

DIAMOND TIARA AND SILVER SPOON LEARN A LESSON

By GeodesicDragon

Two Earth pony fillies sat under the shade of a tree, protecting themselves from the harsh glare of Celestia's sun, while life continued to go on around them. Parents and their foals played, couples snuggled, and the merchants battled for control of the lucrative trade in ice-cream sales.

"Look at them," one of the fillies said. "They may think they're happy, but they're not really. Only if you're as rich as us can you truly know what happiness is. Right, Silver Spoon?"

"That's right, Diamond Tiara," Silver Spoon replied. "They say that money can't buy you happiness — but only ponies without money are dumb enough to believe that."

The two of them giggled uproariously, not noticing another filly approaching — a grey unicorn with a light blue mane. Her flank was bare, but her smile was bright. Her presence did not go unnoticed by the other two fillies, who looked at her with disdain.

"Can we help you?" Silver Spoon asked, raising an eyebrow. "Help you to get lost, that is."

The unicorn shook her head. "I just wanted to come over and say hello," she replied. "My name is Dawning Dusk, and I'm here on holiday from Canterlot!"

"You came from the grandeur of Canterlot, to a backwater town like Ponyville... *on holiday*?" Diamond Tiara asked, aghast, to which Dawning Dusk nodded. "You must be out of your mind! Isn't she, Silver Spoon? Out of her mind!"

"You can say that again, Diamond Tiara," Silver Spoon said. "I can't even *begin* to imagine why anypony would want to come to Ponyville for a holiday. What's wrong with Canterlot?"

"There's nothing wrong with it," Dawning Dusk muttered. "It just gets kinda boring after a while, doing the same things all the time."

"Trust a blank-flank to say something so stupid," Silver Spoon growled, narrowing her eyes at the unicorn. "Why don't you go and hang out with the rest of your kind?"

She indicated a trio of fillies nearby, who were flying kites in the breeze blowing through the area. The objects didn't seem to be gaining much lift, but the three of them only seemed interested in the company of the others — laughing merrily as they ran along the grass. Dawning Dusk shook her head and turned her attention back to the two Earth ponies.

"No, thank you," she said amiably. "You two don't seem to be doing anything, and I'd rather not intrude on their fun."

Diamond Tiara let out an exasperated sigh. "Well we don't want to be seen talking to a blank-flank like you," she said viciously. "We both have reputations to maintain."

Dawning Dusk snorted derisively. "Your use of the word 'reputations' implies that you have friends outside of each other," she said. "Though why anypony, other than you two of course, would want to be your friends is a mystery to me. I've only been here for... not even five minutes, and that's already been plenty of time for me to come up with my own opinions about you."

Silver Spoon crossed her forelegs and stared defiantly at the young filly. "Oh really?" she asked sarcastically. "Well by all means, share your worthless opinion with us."

"Gladly," Dawning Dusk snarled. "The two of you think that you are so much better than the other foals here because you have money, and the power that comes with it. I have both, back home in Canterlot, and I can say that it's not as fun as you'd think. But given the fact that you two have clearly never even *been* to Canterlot, you wouldn't know that — meaning you are perfectly happy living in your fantasy world, blind to the hard facts of life."

"We *have* been to Canterlot," Diamond Tiara said defensively. "We both went up last year to a party hosted by none other than Fancy Pants himself. Both of our fathers are very good friends of his, you see, and he showed us how happy having money has made him."

Dawning Dusk rolled her eyes. "Oh, I see," she said. "You went to a *single party*, hosted by the *nicest pony in Canterlot*, and automatically assume that all ponies with wealth are like him. You *are* aware of the fact that Fancy Pants donates over half of his company's yearly profits to charity, right?" She smirked. "So he doesn't have nearly as much money as you *think* he does, and he's only happy because he is helping those less fortunate."

Diamond Tiara ground her teeth together. "He still has power, though," she countered. "And a lot of ponies, such as Diamond Tiara and I, respect that."

"Fancy Pants has *influence*," Dawning Dusk said. "He can say a few words and maybe change a few minds, but that's it. Having *power* means that ponies do what you want, *when you want it*. Princess Celestia would be a prime example of somepony with power."

"Princess Celestia?" Silver Spoon drawled. "What does she know about having power? She calls herself the ruler of Equestria, yet I haven't seen much evidence of that. Every time something goes wrong, she always has to rely on Twilight Sparkle and the other Elements of Harmony to fix things for her."

Dawning Dusk narrowed her eyes at the pair. "It is because Twilight Sparkle and her friends hold the Elements that Celestia relies on them. She and her sister are no longer bound to them, so—"

"Oh, her sister?" Diamond Tiara interrupted. "Don't even get me started on her. What has she done since she got back from the moon, apart from try desperately to regain our acceptance?"

"Princess Luna spent a thousand years in exile," Dawning Dusk defended. "You cannot simply expect her to get up-to-date with how things are these days so quickly."

"Face it, Dawning Dusk," Silver Spoon said, waving a forehoof in the air dramatically. "It would be better for everypony if Luna simply went back to the moon... and if Celestia went with her, since they're both as useless as each other. We have one Princess who can't face the troubles of her own subjects and another who is so out of touch with them, she thinks that she can scare her way back into their good books."

