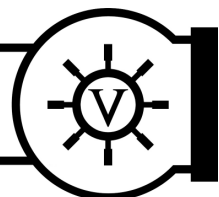


# Cupcakes

Sgt. Sprinkles

PONY FICTION VAULT



The air was warm, the sun was shining, and all of Ponyville was having a glorious day. The town square was bustling and crowded. Busy ponies were making their busy way through the streets. All the pony folk seemed to have somewhere to be. All, except Rainbow Dash. Her place was in the sky. She freely tore through the air, speeding one way and the next. She buzzed the tree tops and raced the wind. The pegasus swooped over a schoolyard, much to the delight of the children. Climbing several hundred feet, she dove, going as fast as she could. Seconds before hitting the ground, her wings flew open and she took off back into the clear blue. Rainbow felt alive.

Then she remembered that she had somewhere to be; she was supposed to meet with Pinkie Pie in five minutes. She'd gotten so caught up in her exercises that she nearly forgot.

Pinkie had asked Dash to meet her at Sugarcube Corner at three. She didn't say why or what they'd be doing, but Dash knew that with Pinkie, it could be anything. She wasn't sure if she really wanted to go, though. She was so engaged with her stunts that she thought about blowing Pinkie off to continue flying. But, Dash's conscience got the better of her. She knew that it would hurt Pinkie's feelings; after all, she said it was going to be something special just for the two of them. She considered it and thought, *Why not*. What did she have to lose? Heck, it might be more pranking. Pinkie might have found a bunch more fun stuff to pull off on folks. They'd had so much fun the last time. Dash kicked it into overdrive, mostly to make up for lost time, and sped to her appointment.

When she walked into the store, she was immediately greeted with her host bouncing in excitement.

"Yay, you're here, you're here! I've been waiting alllll day," said the jumping pony.

"Sorry if I'm a little late, Pinkie. I was doing my afternoon exercises and lost track of time," Dash apologized.

Pinkie giggled and responded, her tone gleefully reassuring. "Oh that's okay, you're here now. What's a few more minutes? I've been sooooo excited thinking about all the fun stuff we're gonna do, I haven't stopped bouncing since I woke up. I mean, I almost forgot to breathe I've been so happy!"

Dash gave a slightly uncomfortable laugh. She always appreciated Pinkie's friendly, outgoing way of life, but her overabundant enthusiasm almost crept her out. Dash was polite, however. If Pinkie was this worked up, then it must good, whatever it was.

“So, you ready to get started, Rainbow Dash? I’ve got everything all ready,” the pink one said.

Dash psyched herself up. “You betcha, Pinkie. What do ya got planned? We gonna prank somebody? I got a couple of good ones I’ve been thinking about. Or maybe you got some stunts you think I should try? Or maybe...”

“MAKING CUPCAKES!” Pinkie happily announced.

“Baking?” Dash was disappointed. “Pinkie, you know I’m no good at baking. Remember the last time?”

“Oh, that’s not a problem at all. I only need your help making them. I’ll be doing most of the work,” Pinkie explained.

Dash thought for about it for a second and replied, “Well, alright, I guess that’s okay. What exactly do you need me to do?”

“That’s the spirit. Here you go.” Pinkie gave Dash a cupcake.

Dash was puzzled. “I thought I was helping you bake.”

“You will be. I made this one just for you before you got here.”

“So, is this like taste testing or something?”

“Sorta,” Pinkie said.

Dash shrugged and popped the pastry in her mouth. She chewed a bit and swallowed. Not bad.

“Okay, now what?” Dash asked.

“Now,” Pinkie informed her, “you take a nap.”

Upon hearing that, Dash felt lightheaded. Her world spun and seconds later, she dropped to the floor.

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When Dash regained consciousness, she found herself in a dark room. She tried to shake her head but found that a taut leather strap kept it firmly in place. She struggled to move,

but braces around her chest and limbs glued her to the upright planks. Her legs were spread wide apart. The only part of her not tied down were her wings, as the frame was backless. As she writhed, Pinkie jumped into her line of sight.

