes a low snarling sound as his body trembles with rage and hands clenching into his fists. With anger burning in his eyes, Lucifer rears his head back as he lets off a monstrous roar into the air, the black flames on his body flared violently and the surrounding area tremors from the sheer power coming off from the enraged dragon, as if a volcano that had been dormant for centuries finally awakes in a violent eruption.

**"HOW DARE YOU MAKE A FOOL OUT OF THE LORD OF DARKNESS!!! I WILL NOT STAND BY AND LET A GROUP OF WRETCHED PONIES GET THE BEST OF ME, FOR THAT I WILL PERSONALLY END YOUR LIVES BY TEARING YOU ALL TO SHREDS! AND ONCE I'M DONE, I'LL SCORCH THIS PATHETIC COUNTRY TO THE GROUND AND EVERYONE WITH IT!!!!!!!"** The dragon roars at the gang with intense hatred in his voice.

The mane six along with Future Applebloom and Emerald stood by each others side as they face against the lord of the Underworld, in an upcoming battle between good and evil that will decide the fate of Equestria's future. Should they succeed in defeating Lucifer for a brighter future or will history repeats itself as darkness swallows the peaceful kingdom like in Future Applebloom's time...

To Be Continued.

## 8 - Chapter 9

It was a clear sunny day at Ponyville as the Cutie Mark Crusaders were at their clubhouse, Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo were discussing on what tasks they would do today to earn them their cutie mark, Applebloom on the other hand has been quiet during the whole conversation. For the past few days, the story of her families demise and the destruction of Ponyville as told by her future-self worried the yellow filly. Applebloom never said a word about the discussion to her friends, as she made a promise to her older-self to keep it a secret between them, even though the young Cutie Mark Crusader was pretending that nothing was wrong when somepony ask her. Applebloom was lost in her own angst-ridden thoughts when Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo turns to her for an answer.

"Hey Applebloom, do you have any suggestions on what we should do today?" Sweetie Belle asked.

"Well...to be honest, I don't know..." the yellow filly responded.

"Not a single idea?" Scootaloo raises a brow.

"No...I can't really think of anything." Applebloom sadly shakes her head.

The two fillies look at each other as they realize something was wrong with their depressed friend.

"Hey, is it me or somethings up with Applebloom?" whispered Scootaloo.

"Now that you mentioned it, she doesn't seem like herself." Sweetie Belle whispered back.

"Should we ask her whats wrong?" asked Scootaloo.

"Hmm yeah, maybe we should so we can try cheering her up" whispered Sweetie Belle before the two turn their attention to the glum earth pony. "Applebloom, is something bothering you?"

"What? N-no, nothing's bothering me" Applebloom denied. "What makes you think that?"

"You've been quiet and mopey since we started this meeting" stated Scootaloo. "Besides If something's bugging you, you could have at least tell us so we can help you."

"It's a personal matter, Scootaloo..." admitted Applebloom.

"Did something bad happen at your place?" asked the orange pegasus.

"No, it's nothing like that." Applebloom replied.

"Then what is it?" asked Scootaloo.

"I can't tell you, I already made a promise that I would never say a word to anypony" said Applebloom as

she looks down. "It's best if you don't know about it..."

"Applebloom, we're your friends, it's alright if you can tell us what's bothering you." said Sweetie Belle who places her hoof over her dispirited friend's shoulder.

"Yeah, we hate seeing you all sad and depressed like this" said Scootaloo standing by her friend's side. "so please, tell us what's wrong?"

The yellow filly looks at her friends and thought to herself whether or not to tell them about the bleak future. Even though she'll end up breaking the promise she made to her mare-self, Applebloom knew she couldn't hide it forever from her friends, since they were concerned about her well-being. She lets out a long sigh as the filly finally decides to tell them.

"Alright...but you two have to keep this an absolute secret." said Applebloom.

"We promised." Sweetie Belle nods.

"Do you mean it? Because this is a really big secret and it should never leave the clubhouse." clarified the yellow earth pony.

"Yes, yes we mean it, so what is it?" said Scootaloo who's eager to hear the secret.

"Okay...the thing that's been bothering me for the past few days is-" Applebloom was suddenly cut off as the tree house and the surrounding area began to tremble violently.

"What's happening?!" Sweetie Belle panicked.

"IT'S AN EARTHQUAKE!" yelled Scootaloo.

"QUICK, OUT OF THE TREE HOUSE!" Applebloom shouted as she and the others quickly exits the tree house to find a safe area in Sweet Apple Acres.

Meanwhile, the citizens of Ponyville went into a full-blown panic as the earthquake struck their town; the Cakes at Sugarcube Corner hid under the table while holding their crying twins and Nurse Redheart along with the staff at the hospital had their hooves full making sure the patients were safe.

At the Golden Oak Library however, Spike was having trouble keeping himself safe from the earthquake as the books fell right off the shelves and lands on top of him. The baby dragon pushes the mountain of books off of him and got out while trying to avoid being buried again by the falling literature.

"WHAT IN EQUESTRIA IS GOING ON?!" Spike shouted in confusion.

Near the Ghastly Gorge area where the seismic disturbance were coming from, Twilight and her friends were in the presence of the enraged Lucifer who they tricked into coming out of the Underworld where the sun is still out in Equestria.

With the sunlight weakening the dark lord, the gang may have the advantage now that he's not as

invincible but with the sheer power radiating from Lucifer, the ponies knew this wasn't going to be an easy battle. The earthquake finally dies down as the dragon regains his composure and prepares to make his first move against the group.

"Now...which one of you shall perish first?" Lucifer hissed.

The ponies silently glare at the dark lord as they weren't in the least intimidated by his threat, especially Future Applebloom who had more experience in fighting Lucifer from her timeline. In their last battle, she along with Scootaloo and Sweetie Belle barely made it out alive after Lucifer mercilessly pummeled the trio. Even when they combined their efforts, the Cutie Mark Crusaders couldn't put a single dent on the dragon's thick hide and were forced to retreat before Lucifer could finish them off.

After traveling to the past and warning the Mane Six of Lucifer's plans, they've successfully prevented Princess Celestia's assassination and rescued Emerald from the depths of the Underworld. All that was left is to fight the dark lord himself in his weakened state, before Twilight and her friends could use the Elements of Harmony, the future pony notices smoke seeping through his sharp teeth as Lucifer opens his mouth.

"Watch out!" shouted Future Applebloom.

The black dragon unleashes his fiery breath at the gang who quickly reacts and jumps out of the way, the heat from Lucifer's flames was so intense that it sets a couple of nearby trees on fire and melted a large boulder.

"Whoa, if we hadn't dodge that, we could have been barbecued ponies!" said a shocked Applejack.

"Yeah! Talk about when things start heating up and I meant that literally!" Pinkie Pie exclaimed.

"Our only hope is the Elements of Harmony but we can't focus if he keeps attacking us." said Twilight

"It would be unwise to use them now especially if he's not going to give us the time to use it, our best plan is to fight him until he's weak enough." suggested Future Applebloom.

"Couldn't we just distract him?" Rarity asked.

"No, Lucifer will notice by then and he'll do anything to prevent you girls from using the Elements of Harmony." stated the future mare.

"So how are we gonna combat against him?" asked Rainbow Dash.

"I have an idea, there's this one spell I want to try out." Emerald spoke as the gang looks at her.

"Let's hear it." said Future Applebloom.

"It is called the Synchronization Spell, it's where two unicorns combine their magic which in turn amplifies their power that can be used for offensive and defensive spells." Emerald explained.

"I never heard this kind of this spell before, how do you perform it?" asked Twilight.

"To perform it, we need to focus our magic on each others horns so that it will create a magical link connecting us" Emerald instructed. "It'll take at least several minutes for it to complete the spell."

"Where did you even find this spell?" the violet unicorn asked.

