

In Memory Of

Obselescence



6 June, Year 40 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

I am writing now to thank you for the extremely generous gift you sent for my sixty-fifth birthday. I can certainly imagine how difficult it must have been to get ahold of a set of (original!) works by Clover the Clever, and I want you to know that I'm very grateful for them. I have no clue how you knew I was looking for sources on this exact subject, but I'm certainly not complaining! Thank you, Princess. I will return them to you to keep in the Royal Library as soon as I can. Literary treasures like these shouldn't stay hidden away in the hooves of an old mare like me.

It's fascinating how much Clover knew about transformation spells. History seems to gloss over her magical discoveries in favor of her role as a political adviser, but some of these notes seem to imply that she might have been even more talented than Starswirl himself...

But this is a casual letter, and I shouldn't be wasting it waxing eloquent about my research. Sorry for that, Princess, I'm getting into the habit of rambling now that Spike's not writing my letters out for me. I'll send you an independent report on everything I've found when I return the books.

You asked in your last letter if anything new or exciting has been going on in Ponyville, and the answer to that is: No. Not really. It's the same old town it's always been.

And, as an aging mare of sixty-five, I'm comfortable with that. New and exciting were for young Twilight Sparkle, and I don't think she's me anymore. Old Twilight Sparkle prefers to play it safe. So much so that she keeps a calendar: I have tea with Fluttershy on Mondays, lunch at Sweet Apple Acres every Wednesday, and a spa visit with Rarity at least once a month. No surprises. Surprises these days give me arrhythmia.

Next thing you know, I'll be shaking my crotchety hooves at noisy young folk and complaining about how everything was better when I was a filly.

(Please tell me I'm not that old yet, Princess.)

Spike tells me that I'm getting stuck in a rut, but I think that's what happens when you get older. You start to gravitate toward the familiar; the reliable; the comfortable. I know that I'm going to be down by Sugarcube Corner tomorrow, I know that I'm going to buy

a carrot cake, and I know that Pinkie's probably going to throw her hip out trying to get me to dance with her while I'm there... but so what? I'm still looking forward to it. My trips to Sugarcube Corner are little bright spots in my week, and even if I could predict exactly what would happen every time I went there, I wouldn't give them up for anything less predictable.

Spike says that that's a fine excuse, but really I'm just stuck in a rut and trying to use my age to rationalize it.

I have no idea what I'm going to do with him, but I'm open to creative suggestions.

—Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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17 January, Year 41 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

Enclosed are the complete findings of all my research on transformation spells and the casting thereof. Also included is a complete set of original works by Clover the Clever, which were given to me by a certain wonderful Princess a few months ago. I'm not naming any names, but I think you can guess who she is!

Truth be told, it's a small miracle that I got all of this in before my self-imposed deadline. I've had to go over the notes repeatedly to make sure I got them all right, and triple-checking for errors takes a lot out of you. I know I keep griping about how I'm not getting any younger, but it really does start to show when I'm studying. I had to go back and read Chapter 5 of Enigma, Volume 3, half a dozen times before I could finally commit it to memory. Can you believe that? I can't.

I owe everything to the weather, which even now conspires to ensnare us all in its icy tendrils. My joints start to ache if I get too cold, and the bitter, freezing wind refuses to stop blowing long enough for me to even step outside. But then, if it weren't for all that, I might have been unable to finish my report on time. I might have worked up the courage to leave the library, instead of studying all day, every day.

It turns out that there are certain advantages to being held hostage in your own home.

I'm not entirely sure what I'm going to do now, since I've completed my report, but I'm still trapped in the library. I like to think I'll manage, though. If only because of my friends.

Applejack—thank goodness for her—stops by with groceries sometimes. I'll never know for sure how she can walk around in those blizzards, but I suspect it's that fabled Apple family vitality at work. She'll be out bucking apples with her grandchildren long after the rest of us are gone, just you wait and see.

And Rarity. She brought along a scarf the other day. "In case you ever do decide to go out, darling," she told me. It's fabulously beautiful, like everything Rarity makes, but I didn't even care. I was just so happy to see her after weeks of sitting around the house that even a designer-brand scarf didn't seem all that important in comparison.

I've got it tucked away in the corner for now, where it can be safe until it's needed. It's not much use at the moment, when even thinking about opening the door gives me the chills, but I'm planning to flaunt it nonstop when the weather improves. It's the least I can do to repay Rarity for her thoughtfulness.