“Goodie, you’re awake. Now we can get started,” she gleefully stated. She was pushing a cart covered with a cloth.

“Pinkie, what’s going on? I can’t move!” Dash said, worried.

“Well, duh, you’re tied down,” Pinkie chided. “That’s why you can’t move. I didn’t think you needed to be told that.”

“But why? What’s happening? I thought you said I was going to help make cupcakes.”

“You are helping! You see, I ran out of the special ingredient and I need you to get more.”

“Special ingredient?” Dash was now breathing heavily and starting to panic. “What special ingredient?”

Pinkie giggled and responded, “You, silly!”

Dash’s eyes widened, her face contorted in fear. Then she started to laugh. “Woo, really got me there, Pinkie Pie. I mean, tricking me into thinking I’m gonna get made into a cupcake. I gotta tell you, this the best prank yet. You win, you’re the best.”

Pinkie giggled even more. “Aw, thanks Dash. But I haven’t done any pranks today, so I can’t accept your praise.”

Dash was struggling again. “Pinkie, come on, this isn’t funny.”

“Then why were you laughing?” Pinkie grabbed the cloth and whipped it off the cart. The top of the tray contained various sharp medical tools and knives carefully organized and ready. There was a medicine bag and several other objects next to them.

Dash was now in full panic mode. She was starting to hyperventilate. Her mind was racing and she tried to reason with the pink pony. “You can’t do this Pinkie! I’m your friend!”

“I know you are and that’s why I’m so happy that I’ve got you here. We get to share your last moments together, just you and me.” She was skipping again.

“But, the other ponies will wonder where I am. When the clouds pile up, they’ll come looking for me and then you’ll get found out.” Dash was desperate.

“Oh, Dash,” Pinkie said, “don’t worry, there are plenty of pegasi to take care of a few clouds. And besides, no one will find out. I mean, how long do you think I’ve been doing this?” And with that the lights suddenly came to life and showcased the rest the room.

“Oh god, no.” Dash reeled in horror at the image presented to her. The room was decorated with a typical but twisted Pinkie Pie flair. Colorful streamers of dried entrails danced around the ceiling, brightly painted skulls of all sizes were stuck on the walls, and organs done up in pastels filled with helium were tied to the backs of chairs. The tables and chairs were made of bones and flesh of past ponies. Dash cringed at the centerpiece on the table nearest to her. The heads of four foals, their eyes closed like they were sleeping, wearing party hats made from their own skin. She recognized one of them as Apple Bloom’s classmate. Her eyes darted back and forth and then gazed up at the patchwork banner hanging from the rafters. Made from several pony hides, the words “Life is a party” were scrawled in red on it.

Dash’s attention was stolen by a party horn unfurling and tickling her nose. She saw Pinkie Pie standing in front of her. The party pony was wearing a dress quilted from cutie marks. On her back fluttered six pegasus wings, all different colors. As she skipped in excitement, her necklace of unicorn horns loudly clacked together.

“Like it?” she asked. “I made it myself.”

Dash pleaded. “Pinkie please, I’m sorry if I did anything to you. I didn’t mean it. Please let me go. I promise I won’t tell anybody.”

“Oh Dash, you didn’t do anything. It’s just that your number came up and, well, I don’t make rules. We can’t turn back now.”

Rainbow Dash was tearing up. How could this be happening?

“Aww, don’t be sad Dash,” Pinkie said. “Look, this’ll cheer you up. I brought you a friend.” Out of nowhere, Pinkie displayed a blue and yellow painted skull. It was about pony sized, but it had a very defining feature: a beak.

Dash was freaking out. “Is... is that... is... that?”