"it's from a rare spell book I have in my personal collection back at home, but the only drawback is that we can't be seperated within five feet from each other, any further and the spell will wear off." stated Emerald.

"Alright, I'll volunteer to perform the spell with you but in the meantime, we need to keep Lucifer busy so he won't interrupt the process" said Twilight before turning her attention to her friends. "Can you girls stall Lucifer for us?"

"You can count on us!" Rainbow Dash replied.

"Good, now let's do this!" said Future Applebloom.

The gang starts their plan as Rainbow Dash grabs Future Applebloom and takes off in the air, Fluttershy does the same with Applejack with Pinkie Pie and Rarity following them. Twilight and Emerald stood within the five feet distance limit from each other and carefully concentrate their magic on their horns in unison, the magical auras from their horns slowly merges with each other in the shape of an arc. As the unicorns prepares the spell, Lucifer on the other hand was about to make his move against the two when suddenly a rock was thrown and hits his face, the dark lord turns to his left to see the Pinkie Pie taunting him.

"Hey Lucifer, your breath smells like a burning garbage dump!" yelled the pink mare as she sticks her tongue out at him and takes off running.

The enraged dragon chases after Pinkie Pie when he was struck on the back with a green ball that explodes on impact, catching him by surprise as the explosion causes him to stumble and fall. Lucifer lifts himself off the ground and looks up to see Rainbow Dash in the air carrying Future Applebloom who tosses another green ball at him, only this time he was able to dodge the explosive ball but was caught off guard as Fluttershy flies down with Applejack delivering a swift kick to Lucifer's ribs.

"Take that, ya overgrown lizard!" shouted Applejack.

Lucifer tries to slash the orange earth pony with his claws but Fluttershy flies up to avoid Applejack from being hit, the dark lord then breathes out a barrage of fireballs in the air at the flying ponies, Rainbow Dash easily dodges the fireballs despite carrying Future Applebloom while Fluttershy however was having a difficult time avoiding them as she tries not to get hit while holding Applejack.

One of the fireballs narrowly misses the timid pegasus but she eventually manages to fly away from the dragon's range, Rainbow Dash flies down and throws Future Applebloom where she raises her hoof and punches Lucifer across his face. The future mare jumps back as the lord of the Underworld felt something wet from his lips, he wipes it off and to his surprise, there was streak of blood smeared on his



claw.

"Well what do you know, it looks like even the Lord of Darkness is capable of bleeding." Future Applebloom smirked.

"How dare you, you wretched pony!" Lucifer growled with teeth gritting.

"I take it your not used to battling others in the day time, since you prefer to fight in the shadows like a coward!" taunted the yellow mare.

"You will regret those words!" The dragon snarls as he charges towards the future pony.

Future Applebloom stood in position as she waits for Lucifer to get close, the yellow mare jumps in the air once Lucifer was near and struck the dragon directly in the face with a spinning kick, causing Lucifer to stumble back as the force of the kick broke a part of his tooth.

"That was for Ponyville!" exclaimed Future Applebloom.

"You insolent, little wretch!" growled the dark lord as he conjures a dark magic orb from his claw.

The future mare makes a dash for it as Lucifer throws the orb at the fleeing pony, Future Applebloom tries to outrun it but the orb was catching up to her fast, Rainbow Dash swoops in and grabs her in time as the magic orb lands on the ground and explodes in a burst of flames. The rainbow-maned pegasus nearly loses her balance from the shock wave but manages to land herself and Future Applebloom safely on top of the trees.

"Thanks, Rainbow." said the future mare.

"No problem." Rainbow Dash replied.

Lucifer conjures up two more dark orbs and was about to throw them at the two when out of no where, Pinkie Pie jumps on top of the dark lord and covers his eyes with her hooves.

"Peekaboo!" shouted Pinkie Pie.

This catches the dragon by surprise as he blindly threw the orbs, causing Rainbow Dash and Future Applebloom to quickly jump out of the way as the flying orbs narrowly misses the two and explodes in mid-air.

"GET OFF OF ME!" yelled the dark lord as he tries to grab Pinkie Pie, who was moving around to keep herself from out of his reach.

"Not until you guess who's behind you, mister" teased the pink mare before Lucifer manage to grab on to her tail and pulls her off of him. "Hey, you were suppose to guess!"

"You think I would let you get away with that little trick you pulled?!" Lucifer snarled at the giggling pony.

"Oh that wasn't the trick you should worry about." Pinkie Pie informed him.

"What are you talking about-" Lucifer was cut off when a small log hits him on the back of the head, causing him to drop Pinkie Pie as he turns to see Rarity with several logs and rocks levitating around her.

"Claws off my friend, you ruffian!" yelled Rarity.

"If you think that you can fight against me with just a couple of rocks and logs, then you are sadly mistaken." Lucifer boasted.

The fashionista unicorn smirks as she starts running towards the dark lord while using her magic to carry the projectiles. First she fires a small rock at Lucifer who easily dodges it and hurls a couple of logs which the dragon burns them with his fiery breath, Rarity throws a slightly bigger rock at him and Lucifer breaks it into pieces with a single punch. This leaves the dragon open for attack as Rarity strikes Lucifer with a vicious kick to the abdomen.

"ARGH!" The dark lord cried out in pain while holding onto his stomach.

"That's what you get for underestimating us ponies!" said the confident unicorn.

Without warning, Lucifer swings his fist directly at Rarity's face in retaliation, the force of the blow was enough to send the unicorn flying about thirty feet away before dropping to the ground with a bloody nose.

"RARITY!" gasped Fluttershy.

"Oh no..." said a shocked Applejack.

"Hold on Rarity, I'm coming for you!" Rainbow Dash immediately flies over to rescue her friend but soon finds herself dodging a swarm of fireballs from Lucifer. One of them hits the end of her tail and catches on fire which the cyan pegasus quickly puts out, she swoops down in a second attempt to get to Rarity but was met with several more fireballs and had to fly away so she won't get hit. While Lucifer was busy trying to hit the flying pony, the others rush over the battlefield to their fallen friend's aid.

"Rarity, are you alright?" asked Future Applebloom as Rarity wakes up.

"Ugh...I feel like I was hit by a train..." the dazed unicorn responded.

"We'll get you out of the area so you can recover." said Fluttershy as she helps Rarity get back on her hooves.

As they were about to leave the area, the gang hears a sudden cry from Rainbow Dash who was hit in the stomach by a fireball, causing her to lose control and crashing straight down into the trees. Lucifer turns his attention to the horrified ponies with a sadistic grin on his face, cracking his knuckles as Future Applebloom and Applejack prepared themselves for combat.

"Now with that pesky insect out of the way, I can deal with the rest of you..." said Lucifer.

Just as the sisters were about to fight against Lucifer to protect their friends, the dark lord was struck from behind by a powerful energy bolt that knocked the dragon away from the gang. The ponies look over to see both Twilight and Emerald had finished the Synchronization Spell; the two unicorns were surrounded by a radiant violet aura that gives off an odd vibration in the surroundings, their eyes glowing bright and their horns linked together by an energy arc.

The spell has made Twilight and Emerald work in complete sync as shown by how they walk at the same time, along with their breathing, blinking and even sharing the same thoughts. The other ponies were astonished to see not only the spell working but their magic is now twice as strong together, even the dark lord was surprised by the sudden attack as he stood back up and stares at the two unicorns.

"What kind of magic is this?" He thought to himself.

"You will not hurt our friends, Lucifer!" Twilight and Emerald spoke in unison.

"I don't know what spell you are using but it's not going to be enough to defeat me!" The dragon stated as he breathes out flames at them.

The two instantly cast a magic barrier around themselves and their friends before the flames could hit them, shielding the ponies from the immense heat as it burns the surrounding area, scorching the ground until it was charred black. The dark lord stops with his fire breathing but to his disbelief, it didn't damage the barrier, the unicorns lower the barrier down to launch an attack by firing a bombardment of energy blades at the dragon.