She and Diamond Tiara both giggled again — just as Dawning Dusk screamed with raw, unbridled, fury. The two of them looked at each other nervously as the unicorn advanced on them, her horn glowing menacingly and her eyes burning with rage.

"You don't know anything about Celestia!" she bellowed. "Or Luna, for that matter! I know for a fact that Celestia is a proud leader and a good... no... an *excellent* sister! Whenever trouble arises she has always offered Twilight and her friends the support they need, but they don't need it because Twilight Sparkle is one of the most powerful unicorns ever to have existed. She and her friends are more than capable of saving Equestria — just like Celestia had been doing for the thousand years Luna was in exile, and the Elements were powerless. So don't you *dare* stand there and think that you are better than her, because you're not!"

"You don't scare us, blank-flank," Silver Spoon shot back. "Look at you — you're just as bad as Luna is, trying to scare us into listening to you go on about how great our supposed leaders are."

Dawning Dusk's eyes narrowed to pinpricks and she growled, this time enveloping herself and the two Earth ponies in a bright blue light. Nearby ponies shielded their eyes from it, only for it to fade and that all three fillies were gone.

"Where are we?" Silver Spoon asked, getting to her hooves. Something poked her and she gasped. "Diamond Tiara, is that you? What happened, are you all right?"

"I'm fine, Silver Spoon," she replied. "Now can you get off me so I can actually – I dunno – *stand up*?" Silver Spoon took a step back and looked down, noticing Diamond Tiara glaring back at her. She giggled sheepishly and helped her up, dusting off her coat and adjusting her tiara. "Thanks, I guess." She looked around. "Where on Equestria are we? Did that blank-flank do this?"

"You're not on Equestria," Dawning Dusk replied as she entered the fillies' vision. "I found that I didn't quite like your attitude, so I brought to a place where we could talk, and where you could serve a time-out – because Celestia knows you need one."

Diamond Tiara growled and rushed towards the unicorn, getting in her face and raising her voice. "What gives you the right to do this, you freak?" she yelled. "Our fathers are very powerful stallions, and they will make sure your family pays through the nose for this! Now let us go right this instant!"

Dawning Dusk shook her head. "Your fathers aren't powerful," she said with a smirk. "They are influential. There's a difference." She took a few steps back from Diamond Tiara and lit her horn again. "But *my* family, on the other hoof..."

A brief flash of magic later, and both fillies found themselves face to face with a stern-looking Princess Luna, who glared at them with contempt. She ruffled her wings irritably and began walking in circles around the two.

"My family, it has to be said, have power. Ever since Nightmare Night, I have been thinking of ways to get back into the good graces of the common pony."

"We're not common!" both fillies clamoured.

"You're right, you aren't," Luna said with a shrug. "Because the common pony is nice. The common pony is charitable. The common pony knows when to *hold their tongue*. I came up with the guise of 'Dawning Dusk' so that I could learn from the children of Equestria what it means to be a pony."

She stopped walking and sighed.

"But it would seem that you two only care about money and power, and what having both could do for you. You envy those who have more than you... but envy, my little ponies, is a dangerous thing." She swept a wing over the darkened area, the two fillies following the appendage as it showed them the dismal landscape. "I once fell victim to envy, and I ended up here."

Diamond Tiara and Silver Spoon glanced at each other nervously, Luna noticing this and grinning at them.

"Your eyes do not deceive you, little ones," she said. "You are indeed on the moon. It was here where I spent a thousand years in exile because I fell victim to envy... and because I bullied others."

Both fillies gulped.

"Why are you showing us this?" Diamond Tiara whimpered.

"Y-yeah..." Silver Spoon added. "Why?"

Luna draped a wing over them. "I want to show you that the path you are walking on is the path to loneliness," she replied. "If you continue to harass and envy others, then you will be shunned by society, and your lives will become as dull as mine did." She retracted her wing and both fillies turned to look at her. "Do you understand what I am trying to tell you?"

Diamond Tiara and Silver Spoon nodded.

"You're trying to tell us to be kinder to everypony," Diamond Tiara replied. "And that we shouldn't use our status as wealthy and powerful ponies to lord over others."

"I don't want everypony to hate me," Silver Spoon said. "I promise I'll change my ways."

"I'm glad to hear it," Luna replied. "Now, I'm going to return you to Ponyville — start making use of what you have learned here. Granted, it will take some time for ponies to accept that you have changed... but you must persevere."

The two fillies nodded, and — with a flash of light — were gone. Luna sighed contentedly, before she produced another flash of light from her horn. When it cleared, another filly — a pegasus — was standing before her. The new arrival looked shocked for a moment, then noticed the Princess with a small smile on her face.

"Princess Luna?" the filly asked. "W-what's going on?"

"Greetings, young Scootaloo," Luna replied. "You will be pleased to hear that I have solved your problem."

There was a slight pause before the two of them grinned at each other, before they both disappeared in a final burst of light, leaving behind the eerie stillness of the crater-scarred lunar landscape.