“Hey Dash, let’s hang together. These ponies are lame-os. Dweebs dweebs dweebs’,” Pinkie mimicked. “I caught her right before she left town. Remember when I left the

party for about twenty minutes? That wasn't enough time to play with her, of course, I had to wait 'til after the party to do that. But boy am I glad I did. It was worth it for the flavor alone. Griffons taste like two animals at once, it's amazing. I know she didn't have a number like everyone else in Ponyville, but when was I gonna get another chance to try a griffon? In hindsight, I probably should have asked where she came from so I can get more, but I forgot. I'll tell you what though, she was quite the fighter. Lasted a long time, which was fun for me; I got a chance to play with somebody other than a pony and try new things. It's too bad she had such a potty mouth. She said so much bad stuff, I had to take her tongue out. You know, bad language makes for bad feelings, Dash."

Dash didn't have anything to say. She just sobbed and writhed.

"Well," Pinkie said, putting the skull down, "that's enough reminiscing, it's time to begin."

She picked up a scalpel and walked over to Dash's right flank. Without any flair, she placed the blade an inch above her cutie mark and started a circular cut around it. Her lungs working overtime, Dash shouted in pain and tried desperately to pull away. But the braces held her still.

Finishing the incision, Pinkie grabbed the curved skinning knife from the tray. She worked it under the skin and sliced the hide away from the muscle. Dash ground her teeth as she tearfully watched her flesh come off. Pinkie then moved to the other side and completed the other flank. Once she was done, Pinkie held up both cutie marks in front of her friend and started waving them like pom-poms. Dash just whimpered. Her thighs burned.

Setting the skin down, Pinkie selected the large butcher knife and walked behind Rainbow Dash.

"Hope you don't mind, I think I'm gonna wing it now." Pinkie laughed. She grabbed the left one and played with it for a second. Then, stretching the wing out, she brought the blade down at the base. Instantly, Dash screamed and thrashed her appendage. The movement threw off Pinkie Pie's aim. She tried to hit the mark again but missed wide and put a huge slice in Rainbow's back.

"Dash, you gotta stay still or I'll keep missing."

She took another whack and hit the target. She swung again and again, blood spraying into the air, but realized she wasn't getting anywhere. The blade just wasn't going through the bone.

"Hmm, I guess I forgot to sharpen it. I'll try something else," she stated as she tossed the knife over her shoulder; the blade embedded itself in the table.

The crying Rainbow Dash heard the sound of a metal box opening and closing.

"Got it! Say Dash, why do they call it a hacksaw? It doesn't hack; hacking is what I was doing with the knife. This is a saw. I don't get it."

Pinkie placed the tool over the last attempt. It effortlessly sailed through the bone and skin. The painful feeling of the teeth biting into her made Dash want to vomit. She watched helplessly as her wing flew over her head and land with a fluff on the table. Pinkie moved to the next and started sawing. Dash didn't struggle this time; she'd given up trying to fight and just cried. Then the sawing abruptly paused. Pinkie was only halfway done, the wing hanging off by only a sliver.

"Hey Dash," she piped up, "think fast!"

Suddenly, she yanked the wing as hard as she could. The bone snapped but the skin held tight. The pull ripped a long strip of flesh down Dash's back to her rump. The unexpected trauma caused her body to seize. She felt a warm release between her legs as her pelvis tensed up. Dash's loud, unending melody of pain filled the room. Unable to catch her breath, she blacked out.

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She awoke with a gasp. The stench of her urine filled her mucus-caked nostrils. She saw a very pouty Pinkie Pie removing the adrenaline needle from her chest. Stomping her hooves, the frustrated Pinkie lashed out.

"Didn't anybody teach you any manners? It's very rude to fall asleep when somebody invites you over to spend time with them. How would like if I came over to your house and went to sleep? 'Oh I'm sorry Dash, you're boring, I think I'll take a nap.' You think I like always doing this by myself? I told you how excited I got when I found out you were next. I was excited to have to a friend be here with me while I worked. But NOOOOO! You've got to be inconsiderate. You know, I thought you were tough, I thought you could handle anything. I've had foals stand up better than you. Do I have to baby you? Huh? Is that how you want me to remember you, as a baby?"

She stopped to catch her breath. Dash blinked and softly cried. Her back was on fire.

Pinkie then popped something red into her mouth and began to chew. She noticed Dash was staring at her.