Lucifer crosses his arms as he braces himself for the upcoming attack, the energy blades rained upon the dark lord with intense force, pelting against the dragon's thick scales and some even cut through deep. The two unicorn stops their attack as they prepare another spell against Lucifer, who took this opportunity for a counter attack by running around to find a blind spot, he throws a dark orb at the ponies only for it to get destroyed by a lightning bolt from the unicorns.

They fired several more electric bolts at Lucifer who tried to dodge them but one struck the dragon and causes him to fall, Lucifer was then hit by three more bolts before he could get back up. Twilight and Emerald conjures a small glowing ball that starts increasing in size while Lucifer is down, once the ball was about the size of a large boulder, the unicorns prepare to attack just as the dragon was getting up and seeing the ball aiming at him.

"This is for deceiving me/Emerald for all these years!" Twilight and Emerald exclaimed as they fire the ball at Lucifer.

The dark lord got back on his feet and with no time to dodge the glowing ball, he quickly uses dark magic to cast a barrier in front of him but when the ball comes into contact, it caused an explosion so powerful that could be heard from several miles away. The shockwave nearly ripped the nearby trees from the ground and the animals took off fleeing for their lives, a huge mushroom cloud could be seen even from Ponyville as the citizens watched with a look of concern on their faces. While the dust settles, the gang notices Twilight and Emerald were showing signs of fatigue as the energy arch above them

was flickering.

"Hey, what's wrong with you two?" asked Applejack.

"We were...unprepared for this...we used up most of our magic, especially on that last attack." the two unicorns replied while catching their breath.

"That doesn't sound good." said a worried Rarity.

"We don't know how long this spell will last but as long as we still have some magic, we can continue fighting." said Twilight and Emerald.

"Don't push yourselves too hard, we got Lucifer on the ropes so reserve your magic for now." stated Future Applebloom.

"Lucifer can't possibly continue fighting after being hit with that big blast you two did." said Pinkie Pie.

"This should give us the time to use the Elements of Harmony but we need Rainbow Dash if we're going to finish this battle. Fluttershy, can you go out and find her-" Future Applebloom cuts her sentence short as she notice the pegasus's face had turn pale. "Fluttershy?"

"G-g-girls...L-l-look!" stammered Fluttershy as points her hoof out.

Looking over at the area where the explosive spell went off, the ponies watch in horror as Lucifer steps out of the dust cloud completely unscathed from the blast.

"For a moment there, I thought I was done for..." said Lucifer while brushing himself off.

"No way!" Applejack said with her jaw nearly dropping to the ground.

"T-that's...impossible!" stuttered Rarity.

"That was a clever trick you pulled, I give you that but it's no match against my magic." stated the dark lord.

"Damn it, here I thought we could have finish him off by now!" said Future Applebloom.

Lucifer took notice of Twilight and Emerald's current condition as the energy arch connecting them was on the verge of going out.

"Judging by how exhausted you two are, it seems that spell of yours has a limit and it won't be long before it wears off." informed Lucifer.

"W-what should we do now?" asked the frighten pegasus.

"Stall him for us" Twilight and Emerald spoke. "We can't attack him in this state, give us some time to recover so we can at least conjure up another spell."

"We better make this count." said Future Applebloom.

"Let's show this vile beast that we're not giving up!" said a determined Rarity.

"CHARGE!" shouted Pinkie Pie as she, Applejack, Rarity and Future Applebloom all charge towards the dark lord.

As Fluttershy stayed with Twilight and Emerald to guard them, the four ponies gang up against the dragon as they begin to attack him. Future Applebloom throws a pepper bomb at Lucifer that explodes in a red mist, causing his eyes and nose to burn from the extremely spicy mist as Applejack kicks him in the knee while he's blind, Lucifer tries to hit the nearest pony but misses and gets punched in the nose by Rarity.

"That was for nearly breaking my nose!" Rarity yelled.

The dark lord opens his eyes as he sees the fashionista pony in front of him, promoting him to breath fire at her but Rarity narrowly dodges it to avoid being burn. Future Applebloom tries to kick him but Lucifer grabs her leg and tosses the red-maned mare at Rarity, knocking both of them out of the way as Applejack runs in to attack only to be smacked in the face hard by the dragon, Lucifer then grabs the orange earth pony and lifts her off the ground as he slowly squeezes his grip tightly around her neck.

"You ponies are really getting on my last nerves!" growled Lucifer.

Applejack struggles against the dragon's vice-like grip while gasping for air, Lucifer smiles as he sadistically strangles the life out of the earth pony when suddenly Pinkie Pie bites down on his tail, causing the dragon to roar in pain as he drops Applejack and turns his attention to the pink mare clamping her jaws on his tail.

"Let go of my tail, you little dog!" yelled the dark lord as he kicks Pinkie Pie off of his tail and causes her to slam against a nearby tree.

Applejack gets back up while trying to regain her breath, she looks over to see Pinkie Pie having been hit hard and Lucifer was about to attack her, the orange earth pony immediately charges at the dragon.

"Don't you dare hurt her!" shouted Applejack.

Before Applejack could attack the dark lord to save her friend, she was struck by Lucifer's tail and was sent flying across the area, landing near where Future Applebloom and Rarity were knocked out. Fluttershy along with Twilight and Emerald are the only ponies left to fight against Lucifer, the two unicorns still haven't recovered from overusing of their magic and Fluttershy was left to guard them against Lucifer.

The timid pegasus was known for her fear of dragons and with their battle against the lord of the Underworld, it made things worse for Fluttershy as she was afraid to even fight him but when she see's her friends injured from trying to defend the weaken unicorns, her fear of dragons suddenly fades away and she became enraged like never before. As if something inside of her was telling the pegasus to

protect her friends, building up the courage to fly over to where Pinkie Pie's at and guards her from Lucifer.

"What do we have here? A pegasus willing to throw her life away for her fellow pony." the dragon sneered while looking down upon her.

"Take one more step towards my friend and you'll be in a world of hurt!" warned Fluttershy.

"Are you honestly threatening me? You seen what I did to your friends and you have the galls to challenge the lord of darkness" Lucifer chuckled at the pegasus's threat. "Don't make me laugh, little pony, unless you want to end up like-"

All of a sudden, Lucifer was caught by surprise as he was struck with a devastating uppercut to the jaw from the yellow pegasus, the dragon nearly falls back but Fluttershy flew around him and kicks Lucifer in the back of the head. Lucifer quickly swings his fist back in retaliation but misses as the enraged pegasus punches the dragon's face in a rapid barrage, hitting the dark lord with every ounce of strength she has.

"YOU WILL NOT HURT MY FRIENDS!" screamed Fluttershy as she lands another major blow to Lucifer's face, breaking several of his teeth and causing him to fall to the ground.

The dark lord spits out pieces of his blood-soaked broken teeth as he gets up to fight back, breathing out a fireball at the pegasus who dodges it and got close enough to drive her elbow to his stomach. The dragon growls in anger as he attempts to land a punch against Fluttershy, the pegasus swiftly avoids his claws and flies around Lucifer in circles to confuse him. The dark lord tries to catch up with the pegasus's speed as he lifts his tail up to hit her at the right moment, however when his tail came down in hopes that he finally hit her, Fluttershy suddenly came at the left side and kicks him square in the face.

The others watch in awe as Fluttershy battles against Lucifer in full force, never would they have imagine the timid pegasus had it in her, especially with her shy and easily-frightened nature. Meanwhile in the woodland parts of Ghastly Gorge, Rainbow Dash had regain consciousness after being hit by Lucifer's fireball, having sustained burns on her stomach and a difficult time standing on her hooves. But luckily for the cyan pegasus, her wings weren't damage during the fall so she's still able to fly.

"That scaly bastard is so gonna get it..." Rainbow Dash mumbles to herself as she flaps her wings and flies off to the battlefield.