Even Spike drags himself out of bed on occasion to keep me company. I know how hard it is for him to move in the winter, so I think it's really sweet of him to do that. We like to curl up by the fireplace, with a mug of hot cocoa each, and talk books. Mostly old classics, which is to say: *Daring Do* and more *Daring Do*. He claims that all the literature these days is cheap trash and that anything that will ever be halfway decent has already been written... Like *Daring Do*.

He's a purist, Spike is, but I love him anyway.

All in all, I think I should be able to keep myself afloat while the weather outside is frightful (and while the fire is so delightful). It's nice to have friends who can look after you in the harsh winter months. They'll keep me from going stir-crazy if anything will.

Finding the blessings in a bad situation—I'm almost sure I wrote a friendship report about that at some point. Didn't I? I'll have to go back and check. It's certainly applicable here.

I hope you find the current report satisfactory in the meantime.

—Wishing You A Happy Winter, Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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14 March, Year 41 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

I'm still not sure what went wrong with the Winter Wrap Up this year. I thought we'd achieved "fine-tuned machine" status decades ago. Usually everything works so well that I barely even have to pay attention to it, so I can't imagine why it all suddenly broke down this time around.

It started with the animal team, as near as I can tell. Somehow they managed to wake up all the animals in the wrong order, and that turned out about as poorly as expected. All the predators received wake-up calls before the prey did, and we ended up losing quite a few squirrels before we could chase the snakes off and give the other animals a fair chance.

And that was only the first domino. Without the animals secure on-schedule, the weather team was forced to hold off on melting the snow (can't risk flooding the dens unless all the animals are accounted for). And without the weather team's help in clearing the snow, the planting team couldn't do anything but stare at each other until the whole mess was resolved. So that was all three teams rendered completely unproductive by one little mishap. For Want of a Nail, indeed.

Eventually we did manage to clear it all up, but the damage was done. A few hours too late for spring this year. Our worst Winter Wrap Up in decades.

The weather team, for their part, proved wonderfully capable at handling their duties. The planting team even exceeded expectations, when they finally got their chance to work. But that animal team! Ugh. I swear, they've been going downhill ever since Fluttershy stopped doing Wrap Ups.

I don't know what went wrong, exactly. I can't figure out where the instructions got mixed up, or who misheard me when I was directing everypony, but I suppose it's my fault either way. It's my job as All-Team Organizer to make sure everything gets done when it needs to get done. They thought I said something that I didn't say, and I didn't catch it soon enough to correct the mistake.

You wouldn't believe how terribly embarrassing it is for me, the All-Team Organizer who's delivered Ponyville the spring season on-time for 38 of the last 40 years, to make such a simple, awful, amateur error.

So that's a lesson right there: You can't ever let yourself get complacent, else you fall victim to things like this. I haven't needed checklists to organize the Wrap Up for years, but, well, here's the inevitable result of that. I'll be sure to work those back into the routine for the next winter. No worries, Princess. Next year's Wrap Up will be in tip-top shape as per usual. Twilight Sparkle's still got it.

The funny thing is that, on top of all this chaos, I seem to have misplaced Rarity's scarf. Imagine that! First time I go out all winter, and I can't even find it. I could have sworn it was still in the corner, where I'd left it, but...

I'm sure it'll turn up before she notices that I've lost it, so it's not anything to be particularly concerned about. It's strange, though, that the rest of the day went completely sour after I lost a gift from a good friend. I'd even call it ominous. Wouldn't you?

It's almost enough to make one superstitious.

Almost.

—Planning To Do Better, Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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23 March, Year 41 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

I know this won't be relevant for quite a while, but I'm so excited that I feel like I have to tell somepony: Hay-Bale's Comet is going to be visible from Equestria in two years' time!

It's only the most important cosmological event in 176 years, so I was understandably ecstatic when one of my old astronomy texts reminded me of it. That one publication by Lagraze. She described it as "an aureole of light, the likes of which are unequalled by all in the night sky, save the moon itself... The array of colors that this Comet displays on its journey through the infinite void... defy description."

It sounds beautiful.

And I'm going to live to see it!

I've been busy busy busy these past few days, trying to work out the details of its arrival. The exact date and hour, the ideal location in Ponyville from which to see it, etc. It's not easy extrapolating all of this from some vague textbook sources and astronomy papers written decades ago, but at least I have help.