“What?” she asked. “Oh, this?” She held up another piece. “Well, while *you* were asleep, I got a little impatient and helped myself to a sample. I got it from your leg, you’re not bad. Wanna try some?”

Without waiting for a response, she shoved the strip of meat into the revolted Rainbow Dash’s mouth. She immediately spat it out. Pinkie picked it up. “If you didn’t want it, you could have said no.” She then ate the discarded snotty morsel. “It’s not like you haven’t had it before.”

Swallowing, she turned her attention to the small can on the tray. She removed the lid, revealing that it was filled with burning coals. Sitting on top of the fire were several large nails. Dash began to panic again. Pinkie picked up the can and walked over to Dash’s left. Carefully picking up a nail and grabbing a hammer, she positioned the spike at the seam between her leg and her hoof.

“No! Pinkie, NO!” Dash screamed. “NO! NO!”

The hammer came down and the nail punctured under her skin. The white hot burning was too much. Dash pulled and thrashed at the brace; her skin rubbed and tore. Pinkie tried to line up another one, but couldn’t find her aim. She let out a frustrated grunt. When she pulled the hammer back to take a wild swing, Dash burst out crying and begging.

“PLEASE STOP! PLEASE, PLEASE STOP!”

Pinkie rolled her eyes. Putting hammer back down, she walked back in front of her friend. She stared pensively at the broken pegasus. Gilda didn’t even cry this much when she stuck that live parasprite down her throat. Pinkie thought for a minute about what to do next. Then there was a sudden spark in her imagination. She grabbed the gear wheel on the rack and laid Rainbow Dash on her back. She moved to Dash’s hind legs, bringing the can with her. Pinkie picked up the hammer again and she drove a searing piece of metal into the bottom of Dash’s hoof. Dash screamed again; Pinkie put one into the other hoof. Next she located the small generator on the tray. Tying the copper wires to the nails, she gave Dash a wink and flipped the switch. Electricity rocketed through Dash’s body. The blue pony reacted immediately: body seized, muscles struck taut. Her



hips thrust skyward and her eyes rolled back. She let out a deep, throat-shredding cry. Pinkie giggled and danced in place. She turned up the juice. Dash convulsed uncontrollably. Her bladder emptied once more.

After about five minutes, Pinkie shut off the power. The area smelled lightly of cooked flesh and burnt keratin. She put Dash upright again and tried to snap the delirious and drooling pony to back to attention.

“Dash. Daaash. Wake up.” Rainbow Dash managed to give her a modicum of weak acknowledgment.

Pinkie reached into the medicine bag and produced a large syringe. “Alright, time for the last round.”

Dash looked at the needle and Pinkie took that as a question as to what it was.

“Something to take the pain away,” she explained as she walked around to Dash’s ruined backside. She stuck the needle into the lower part of her spine. Dash flinched.

Coming to the front again, she told her friend, “In a few minutes, you won’t be able to feel anything below your ribcage. Then you’ll be able to stay awake to watch the harvest.”

Dash started to cry again. “Pinkie,” she trembled out.

“Yeah?”

“I want to go home.” Dash openly sobbed.

“Yeah, I can see wanting to do that,” the party pony replied. “Sometimes, I just wanna give up, say ‘I’m done with this mess’ and go to bed. But you know what? You can’t shrug off your responsibilities. You got to pull yourself up and meet the challenges head on. That’s the only way you’re gonna get ahead in life.”

Dash cried.

Minutes passed and the drug took effect. Dash was numb from her chest to her flanks. Aware of this, Pinkie approached with her scalpel. With only a smiling glance to Dash, she made a long cut across her pelvis just above her crotch. Moving up her body, she drew a similar incision under her ribs. One final cut was made down her stomach, connecting the first two.

“Looks like I got my ‘T’ on you, Dash!”

With a moist, gooey sound, the new door flapped open. The sight of her own organs and the lack of feeling caused Dash’s breathing to intensify. Pinkie sliced open the abdominal sac and grabbed the large intestines. Separating them from the rest of the digestive tract and pulling them from the cavity, Pinkie was getting jovial and starting making jokes. Dash, growing weaker from the new source of blood loss, tried to shut out the comedy act. Pinkie was laughing.