Fluttershy continues to unleash her fury against the lord of the Underworld, the furious pegasus punches the dragon a few times in the stomach and when she was about to land another blow, Lucifer slams both of his claws down onto Fluttershy as she hits the ground face first. Before she could get back up, the dragon grabs her by the mane and lifts Fluttershy up to his eye level.

"I'm going to repay that beating you gave me in ten fold!" Lucifer said this as he punched the helpless pegasus in the stomach, causing her to cry out in pain.

Rainbow Dash hears Fluttershy's cry from afar as she arrives to see the dark lord mercilessly beating her friend, Lucifer throws the yellow pegasus down and proceeds to stomp on her like an defenseless

insect. Fluttershy tries to move herself away from the dragon who then kicks her across the field, breaking both of her wings when she crashed against a boulder, the others watched helplessly as they were weakened from the fight to help her.

Angered by the sight of Lucifer pounding Fluttershy like a punching bag, Rainbow Dash took to the air at a higher altitude as she flies straight down, picking up speed just as the dragon was about to attack the injured pegasus.

"H-help...m-me..." Fluttershy stammered in agony.

"I'll put you out of your misery as soon as I'm done with you." Lucifer smirked as he raised his claw at the helpless pony.

Then suddenly Rainbow Dash hurtles at the dark lord from the left side, hitting the unsuspected dragon as he was knocked several yards away from Fluttershy. Once Lucifer gets back up on his feet, he looks around to see what hit him when Rainbow Dash struck him again from behind, causing the dark lord to stumble as he caught a glimpse of the flying pegasus.

"What the? I thought I took care of that rainbow pony!" thought Lucifer.

Rainbow Dash makes a sharp U-turn in the air and hits the dragon from the opposite side, tearing a piece of his shoulder armor off as the cyan pegasus strikes at Lucifer again. With her airspeed increasing drastically per second, Rainbow Dash flew across Ghastly Gorge in a rainbow blur and bombards the dark lord from all directions. Her lightning-speed soon overwhelmed the dragon, making sure that he didn't have any time for a counterattack as Lucifer was being pummeled so violently, one of the blows causes him to hack up blood.

The cyan pegasus then flies out of the battlefield so she would gain altitude in the air, while Lucifer staggers to regain his balance from the immense beating he took, Rainbow Dash charges straight back to the area in rapid speed and heads straight towards Lucifer. The dark lord lifts his head up to see the pegasus coming at him like a comet and before he could have time to defend himself, Rainbow Dash rams right onto his chest just as a sonic rainboom appears upon impact. A huge multicolored shock wave swept through Ghastly Gorge as the collision sent the dragon flying, breaking through a bunch of trees in the way and finally plummeting into a mountain that left a small but noticeable fissure.

Rainbow Dash was also sent flying back due to the rebound of the impact, crashing into the ground and sliding through for several feet before stopping. The others were left dumbstruck upon witnessing Rainbow Dash landing a devastating blow to Lucifer, but when they notice she wasn't moving at all, the ponies immediately rush to their friend's aid.

"Rainbow Dash!" Fluttershy cried out as she ran towards her fallen friend despite her injuries and gently lifts Rainbow Dash in her arms.

"Dashie, Dashie wake up, please say something to us!" said a worried Pinkie Pie.

The cyan pegasus stirs as her eyes slightly open to see her friends around her and Fluttershy holding her.

"F-Fluttershy...y-you're not hurt badly, are you?" Rainbow Dash asked her with a weakly voice.

"Forget about me, you've could have gotten yourself killed pulling off a reckless move like that, what were you thinking?!" Fluttershy scolded her friend as her eyes filled with tears.

"I couldn't stand there while that monster hurt my friends, I nailed him pretty good, did I?" the injured pegasus smiled.

"Yes...yes you did, Rainbow." Fluttershy smiles back.

"Damn...my entire body hurts a lot" Rainbow Dash said wincing in pain. "I don't think I can fly or even fight at this state."

"Don't try to move too much, Rainbow Dash." said Fluttershy.

"Twilight, Emerald, are you two able to perform any spells?" asked Future Applebloom.

"We're still recovering from overusing our magic, we only have enough for one more before the Synchronization Spell wears off." informed the two unicorns.

"Then we're gonna need it for when Lucifer gets back on his feet, knowing how tough that dragon is, he's not going to be happy when he recovers from that attack Rainbow Dash did on him." stated the future mare.

"Don't forget that we still have the Elements of Harmony as our last resort." Applejack reminded to her sister.

"Right, now lets take Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy to a safe area so they can re-"

The gang suddenly hears a loud rage-filled roar echoing across Ghastly Gorge from the mountain area, followed by an explosion that left a huge dust cloud as Lucifer springs through the air in one big leap and lands in the battlefield near the surprised ponies. The sonic rainboom did some major damage to the dragon; his body riddle with scrapes and cuts and the horns on his head were broken off, the armor he wore was torn beyond repair as his chest bares a large smoldering mark from where Rainbow Dash had struck him. Now furious as ever, the dark lord slowly approaches the gang with murderous intent.

"I've...have had...**ENOUGH WITH ALL OF YOU!**" Lucifer roared at the terrified ponies as he conjures two dark orbs from his claws.

Twilight and Emerald quickly casts a barrier spell around the gang just as Lucifer hurls the orbs, the first one explodes upon impact and causes the barrier to crack, their magic was depleting fast as the energy arch connecting their horns was fading away. The second orb struck the broken barrier with enough force to shatter through and the shock wave knocks the ponies off the ground, scattering them through out the area as the arch disappears completely and the two unicorns were separated from each other.

The gang struggles to stand back up on their hooves but the blast had injured most of the ponies, with



Twilight and Emerald having used the last amount of their magic to protect them from the blast, the situation is looking very bleak for the Mane Six as they barely had any strength left to use the Elements of Harmony. The dark lord lets out a sinister laugh while standing triumphantly against the fallen heroines.

"It appears that this battle has reach its climax and in the end, your efforts to take me down were all in vain." the dragon sneered at the injured ponies.

"No...this can't...be happening." Twilight muttered while struggling to stand up.

"We..can't...let him...take over Equestria!" Rainbow Dash said trying to move her injured body but to little avail.

"Don't feel too bad, you ponies should be quite honored that all of you will be the first to die under my reign!" Lucifer smirked.

The dark lord moves in to finish off the incapacitated Mane Six when he was hit on the shoulder by a green explosive ball, Lucifer flinches from the small explosion as he turns to see an injured Future Applebloom still standing in spite of her condition.

"There's no way we're going to let you win, Lucifer!" yelled Future Applebloom.

"You just don't know when to give up, do you?! " The dragon growled.

"I won't give up as long as your existence continues to plague this world, Equestria will not become a place devoid of light that you've created in the future and I'm sure as hell won't let that happen in this time line!" proclaimed the future mare as she sprints towards the dark lord.

Lucifer clenches his fist tightly as he prepares to attack Future Applebloom who takes out a black ball from her vest and throws it at him, a large net pops out from the ball and entangles the dragon just as the mare kicks him in the stomach. Future Applebloom jumps away from Lucifer who tears the net off of him and breathes several fireballs at the earth pony, she dodges them easily but the flames created a cloud of smoke around Future Applebloom.

With the smoke blocking her view, the mare cautiously keeps an eye out for the dark lord while reaching in her vest pockets for another explosive ball, but all she could find was one as the rest of her pockets were empty.

"Damn, only one left..." Future Applebloom thought to herself as she looks around to see where Lucifer is going to attack her.

Then a long black tail pierces through the thick smoke and strikes Future Applebloom from behind, causing her to drop the explosive ball as she flies out of the smoke cloud and lands on the hard ground. Before the yellow earth pony could stand up, Lucifer stomps on her back and pins the mare down to prevent her from fighting back.