Spike really is the world's best assistant. How would I ever get anything done without him? He writes everything down without fail, finds new sources for me to read through, and even grabs books off the top shelf (he's getting tall enough to reach those now). I guess you could call him the true caretaker of the library these days. I don't think I could keep track of all the books we have now if I tried, but Spike does a wonderful job at picking up the slack.

I need to figure out how to thank him for all the hard work he's been doing. A gemstone is the obvious route, but this time I want something really meaningful. I'll have to ask Pinkie when I go down to Sugarcube Corner next Tuesday. She's an expert in gift-giving. I'm sure she'll have some ideas.

At any rate, I'll try to forward you the specifics of the comet's arrival as soon as I can. They might not be done for a while, but what the hay, we have plenty of time, right?

Maybe, if it's not too much trouble, you could even stop by Ponyville and watch it with us? I know that your duties as a Princess keep you busy, but if you could keep an eye out for an open spot in your schedule some two years from now, that'd be great.

—Unable To Wait, Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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Year Forty-One Luna's Return, First of July

Dear Princess,

I'm worried about Twilight.

First it was that report on transformation spells and Clover the Clever, then it was that write-up on cloud-walking spells she did after her visit with Rainbow Dash up in Cloudsdale, and now it's all about Hay-Bale's Comet. It won't be here for years. Did you know that? Why is she even worrying about it right now? Besides, uh, her being Twilight Sparkle.

I'm taking as much of the workload as I can, but I don't see how it could be healthy for a mare her age to handle all these "research projects" on top of that stupid weekly schedule of hers. It's one thing after another, nonstop, and I think it's finally starting to wear her down.

It's mostly little stuff... for now. She yawns every other minute, and she's not eating as much as she should. I've been trying to put her on a steady diet of my homemade triple-decker nut-crazy vanilla cream cookies, but somehow she's still losing weight. You should see how bony her legs are getting. They look terrible.

And she's forgetting things. It's not like her to forget anything. Ever. Not that it's anything too important. Things like the mailmare's name, or when the next quill shipment is supposed to come in. But it's still really weird for her. Twilight forgetting things is like Applejack lying, or Pinkie Pie saying she hates parties. It just doesn't happen.

I'm hoping that this doesn't end up like... you know... like when she gets really, really stressed and it just screws her up. Remember that one time a while back when the Mayor asked her to handle Ponyville's paperwork while all the secretaries were out with the trots? She started collecting STAMPS.

Could you, I don't know, suggest that she ease up a bit? She doesn't listen to me because I'm just the lowly assistant and she's "obviously" fine, but I know she'll listen if you tell her.

Could you, please, Princess?

—Spike

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3 July, Year 41 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

Did Spike ask you to write that? He did, didn't he? It's just the sort of thing he would do.

To put your fears to rest, Princess: I'm fine. I appreciate the concern—I really do—but there isn't any need for it. I'm losing a little extra body fat, yes, and maybe I've been getting a tad bad with names, but, well, it's only natural. I'm doing pretty well for my age, but it's inevitable that I'll run down someday. Just take a look at my face: the wrinkles are

already starting to show, like cracks in a dam. Won't be too long now before I'm just a wizened purple prune. (Ha!)

I've tried explaining this to Spike, but I don't think he "gets" it yet. He's too convinced that I'm overworking myself to notice that I'm well past my prime. He's still young, as dragons go, I suppose. Thinks now is forever. One of these days he's going to have to wake up and realize that the rest of us don't have as much time as he does.

I'm sure he'll figure it out somewhere down the road. He's a smart cookie when he isn't forcing a plate of his homemade triple-decker whatsits down my throat.

Anyway, I'll admit that I might have been biting off a bit much, but it's nothing I can't chew. I've put myself through much worse than this before, and the occasional project helps keep me occupied. Why, if I weren't calculating the trajectory of Hay-Bale's Comet or uncovering magical secrets lost to the murky depths of history, what WOULD I be doing? Not knitting, certainly. Already tried that once. Never again.

If you ask me, Spike's the one most in danger of overworking himself here. The library's been busier than ever since Cheerilee started those summer reading programs at the school. It's all he can do to help me with my own ventures while checking books out to students in need of something to read. We've got half a dozen foals over at any given time, so Spike's been trying his hardest to keep them in check. My best guess is that he'll stop worrying about me soon enough and start begging for a break of his own. You know how kids are.