“Look at me, I’m Rarity!” she said, slinging the tube around her neck and spreading blood in all directions. “Isn’t my new scarf soooo pretty?”

Reaching back in, she cut the smaller intestine off the bowels. Squeezing out the excess excrement, Pinkie filed it through her teeth and dragged it back and forth. “Dentists say you gotta floss every day, Dash.”

Rainbow Dash was barely aware of what was going on anymore. The shock was causing her to fade. Pinkie got disappointed. Diving back into the guts, she ramped up her routine.

“Aw, don’t go yet, Dash.” She started pulling out the rest of the organs, stopping at each one. “I know I can be a real pancreas, but you know I’m just kidney with you. You really got to learn to liver it up. Boy, these jokes are getting bladder. Guess ya gotta develop a stomach for them.” She placed the discarded body parts into a bucket, keeping the last one for bit longer. “Ooh, bagpipes,” she said, placing the tube in her mouth and the organ in her armpit. A spurt of acid hit her tongue. “Eww. Oh hey, there’s your cupcake, Dash.”

Dash didn’t hear her. She had slipped from consciousness minutes ago. Pinkie, not satisfied yet, hit her with another adrenaline shot. Dash woke up for the last time, her heart jumping. Her blood flowed out faster; it wouldn’t be long now.

Pinkie put Dash down on her back and straddled her chest, scalpel at the ready.

“Ya know, Rainbow Dash, I’m disappointed. I thought you would have lasted longer. I really wanted to spend more time with you before we got here. But I guess it’s my fault, I should have taken it a little slower. Oh well, it was really was nice knowing you, Dash.”

The blade sunk into the blue one’s throat and worked its way up her chin. Coming back down, it circled around her neck. The last thing Dash felt was her skin being cut away from her skull, the metal scraping her teeth.

Then she was gone.

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Pinkie Pie stared into the mirror. She did a really good job, even keeping the eyelids. She winked, Dash winked back. Pinkie smiled.

But still, she was sad that her friend was now gone. It only lasted fifty minutes, not nearly as long as she wanted. She looked back at the cadaver hanging there in the center of the room, the last of its fluids draining into the pan. Yup, no more Rainbow Dash.

Then Pinkie cocked her head. She was starting to take notice of the fact that there really wasn't that much damage. "In fact," she began to think, "I think..." An idea exploded in her head. She was good at sewing and she had all the pieces, all she had to do was put her back together. Yeah, just get some stuffing and bingo, she'd have Rainbow Dash forever! In fact, that's what she'd do for all her friends when their numbers came up! She was so excited, she skipped over to the body with the skinner to get started. The cupcakes can wait; Pinkie had a friend to make.

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Silver Spoon suddenly woke up. She was on her back and couldn't move. She couldn't see. Where was she? Freaking out, she was just about to scream when the pony from the bakery appeared in front of her.

"Hi!" she giggled.

"Where am I, what's going on?" the frightened little foal asked.

"Oh, well, you see, your number came up and I gotta make cupcakes," Pinkie explained.

"W... wha... what does that mean. What are you talking about?"

"Oh, nothing. I wouldn't worry it if I was you. It'll be over soon." She approached the girl, scalpel at the ready, when a small voice called out from behind.

"Miss Pinkie, what are you doing?"

She paused and turned to look at Apple Bloom. The yellow baby pony walked up to her with an angry look on her face. Silver Spoon started to feel relieved.

“Ah can’t believe you’re doing this,” she pouted. “You said this one was gonna be mine.”

Pinkie apologized. “Oops, sorry about that, guess I forgot. Here you go!” She hoofed the blade over.

Apple Bloom climbed on the table and stood over her prey. Silver Spoon tried to struggle. She stared in fear at Apple Bloom and her apron. The pink apron with a shiny tiara on it. Silver Spoon started to cry.

Apple Bloom grinned and opened her mouth. “Hey, Silver Spoon, guess who’s gonna be a blank flank?”