"You've should have stayed in the future where you belong, if you hadn't time-traveled to the past and

run your mouth to the princess about my plans, taking over this country would have been a lot easier for me!" the dragon chastised her as he stomps on the future mare.

"L-let..me...make this..clear for you, Lucifer..." groaned Future Applebloom while turning her head towards Lucifer with a smirk on her face. "You will never have a future of ruling Equestria...EVER!"

The dark lord growls in annoyance as he continues to stomp on Future Applebloom, each time Lucifer drives his foot down on the mare's back, her agonizing cries echoes through out the battlefield. As Applejack pulls herself up despite suffering from a bruise rib from the blast, she hears the cries from her sister and witnesses the dragon ruthlessly beating Future Applebloom so badly that the future mare was coughing out blood, the orange earth pony instantly charges at Lucifer from behind in a full blown rage.

"LEAVE MY SISTER ALONE!" roared Applejack.

Applejack kicks the dragon's other leg as hard as she could, causing Lucifer to lose his balance and fall down when he was about to stomp on Future Applebloom, the enraged earth pony then jumps on his chest and furiously punches the dark lord in the face. Just as she was about to punch him yet again, Lucifer suddenly grabs both Applejack's hooves and throws her off of him but when he stands up, his leg was being held back by Future Applebloom in an attempt to prevent him from attacking her older sister.

"Your efforts are futile!" growled Lucifer as he kicks the red-maned mare off his leg, knocking her towards several bushes and turns his focus on Applejack.

As the injured earth pony tries to get up to fight against the dark lord, Applejack winces from the aching pain of her bruised rib, causing her to stumble and fall back on the ground just as Lucifer draws closer towards Applejack. Looking upon the dragon's hate-filled eyes, the earth pony was paralyzed with fear as Lucifer was standing in front of her like a predator cornering its prey.

"You've put up a brave fight but it looks like this is the end for you, pony!" Lucifer smirked as he whips his tail upwards with the tip pointing at Applejack.

The future mare pushes herself through the bushes just as she spots Lucifer about to kill her sister, her eyes widen and memories about Applejack's gruesome death from her time line flashes through the pony's mind. Not wanting to let that event repeated again, Future Applebloom makes a dash towards her sister's aid, just when the dark lord's tail lunges at Applejack who closes her eyes and awaits her fate.

The orange earth pony kept her eyes shut for a second before realizing she wasn't struck, slowly Applejack opens her eyes and see's something that made her expression turn into complete horror; Future Applebloom standing in front of her with Lucifer's tail stabbing directly into her abdomen. Blood was dripping from her wound and forms a small puddle on the ground, the future mare was holding on to the dragon's tail while her body quivers in agonizing pain, the others watch in utter shock as Lucifer lifts the wounded pony to his eye level with his tail still inside her.

"What a shame, throwing your own life away to save your pathetic sister" The dark lord sneered at her. "Tell me, does it hurt when I do this?"

The dragon's tail drills even deeper into Future Applebloom's wound, causing her to let out a

blood-curdling scream while Lucifer looks on with a sickening smile.

"APPLEBLOOM!" Applejack cried out.

"Ohhh I bet the pain is very excruciating, there's absolutely nothing better than hearing the wails of the wounded." Lucifer smirked.

"You...son..of a..." stuttered Future Applebloom with teeth gritting.

"That's enough from you, now why don't you do me a favor and die!" said the dark lord as he use his tail to fling Future Applebloom into the air like a ragdoll and when she came back down, Lucifer punches the wounded pony so hard that she went flying away from the battlefield.

Applejack and the others were left horrified after what they had witnessed, not only Future Applebloom saved her sister from being killed by Lucifer but as a result, she was wounded by the dark lord who took a delight on seeing her suffering before knocking her away like a piece of trash. Lucifer starts to laugh maniacally at the demise of the future mare much to the dismay of the gang.

"What a foolish mare, to think that she could change what has already set in stone." boasted the dark lord.

"Y-you...Heartless bastard!" shouted an enraged Applejack.

"Oh did I struck a nerve? It's not my fault that she was too weak to defeat me, let alone taking a fatal blow for you." Lucifer grins at the furious pony.

"I'll buck that stupid grin off your face if it's the last thing I do!" yelled Applejack as she tries to stand up to attack him but was quickly pinned down by the dragon's foot.

"Don't even bother, you and your friends don't have any strength left to battle me" stated Lucifer as he stomps on Applejack, causing her to cry out in agony due to her bruise rib. "You and the others will join your sister soon enough..."

The dark lord slowly begins to crush Applejack under the weight of his foot, her screams echos across Ghastly Gorge and with Future Applebloom having been critically injured, the hope of saving Equestria began to look like a lost cause. Even with the Elements of Harmony in their possession, the Mane Six were worn out from the on-going battle against the lord of the Underworld, the ponies thought to themselves if they were really going to die at the hands of Lucifer like Future Applebloom described in her time line.

Just when all hope seems to be lost for the ponies, a powerful golden beam suddenly appears out of nowhere and struck Lucifer from behind, knocking the dragon off of Applejack as he crashes through a couple of trees. The surprise attack left the gang dumbfounded and looking around to see where it came from, at the corner of their eyes spots a familiar alicorn in the air with long, flowing multicolored mane. Landing in the battlefield besides the injured Applejack was the ruler of Equestria herself, Princess Celestia.

"Princess...Celestia?" Applejack uttered while looking up at the alicorn princess.

"Are you alright, Applejack?" asked Princess Celestia.

"My rib is bruised..but other than that, I can still stand" said Applejack as she manages to push herself back up on her hooves. "How in the world did you know we were here?"

"I received a letter from Spike about a major disturbance outside from Ponyville, I asked my sister to watch over Canterlot while I head over to Ponyville" the princess explained to the earth pony. "And on the way, I've witness Rainbow Dash's sonic rainboom coming from this direction, so I flew over here only to find Lucifer about to finish you off."

"I can't tell you how really lucky we are to have you here, your highness" Applejack smiled a bit before looking down with a grim expression. "We fought Lucifer with everything we have but he still had us by the tail, the reason why we haven't use the Elements of Harmony was because we knew Lucifer wouldn't give us the time to-"

Applejack was cut off by the alicorn princess who puts her hoof on the injured pony's shoulders and leans over to whisper something into her ear.

"Go help your friends with preparing the Elements of Harmony, I'll take care of him" Celestia quietly instructs her with her gentle smile. "You have my word that I will keep all of you safe from Lucifer."

The blonde-maned mare smiled and follows Celestia's orders to aid her friends, even though she was still worried about her sister's wounded state, Applejack's mind was now focused on helping bring down the lord of the Underworld once and for all. While the earth pony began to help her friends up on their hooves, Lucifer recovers from the surprise attack and rises from the dust cloud to see the alicorn princess who once imprisoned him in the Underworld for centuries.

"Celestia..." the dark lord hissed at the alicorn. "I should have known you were responsible for that sneak attack!"

"You will no longer harm my student or her friends, your battle is with me now, Lucifer!" said Princess Celestia who stood in a fighting stance with a golden aura emitting from her horn.

"Ohhh how I waited so many years for this opportunity, I have not forgotten what you did to me the last time we fought a thousand years ago." said Lucifer.

"Nor have I forgotten the countless nations you'd conquered and the lives you've destroyed for your own demonic desire!" Princess Celestia replied sharply.

"Equestria would have been mine if you hadn't meddle in and prevented my empire from growing, Celestia!" the dragon argued.

"And let you bring ruin to this peaceful land and force my subjects into slavery? Never in an eternity that I would let Equestria be ruled by a ruthless monster such as yourself!" the alicorn princess lashes back at the dark lord.

"Then we'll have to see who comes out the victor in this battle, I won't be taken down so easily like the first time we fought even with this wretched sun light!" boasted Lucifer.