Until then, I'll be sure to tell him you tried, Princess. Hopefully he won't try to involve you in his next crazy scheme.

Oh, what am I saying? Of course he will.

—Your Fine and Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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3 July, Year 41 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

Sorry to bother you with another letter right after the last one, but it completely slipped my mind earlier and I'm desperately in need of advice. That scarf Rarity gave me last

winter—the one I lost—is still missing. I’ve been looking high and low for it, but, so far as I can tell, it isn’t anywhere to be found.

I don’t want to tell her I’ve lost it—what kind of friend loses a gift you spent so much time and trouble to give them?—but she’s been asking after it lately and it’s getting difficult for me to look her in the eye. I haven’t... lied about it, exactly. Every time she asks I default to a non-answer and change the subject. It technically isn’t lying, but still it feels so dishonest. I can’t keep it up forever.

I don’t know what to do. None of the friendship reports I’ve been reading are helping, Spike can’t give me an unbiased answer, for obvious reasons, and I don’t want to tell anyone else I lost Rarity’s gift if I don’t have to. It’s bad enough that Spike knows.

I keep getting this feeling that maybe I’ll find the scarf and the problem will go away, but it doesn’t do me much good if I can’t find the scarf. And every day I don’t tell her I lost it will make it worse when I finally do.

Should I just tell her? Should I keep looking? Or should I try to figure it out by myself? I suppose I could try to work something out on my own, if you think that’s what I should do, Princess. I think one of the old friendship reports I read mentioned the importance of learning self-reliance...

I have a spa visit scheduled with Rarity in about a week, when she gets back from meeting her business partners in Canterlot, so any wisdom you could give me on the matter would be deeply appreciated. The sooner the better.

—Gratefully, Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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Year Forty-One Luna’s Return, Tenth of December

Dear Princess,

It’s cold here in Ponyville and getting colder. *Cloudsdale Daily* says it’s not going to stop anytime soon, so it looks like we’re in for more nothing but more bad news. The way the snow’s been falling, we’re probably going to have another unbearably blizzardy snow-you-in winter. Bleh. Hate those. Can’t even begin to imagine how you stand it in Canterlot. Isn’t it thirty degrees below freezing up there, or something ridiculous like that?

So, updates on the silliest grudge in Equestria: Sweetie Belle stopped by the library the other day with a letter from Rarity. It was—and you won't believe this—a REMINDER to Twilight that they STILL aren't on speaking terms. I'm not even sure what to say anymore. Yeah, Twilight lost the scarf Rarity knitted for her, and yeah, she lied about it for ages, but this is just overreacting. Giving your best friend the silent treatment for five months over a misplaced scarf? Remind me to never get on her bad side.

Rarity'll probably end up coming to her senses sooner or later, I guess. Maybe. Probably. Time heals all wounds and all that. I mean, I got over HER eventually, right? It shouldn't take anywhere near as long for her to get over one little scarf. Wouldn't totally surprise me if she kept it up for another month or two, though...

Honestly, I don't think mares really age. They just get stubborn as mules.

No offense, Princess.

Twilight's been taking it pretty hard. She's got herself shut up in the study because she "has to research" and she doesn't come out much. She's got all the usual excuses, like how it's too cold for her to do anything but learn and how she's never going to knit again, but I'll bet you anything it's really about Rarity. I'd go and drag her out just to get her some fresh air, but I can barely roll out of bed myself. Darned cold blood.

But whenever I can manage it, I make a mug of hot cocoa and leave it by the door. She might even be drinking it.

Still worried about these neverending research projects. This time it's about... I want to say Practical Applications of Abalone Magic? I know it's something really complicated and unnecessary, because she always goes for those subjects when she's trying to get her mind off her life. And it's not really a BAD thing that she's studying, but it's starting to get way out of hoof. She actually has me telling her friends she's asleep when they visit so she won't be interrupted.

Preeeeetty sure none of them are buying it. Definitely not Rainbow Dash, at least. She dropped by with Soarin' a billion or so times yesterday and she kept complaining that nopony could possibly sleep that much. I came about this close to telling her how right she was, but I'm not going to be the dragon who sells Twilight out. Not yet, anyway.