"I take it that the sun's rays has already affected your body you once claim to be impenetrable, kinda reminds me of how I crushed your pride when I gave you that scar." a smirk forms on the princess's mouth, noting the scar across Lucifer's right eye.

The alicorn's remark causes the dark lord to breathe out several fireballs that were heading towards the princess, Celestia then casts a magic barrier that instantly appears and shields her from the flaming projectiles. Once the smoke clears, the alicorn lowers the barrier and fires a golden orb at Lucifer, who narrowly dodges it but the orb makes a sharp turn and lands on his left shoulder where it explodes on impact.

"GAAHHHH!" the dragon roared as the blast created a wound on his shoulder, blood was dripping and running down across his arm.

"That was for attempting to destroy Canterlot and trying to assassinate me!" claimed Princess Celestia.

While holding onto his wound, the dragon glares at the princess with bloodshot eyes as he conjures a dark orb from his claw, only this time it was bigger than what he had use against the Twilight and her friends. Lucifer hurls the dark orb towards Princess Celestia who quickly flap her wings and took to the air, just as the large sphere passes by and lands away from the battlefield where a huge explosion can be seen from afar.

"Though your magic is still powerful even under the sunlight, the injuries you received from fighting my student and her friends has apparently diminish your accuracy" said Celestia before landing back on the ground. "you might as well give up, Lucifer!"

"I...will...never surrender...to a bunch of ponies..." replied the dark lord, hyperventilating and nearly exhausted from the battle, clinching his claw so hard his nails pierces through the skin and bleeds. "Know this, Celestia...the lord of darkness...will never submit...**TO THE LIKES OF YOU!**"

Lucifer channels his dark magic to his right arm and drives his fist into the earth, causing the land around the area to tremble violently as the surface begins to crack, a series of holes appears from where the cracks form shoots out pillars of pitch-black beams that reached several stories in the air. Princess Celestia flew back to avoid being hit by the dark beams, one of them narrowly misses the alicorn by an inch from her head but not before slicing off a few strains of her rainbow mane.

The princess flew across the battlefield with her eyes locking on the dragon like a hawk, Celestia flies down to attack Lucifer from above when one of the dark beams nearly struck her wing, though it only singed a feather or two. Once she was near Lucifer, her horn charges and fires off another golden beam directly at the dark lord who counters it with his fiery breath.

The alicorn's beam and the dragon's flames collides as the two deities struggles to overpower each other, the heat from Lucifer's flames intensifies in a desperate attempt to push the beam back but to no avail, the golden beam pierces through the flames and Lucifer manages to jump out of the way before it

could hit him.

The dark lord looks up to see the princess firing another golden orb at him, he throws a dark orb as it hits the other and causes the two to explode in midair, Lucifer prepares for another counterattack when Princess Celestia flies through the dust cloud and fires a magical blast towards the dragon at point-blank range.

The blast sent Lucifer flying across the area where he crash lands into a hill, once he rises up from the crater-sized hole left from the impact, the dragon tosses a couple of dark orbs at Princess Celestia who swiftly dodges them and fires a few back at Lucifer. Meanwhile at the other side of the battlefield, Applejack had helped her friends back up on their hooves, with Rainbow Dash having the most difficulty standing due to her injuries and Pinkie Pie having to hold her up.

"How are you holding up, Dashie?" asked the pink mare.

"Every bone in my body feels like a pile of broken glass..." the injured pegasus replied.

"And I can't fly with the way my wings are now..." Fluttershy sadly stated.

"I know it hurts right now but we got bigger things to worry about, the princess is battling Lucifer and she wants us to prepare the Elements of Harmony." explained Applejack.

"She's buying us time, isn't she?" asked Rarity.

"Yes Rarity, this is our only chance to finally take that son of a dog down once and for all." Applejack said as she picks up Twilight's crown and hands it to her.

"Now your talking my language." Rainbow Dash smirked.

"Alright girls, let's finish this battle for Applebloom and the future of Equestria!" exclaimed Twilight as she and the others rush off to the battlefield.

Before Emerald could catch up with the gang, she notices a small object from the corner of her eye in the patch of grass, it was Future Applebloom's last explosive ball which gives the green unicorn an idea. During the battle between Princess Celestia and Lucifer, the dark lord was using a magic barrier to shield himself from Celestia's golden beam, the barrier begins to crack and the beam pierces through but narrowly misses Lucifer by several inches from his neck.

The broken barrier vanishes around Lucifer who then spits out three fireballs in the air, Princess Celestia use her wings to create a gust of wind that reflect the fireballs back down, the dark lord crosses his arms to defend himself but the flaming projectiles passes by and explodes in a cloud of smoke from fifty feet away. The alicorn princess soars through the air before landing back on the ground, Celestia stared at her enemy while catching her breath and beads of sweat pouring down from her face.

"What's a matter, Celestia? Don't tell me this battle has took a toll on you already?" Lucifer chuckled a little.

"No Lucifer, don't mistaken this as a sign of weakness, my magic is still as strong as it was in the last thousand years." Celestia replied.

"And at the same time, you still haven't been able to take me down permanently." the dark lord sneered at the princess.

"As I said before, I will do anything to prevent you from destroying Equestria even at the cost of my own life!" the princess clarified with a firm, assertive tone in her voice.

"Willing to go that far, are you? After this battle is over and I take control of this country, I will enjoy having your head as a personal trophy of my victory." Lucifer said with a sadistic grin.

The alicorn's magenta eyes catches a glimpse of something behind the smoke cloud left by the dragon's fireballs, Princess Celestia turns her attention back to Lucifer as a smirk forms from the corner of her mouth.

"Well Lucifer, it looks like that this battle has finally come to an end." said the alicorn princess as she flap her wings and takes off in the air.

"Hey! where do you think your going, Celestia?! this fight is not over until I-" the dark lord turns around while keeping his sight on the princess until he sees something near the smoke cloud. "What the?"

Six silhouettes can be seen levitating in mid air as the flames were extinguished and the cloud of smoke blown away, revealing Twilight and her friends wielding the Elements of Harmony as they prepare to launch their final attack against the dark lord.

"WHAT?! NO! " Lucifer exclaimed, eyes widened in shocked disbelief. "How is this possible? They should be in no position to use the Elements after I-"

Then it became clear to the dragon as it hits him like a ton of bricks.

"Celestia...that wretched alicorn! She was distracting me to give them enough time to recover!" The enraged dark lord thought to himself.

"Lucifer, your days of terrorizing the lives of others are over!" shouted Twilight as her eyes glows along with her friends. "Now girls!"

The Mane Six were surrounded by a bright aura that illuminates the area as they fire a rainbow-colored magical beam, in a desperate attempt to counter the upcoming blast from the Elements, Lucifer was about to use his fiery breath when a small green ball was thrown at him and explodes on his face. The sudden attack left him blind him in one eye while the other was still able to see, the dark lord looks to his left to see a battle-worn Emerald with her horn briefly glowing and a satisfying smirk on her face.

Growling at the green unicorn for attacking him with the explosive ball, Lucifer was too late to notice the rainbow beam coming at him as it struck and penetrates through his chest, the dragon lets out an agonizing roar as the blast begins to cause an unusual effect on the dark lord; a bright light pierces through his right shoulder from the inside and another bores out from his abdomen. He tries to cover up

the holes with his claws but the light burns through the palms, causing his hands to break apart as more beams of light pierces out of the dark lord's torso followed by his legs, tail and even through his golden eyes.

With his body being disintegrated from the inside by the Elements, the last thing that ran through the dark lord's mind was how a god such as himself was defeated by a group of ponies, Lucifer then rears his head back and roars for the final time just before the dragon explodes in a blinding flash of light that nearly envelops the entire battlefield. Once the light dies down and everything was visible, the gang now with their injuries having been restored by the Elements saw no traces of Lucifer anywhere, a sign that the lord of the Underworld has finally been vanquish for good with the Mane Six standing as victors of the epic battle.

"Did...did we win?" Fluttershy wondered.

"Of course we did, we totally toasted that dragon's @\$!" Rainbow Dash smiled.

"Yay! We did it! We did it! We defeated that big meanie Lucifer for good!" Pinkie Pie cheered while jumping around victorious.

"And best of all, our injuries have been healed thanks to the Elements." stated Twilight.

"No kidding, my ribs feels a whole lot better now." said Applejack.

"And my wings too." Rainbow Dash added as she flaps her wings.

"It's a good thing we didn't gain any permanent scars from this, I can't imagine the amount of make up I have to use to hide it." said Rarity.

"Hey girls!" shouted Emerald as she runs towards the Mane Six, limping a little from her injuries.

"Emerald, how are you holding up?" asked Twilight.

"I'm still a bit sore from the battle but I shouldn't worry too much about it." Emerald replied.

The gang notices Princess Celestia was still hovering in the air as she flies down near where they were, Twilight and the others bow to her when the white alicorn approaches them.

"As ruler of Equestria, I want to congratulate you all for defeating Lucifer and saving this country from a horrible fate." the princess thanked the gang with a smile.

"We couldn't have done it without everypony's help including yours too, Princess." Twilight smiled back.

"You should have seen the look on Lucifer's face when Emerald cast an attack spell on him right before we creamed him!" said the cyan pegasus.

"It wasn't a spell I used, it was one of those explosive balls your friend Applebloom had with her while fighting-"



"APPLEBLOOM" Applejack suddenly exclaims, interrupting Emerald as the others look at the now worried earth pony. "Oh dear, we got to find her immediately, Lucifer hurt her really badly and I have no idea where she is!"

"I'll go find her, Applejack." Rainbow Dash said as she takes off in the air and flies across Ghastly Gorge to find her friend's sister. Searching high and low around the area until she spots Future Applebloom lying motionless at a clearing not too far from the battlefield

"Hey, she's over here!" Rainbow Dash shouted to the others who took off to follow her.

The gang rushes through the woodland area with Applejack sprinting as fast as she could, passing by her friends with the thought of her wounded sister in mind. When they finally arrived at the spot where Rainbow Dash found Future Applebloom, Applejack runs towards her unconscious sister and carefully lifts her up in her arms.

"Applebloom, Applebloom, please wake up and speak to me, sis!" cried the orange earth pony.

The other watches silently as Applejack tries to wake her sister who appears to be unresponsive at first, the wound Future Applebloom received from Lucifer was still bleeding and blood was seen dripping from the corner of her mouth. The injured mare suddenly stirs and her eyes slowly opens as she finds herself in the arms of her older sister.

"A-Apple..Jack?" Future Applebloom spoke to her with a weak voice.

"Oh thank goodness, your alive" Applejack sighed in relief. "listen, you're badly wounded so we need to take you to Ponyville Hospital for-"

"Sis..." the wounded pony cuts Applejack off to ask her a question. "T-tell me, d-did you defeat..Lucifer?"

"Y-yes sugarcube, we defeated that heartless monster for good." the blonde-maned mare replied.

"Heh heh...it's finally over now...is it?" a smile forms from Future Applebloom's blood-stained lips.

"It is, Applebloom...it is." Applejack smiled for her.

The orange earth pony gasps when she see's Future Applebloom's left hoof slowly becoming transparent, followed by her arm and the rest of her body as the gang watches the injured mare begin to fade away.

"It's happening..." said Future Applebloom looking at her fading body.

"What's happening to her?" asked Emerald.

"The time line is starting to change now that Lucifer no longer rules Equestria in the future, and since Applebloom here is from that time era, she - this version of her...will cease to exist." Twilight sadly explained to Emerald.

"No!" cried Applejack, her eyes filled with tears. "You can't die like this, sis! There has to be another way for you to-"

"It's alright, Applejack..." said the dying mare as she placed her hoof on Applejack's cheek, smiling to her sister while trying to comfort her. "This is exactly how I wanted..."

"Applebloom...what are you saying?" asked a confused Applejack.

"In these last ten years, I've suffered so much without you and our family...the pain and loneliness I had to endure as a filly...I never had a normal childhood like I always wanted, there were times in my life where I wish you were there for me like the good old days...and now that Lucifer is gone, I am finally at peace..." Future Applebloom calmly explains to her.

Tears poured from the earth pony's green eyes as she listens to her sister's heartfelt speech, her friends were brought to tears from hearing the mortally wounded mare's words including the princess herself. Future Applebloom's body continues to disappear while at the same time, she was slowly succumbing to her wound as she starts coughing up blood, Applejack grabs her hoof and held it tightly as she can.

"You still have me in this time line, sis..." said the wounded pony, her voice becoming gravelly yet still clear enough to be heard. "Can I..ask you one last request...for me?"

"What is it?" Applejack asked softly.

"I want my present self...to live a peaceful life with her family...I don't want her...to grow up alone in this world...as I had to in my time line...Will you...do that for me, sis?" asked the red-maned mare, looking up at her sister with her teary gamboge eyes.

"Yes, Applebloom..." Applejack replied to her dying sister with a tearful smile. "I promise from the bottom of my heart, I'll do it for you, sugarcube."

"Thank you...Applejack..." Future Applebloom smiled. "I was glad...to be with you..in...the...end..."

With her last breath escaping from her lips, Applejack watches her sister closing her eyes for the final time and the grip on her hoof becomes limp, then her body goes still as Future Applebloom passes away in arms of her older sister. The distraught earth pony tearfully held on to the deceased mare before laying her fading lifeless body on the ground, staring at the peaceful smile frozen upon her face as she and the others watch Future Applebloom's body completely fades away from existence, not a trace was left of the brave future mare who fought to the very end to fulfill her mission to save Equestria from Lucifer's reign.

Even though the dark lord has been defeated and Equestria saved from a dark fate, it left Applejack deeply heart-broken after having to watch her own sister die, she takes her brown stetson hat off to honor the memory of Future Applebloom's sacrifice in silence. The others held their head down for a moment of silence for the fallen mare, Applejack however couldn't contain herself as she breaks down crying hard with tears dropping to the ground.

"No...Applebloom!" shouted the weeping mare, her voice cracking with sorrow. "Applebloom..."

As Applejack cries her heart out over the loss of her sister, her friends gather around the grieving pony to show their condolences for her, with Twilight wrapping her arms around Applejack in a comforting hug as she lets her friend cry on her shoulder.

"Applejack, I'm so sorry for what happened to Applebloom but we knew she was going to disappear once Lucifer was defeated..." Twilight said to her with a calm, gentle tone.

"I...I know that...s-she was from the future and all...but she was still my little sister" Applejack stuttered, trying to speak clearly to Twilight in between sobs. "watching her go like that...it's just hard to imagine the same happening to Applebloom in this time..."

"But it won't happen to your sister in this time line, right now her future self will be much different from the one that came to the present." said the violet unicorn.

"You..really think so?" the earth pony asked as she looks at Twilight.

"Since Equestria is no longer a dystopian place in the future now that Lucifer's gone, Applebloom wouldn't have to go through the same turmoil that the one from that era had to endure, she would have wanted this way for everypony including her own family." Twilight kindly explained to her.

"You're right, Twilight" Applejack replied, wiping off the tears from her eyes. "no pony should ever have to experience the kind of harsh life Applebloom grew up in, I promised her that she'll have a better life with her family by her side."

"Let us not forget that her death did not end in vain, Equestria would have fallen in Lucifer's grip if it had not been for Applebloom's heroic sacrifice." stated Princess Celestia.

"She prevented me from making the most terrible mistake of my life, I couldn't thank her enough for what she did and I should thank you all for risking your lives to rescue me from the Underworld." Emerald said to Twilight and her friends

"We're very glad to help you out, Emerald." Twilight happily replied.