I think we'll have to stage an intervention before it gets any worse. I know I suggested you start sending her stuff from the Royal Library Vaults, but it's probably best if you don't give her any more. Cut her off, cold turkey. That'll be a good start. And I'll try to

work up the energy to rally the gang. We'll see if we can't get her nose out of a textbook for more than five minutes.

I'll keep you posted, Princess. Wish me luck.

—Spike

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28 February, Year 42 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

Enclosed are my reports on the Practical Applications of Amniomorphic Magic and related volumes on unicorn history originally from the Royal Library. Thank you so much again for sending me those last summer, Princess. They were all more insightful than I'd imagined in my wildest dreams, and I'm eager to see what you'll send me for my next birthday!

Three more months until I can finally get some good reference material. I can't wait!

Even without references, though I've managed to get my next few reports lined up (something for YOU to look forward to, Princess!). Practical Applications of ~~Amno~~ Amniomorphic Magic isn't exactly a groundbreaking work, but maybe you'll find it amusing while I take on some more exciting endeavors. I think I've already told you I'm not going to be managing this year's Wrap Up, so I should have plenty of time to get everything done.

Not that Spike approves, but why would he? He's done nothing but fuss over my studies all winter. Says they're not good for me. I, in turn, say he's being a worrywart. As if some light reading—and this is light by my standards—is going to ruin me! I've been feeling better than ever since things started warming up, so I've got no clue what he's talking about.

Sometimes I wonder about that dragon.

But, back to the Wrap Up, I've been talking to the Mayor recently, and she's ~~off~~ officially allowed me some time off as All-Team Organizer. I can't seem to get myself motivated for all the crazy planning the Wrap Up requires. And, after last year's mess with the weather team, I'm not even sure I want the responsibility for much longer anyway. Too many things can go wrong if the coordination isn't top-notch and I'm starting to think I

can manage without the extra stress every year. More proof I'm getting old, I guess. My age is catching up with me.

When you think about it, though, it's probably for the best. They'll have to find themselves some newer, younger blood to fill my horseshoes eventually, so they might as well get a running start on training my replacement. Whoever he or she is, I wish them luck. If the teams' performances last year is anything to go by, it'll be a miracle if winter ends by next August.

Not that it's my problem anymore!

On time or not, though, spring's going to be a nice change of pace. With winter coming to a close and most of my harder projects out of the way, I'll be able to return to my regular schedule. Going back to a weekly lunch at Sweet Apple Acres is going to be a treat. I can't remember the last time I had a good apple pie.

But I still miss the spa visits with Rarity more than anything. If only she'd let me talk to her and apologize. Whenever I try to send her a letter, Sweetie Belle comes back with the shredded remains. I don't know why I didn't tell Rarity the truth about her scarf when I had the chance. If I'd just been honest about it, like you suggested, Princess... If I hadn't waited for her find out on her own... maybe she'd have been more willing to listen.

I hope you're doing well, at least, Princess. I'll try to send the next report as soon as possible.

—Ever-Diligent, Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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Year Forty-Two Luna's Return, Fifteenth of March

Dear Princess,

I might have let it slip to Twilight that she shouldn't expect any more books for her birthday. She didn't take it very well. At all. Voices were raised, things were thrown... It wasn't a whole lot of fun.

So I'm warning you ahead of time that if she sends you anything begging you to change your mind: DO NOT BUDGE. She just laughed us off when I got the gang to stage an intervention last winter and she's already skipped the Winter Wrap Up to cram in even more study time. You're the only thing standing between Twilight and another year of

her working herself to the bone, Princess. You have to stand firm on this or she isn't going to change.

I'm starting to wonder if something's seriously wrong. She doesn't remember to eat unless I tell her to, she doesn't talk to her friends unless it's on her schedule, and she keeps organizing the fiction shelves wrong. She actually managed to put *Daring Do and the Sapphire Stone...* next to *Daring Do and the Magician's Map*. How is that even possible? They're practically ten books apart.

I try to talk to her about it, but it's hard to carry on a conversation. It's like, I say something, and maybe she's listening. Then the next minute she's nodding and staring off into space. She's all, "Sorry, Spike, what was that? I was just thinking about blah blah magic blah blah report blah blah Princess. Blah blah blah..." And that's my cue to bail, because then she goes on like that for hours.

But I did talk to Pinkie and Fluttershy, and they've noticed that Twilight's been acting off lately too. It's... probably because she hasn't taken a break from her projects for months and she'll be fine when she finally snaps out of it, but I'm going to keep an eye on her to make sure it's not anything worse. As wise old Twilight Sparkle says: You can never be too careful.

Either way, it's not going to help if you send her more books as a birthday present, Princess. Maybe a scarf? I dunno. She does still need one, and Rarity isn't about to knit her another any time soon. She tried making one herself a couple month ago, but she honestly can't knit for beans. I don't know why she even bothered.

Pinkie says giving her a scarf would be "super duper," so as long as you don't mention Rarity, I'm sure Twilight wouldn't mind getting a thick woolen muffler to keep her warm next winter. It might allow her to leave the house every now and then, at least. I hear it's still scarf weather up in Canterlot, so, you know, it could be worth keeping your eyes open for anything Twilight might like.

I wouldn't mind getting a scarf on my birthday either, Princess. Just saying. Hint hint.

—Spike

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6 June, Year 42 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

I don't know what to say except "How could you?" I told you: I'm perfectly fine and Spike's making a big deal over absolutely nothing. ~~But you just You~~ How could you take his word over mine, Princess?

Don't you trust me?

Can't you just once believe that I'm okay when I say I'm okay? That Spike isn't always as ~~right~~ right about me as he thinks he is? ~~Apore~~ Apparently you can't! Not even on my own birthday.

I'm not sure what's worse: that you trust Spike more than you trust me, your faithful student, or that the two of you let me believe I was going to get a book right up until the scarf ~~ari~~ arrived. A scarf! I was so excited this morning because I thought you were going to give me another wonderful book to read. And all I got was a stupid scarf.

It was Spike again, wasn't it? "Haha, Princess! Let's not tell her what she's getting until she opens up the box. The look on her face will be priceless!" I don't even want to look at him right now. Or you, really. I'm so mad that I can barely see ~~stray~~ straight anyway.

But I guess I know how Rarity feels now. Don't I, Princess?

—Twilight

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6 June, Year 42 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

I am so, so sorry for the letter I just sent you. I don't know what came over me. I just... I was expecting study ~~mateer~~ material, and when I didn't get them... I don't know. I've been on edge a lot lately, and I don't think that helped. I really wanted to do something great for you this year, because I knew my last reports were all terrible, and I didn't think I'd be able to do any better unless you sent me more books. No matter what though, I shouldn't have snapped at you like that. Or Spike. At either of you. I still can't understand why I did.

Maybe Spike is right and all this research really is starting to wear on me...

But there's no ~~es~~ excusing what I said or did, and I wouldn't be surprised if you never forgave me for it (you wouldn't even be the first). I should have been grateful for the

scarf you gave me, Princess. I know you sent it because you cared, and I should have realized that from the start. It's a very nice scarf too, and I love it. I'm going to be wearing it outside a lot once the weather gets chilly.

Hopefully I won't end up losing this one too right? Heh.

Again, I'm very sorry for that letter, Princess. I only hope you can forgive me for writing it someday.

—Still Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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8 July, Year 42 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

I'm really excited about this report on Geomorphic Cultivation. I know my last few have'nt exactly been my best and I had to work at this one a couple time but I think I've finally got something here that's worth reeding.

Hopefully you'll think so too.

—Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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9 July, Year 42 LR

Dear Princess Celestia,

Thank you for replying so quickly. It's good to know you enjoyed it. I'll admit I was a teensy bit worried that you wouldn't but it looks like all that worrying was for nothing. After my last few reports its good to know I can still write something half worth reading.

And yes, I think that might be the last report for a while. I really have been meaning to take a brake lately, and nows as good a time as any to do it. There's a novel or two I want to catch up on and I might as well start squeezing a little extra shuteye into my schedule. Itll get Spike off my back if nothing else.

It's just for a while though, Princess. I'll be writing something even better before you know it.

—Best Wishes, Your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle.

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Year Forty-Two Luna's Return, Ninth of July

Dear Princess,

I really hope you're wrong. I saw the report too, and you're right about that much, but...

Well, I hope you're wrong.

I'll take her to a professional tomorrow.

Will drag her if I have to.

—Spike

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13 July Year 42 LR

Dear Princess Celestia

I'm sure Spike's already given you the bad news, but I wanted to write to you anyway. While I still can. Looking back, I can tell my memory's been getting worse for a while now. It's been going and going, and I don't know how much time I have until it's all gone. The doctor doesn't know either, so every second counts. I want to make sure I make the most of what I have left. What I haven't already wasted.