"And Applejack, I feel for your loss and you have my most heartfelt sympathy, your sister was a brave mare and none of this would have happened if it weren't for her." said the green unicorn.

"Thank you, Emerald." Applejack smiled, her tears having been dried but then something popped in her mind. "Oh! We almost forgot, your mother is still at Canterlot, she's been worried to death about you."

"I guess we should head back, I don't want mother to get anymore worried." Emerald suggested.

"I'll have the doctors have a look at your injuries when we get there." said Princess Celestia as she and the other ponies leave Ghastly Gorge, which will forever be remembered where the grand battle against the dark lord took place and was finally defeated by the wielders of the Elements.

Later that day at Canterlot which was still rebuilding from the massive earthquake caused by Lucifer, Garnet was staying at the guest room in the palace with the thought of her daughter running through her mind, hoping that she would hear something from the princess about the progress of their rescue mission. Garnet quietly looks out the window and watches the construction crew fixing the damaged buildings, just as she hears the door behind her opened and turning to see Princess Celestia standing in the door way.

"Your highness" said Garnet, walking towards the alicorn princess with a concern look on her face. "Have you heard anything from them, have they found Emerald yet?"

"Why don't you ask her yourself?" Princess Celestia smiled as she steps aside to let Garnet see her daughter standing by with the Mane Six, partly covered in bandages including a brace on her injured hind leg.

"Emerald!" the sapphire unicorn ran to her daughter and instantly pulls Emerald in a tight yet heartwarming embrace. "Thank heavens you made it out from that horrible place."

"I'm glad to see you again, mother" Emerald smiles as she hugs her back. "I'm sorry that I've put you through a hard time."

"That doesn't matter anymore, all that matters is that you're back in Equestria alive." Garnet replied.

"Mother, I have some good news to share with you, Lucifer has been defeated by the Elements of Harmony and I'm free from his control." the green unicorn told her as Garnet's expression turns to joy.

"Oh Emerald, I couldn't be any more happier now that you can finally put this whole ordeal behind you." Garnet said with tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Yes and I have my new friends to thank for." Emerald said looking back at the six ponies, who were moved to hear that from the unicorn who never made a single friend through out her entire life.

"Thank you all for helping bringing my daughter back from the Underworld, I really appreciate for what you did for us now that Emerald has friends who helped her out in her time of need." the elder unicorn said to the Mane Six.

"It's an honor, Ms. Gemstone." Twilight smiled.

After reuniting Emerald with her mother and lifting the tremendous weight that was cast by Lucifer off their shoulders, the two took a train back to Manehattan but not before saying their farewell to the gang, Emerald promises to write a letter to them to stay in contact with while Garnet states that she will reward the six with jewelry much to Rarity's delight.

Emerald waved goodbye to her new friends as the train heads off to the city of Manehattan, with the experience she gained from her first encounter with the dark lord to helping leading to his defeat, inspiration struck the green unicorn as she writes down notes for what it appears to be an idea for a novel.

Meanwhile, Twilight and her friends also bid farewell to Princess Celestia as they left Canterlot to head back home to Ponyville, now that Equestria is once again saved from becoming a dystopian hell, the mane six each went their separate ways to earn their much-deserved rest from the grueling battle they endured. Applejack was walking along the trail leading to Sweet Apple Acres, while looking back on the last moments of Future Applebloom before she passed away in her arms, it left the orange earth pony wondering in deep thought about her own unpredicted future now with Lucifer out of the picture.

"Applejack!" the mare raised her head up upon hearing the voice of Applebloom, who happily ran to her older sister and welcomed her with a hug. "I'm so glad to see you back home, sis."

"Thanks sugarcube, I'm glad to be back home too." Applejack smiles at Applebloom, holding her little sister in an endearing embrace.

"Hey, how come cousin Applelove isn't with you?" asked the yellow filly, not wanting to mention her real name to Applejack. "Did...did she leave?"

"Yes..." the orange mare paused for a moment, as she didn't have the heart to tell the filly about the fate of her future version. "Sadly Applelove had to leave to go back home, Applebloom."

"Oh, that's a shame..." said a disappointed Applebloom with her head hanging down. "There were some things I want to ask her before she left."

"What did you want to ask her?" wondered Applejack.

"Well I wanted to know about..." the filly then stops herself from going into any further details. "never mind, it's nothing really important."

"Since I'm now back in Sweet Apple Acres, how's about I cook up some apple cobbler for supper?" suggested Applejack.

"Yay! I love apple cobbler" Applebloom cheered in glee. "Can I help you make them, please?"

"You sure can, in the meantime you can tell your older sister what you've been up to while I was away." said Applejack who puts her arm around Applebloom's shoulder.

"Oh there's so much to tell you, I don't know where to begin..." said the eager little filly as she and Applejack heads back to their house together, with the sun setting down and the moon taking its place, thousands of stars illuminate the night sky as the day ends with the threat against Equestria finally coming to a peaceful conclusion.

## Ten years into the Future

With Lucifer having been vanquished in the past thanks to the actions of Future Applebloom, Equestria has been restored back to the colorful paradise it was once known, every evidence of the dark lord's regime were erased from existence and cities like Canterlot which were in ruins have been brought back as if he had never invaded Equestria in the first place.

No longer the sky was covered by the massive black cloud that once blocked out the sun, nor were the citizens subjected to the brutal slavery that was forced upon them by Lucifer and his army, the country of Equestria is still under Celestia's reign and the wielders of the Elements are still active including Twilight who is now an alicorn princess residing in Ponyville.

At the Sweet Apple Acres residence where it had remain unchanged through out the course of time, Future Applebloom was seen in her room lying in bed while reading a book, now a healthier-looking young mare with no visible or psychological scars as her post-apocalyptic version once had. Applebloom flips the page of her book to read the next chapter when she hears a knock on her door, she puts the book down and opens the door to see her friends Sweetie Belle and Scootaloo standing in the doorway.

"Hey Applebloom." greeted Sweetie Belle.

"Sweetie Belle, Scootaloo, what brings you two here?" Applebloom asked her friends.

"We were wondering if you're going to the Summer Sun Celebration with us." Scootaloo said as it hits Applebloom like a buffalo stampede.

"The Summer Sun Celebration is today?! Oh boy...I guess I kinda lost track of time, heh heh." the yellow mare grins sheepishly while rubbing the back of her head.

"Don't tell me you're still reading that novel Princess Twilight gave to you?" the pegasus asked with an annoyed tone.

"Yes I'm still reading it, I'm already halfway through the story and it's getting good so far" Applebloom countered before changing the subject. "And of course I am going to the Summer Sun Celebration, did you really think I miss out on that without my best friends?"

"It won't start in a few hours so you want to come hang out with us till then?" suggested Sweetie Belle.

"Well since I'm not doing anything besides reading, why the heck not?" Applebloom smiles as she exits the room to go out with her friends.

"Oh wanna hear something funny? Me and Scootaloo saw Diamond Tiara while on the way here and she got a new mane-style that look like she stuck her head in a thundercloud." Sweetie Belle told Applebloom who giggled a bit.

"No kidding?" Applebloom replied.

"And the funny thing about it is that she thinks it's the hottest trend, yeah maybe for Nightmare Night to scare the little fillies away." joked Scootaloo.

As the three mares heads off while laughing about Diamond Tiara, the front cover of the book Applebloom was reading earlier has an illustration depicting an earth pony mare; who bears a striking resemblance of her alternate counterpart standing on the edge of a cliff while watching the sun setting. The title of the novel is written in bold letters that reads.

## **HOPE FROM THE FUTURE**

**By Emerald Gemstone.**

On the back cover of the book, there was a quote from the author herself just below the novel's synopsis that reads.

**"A tribute to the brave mare who saved Equestria from it's dark path and into a brighter future."**

**The End**