It's funny I guess, how it was so obvious something was wrong and I couldn't see it. You knew. Spike knew. All my friends knew. But I didn't. I thought I knew better than they did. How much more time would I have had to say my goodbyes if I hadn't been so stubborn and stupid? If I'd listened when everypony said that I should study less? If I'd had more faith in my friends than in my books?

Maybe I don't want to think about it.

I wish I knew what to say to you now Princess. There's so much that I never got the chance to tell you. Too much to fit into one letter... but one letter might be all I have. I'm not sure how much I'll remember tomorrow or next week or in a month, but it'll be less than today. And then it might be too late.

So I don't think I'll be able to write to you much more after this, but I'm glad I had the chance to for as long as I did Princess.

~~Because I~~ ~~Because you're the best teacher in~~ Because you've been there for me since I was a little filly and I wish I could have done more to be there for you over the years. You were the best teacher in Equestria and that made me the luckiest filly in Equestria because you were MY teacher. And it just isn't fair that I don't have the time to pay back even half of what I owe you.

All I could ever do for you was to be the best, most faithful student that I could be. I hope I was that much at least. I don't know how bad my last reports to you must have been but I want you to know that I always tried my hardest and I hope that counts for something.

I wanted you to be proud of me, Princess. When I got the ponypox and I couldn't get to my magic kindergarten classes, you spent all day reading my textbooks to me in bed. And I promised myself then that I was going to be as good a student as you were a teacher. Maybe I was asking too much of myself, but if I ever got close even once I think that would have made everything worth it.

You were a great teacher, Princess.

I still remember when you first spoke to me at my entrance exam. That day when I hatched Spike from his egg and you told me I was the most talented foal you'd ever seen and that if I wanted I could be your own personal student. And when the two of us went to live with you in Canterlot castle, like our own sort of family—together—It was the greatest thing that ever happened to me in my entire life and I don't ever want to forget it.

~~But what if~~

~~But I'm scared~~

But I just wanted to say thank you Princess. For everything. Thank you for all of the happy memories. I want to say thank you for letting me be your student for all these years and thank you for helping me find my wonderful friends and thank you for being there for me when my hamster died and for letting me be a professor at the school for

gifted unicorns and for always telling me just the right thing when I don't know what to do and

I just wanted to say thank you Princess.

And maybe next year when Hay Bales Comet passes, you could watch it with us? I don't know how much of me will be left in a year and I don't want to ask you for any more favors when I already owe you so much, but I'd really like it a lot if we could watch it together.

—Always your Faithful Student, Twilight Sparkle

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Year Forty-Three Luna's Return, Thirtieth of March

Dear Princess,

Twilight wants me to tell you thanks again, for coming to see Hay-Bale's Comet with us tonight. And I guess I want to say thanks for that too. She's been looking forward to it for so long, and you being there, waiting for us when we wheeled her up to the lookout... I don't think I've seen her that happy in a long time.

I guess that's the most we can do for her now: make her happy. It's not a lot. It's not as much as she deserves. But it's the most we can do. She can't remember how to talk very well anymore, but she still remembers how to smile.

I'm doing everything I can think of. Rarity's bringing her a lot of scarves and sweaters these days—I think she still feels a little guilty about how she acted over that scarf—and I help Twilight try them on. I take her down to Sugarcube Corner for carrot cake as often as she wants. I read her Daring Do every night before she goes to bed. Whatever it takes to make her happy.

It sounds like a lot, but it isn't. Not really. She did this sort of stuff for me all the time, when I was a baby dragon. I'm just doing the same for her, now that she's an old mare.

It's the least I can do.

Anyway, it's been a long night. Twilight's sleeping right now, but right up until I tucked her in, she was still babbling about how pretty the lights were and how much she loved

the cookies I baked her for the comet and... how glad she was that you and all her friends could be there with her.

I don't know how much of it she'll remember when she wakes up, Princess, but maybe it would help if you sent her a letter. Just... a reminder, from a teacher to her most faithful student. You know, she forgets my name sometimes, but she always remembers yours.

So maybe, if it's not too much trouble, you could visit us again sometime soon.

I think Twilight would like that a lot.

—Spike, Number One Assistant to Twilight Sparkle.