

TWELVE GLORIOUS HOURS

by GeodesicDragon

"It's now or never, Spike. All you gotta do is march on over there and tell that mare how much you love her. The worst she can do is turn you down... or maybe downright humiliate you in front of all your friends. But you'll never know until you try!"

The young dragon looked at his reflection for a moment before his shoulders slumped and his face fell. Letting out an aggravated sigh, he sat on the floor, bringing his legs up to his knees as the clock chimed eleven times.

"Aw, who am I kidding?" he moaned. "A mare like Dash would never go for a guy like me. She's beautiful and talented and I'm just... nothing."

He sat in silence for a moment, letting his mind wander. All his thoughts revolved around him and the prismatic-maned mare, laughing and joking together as a couple of lovers, rather than a couple of friends. The dreams stirred new emotion in the dragon's heart, and he slammed a fist into the library floor.

"No!" he snarled. "I'm not going to let my paranoia get the better of me. I'm going to do this, and nothing, or nopony, will stop me! I will tell Rainbow Dash how I feel, and to Tartarus with the consequences! Whatever happens, happens!"

He got to his feet and checked himself over in the mirror one final time, smoothing out his scales and making sure there were no stray bits of gemstone in his teeth. He clicked his tongue and left the library, beginning his search for the mare of his desires.

His search eventually led him to a spot outside of town, where a few stray clouds from the Everfree Forest had gathered. Much to Spike's delight, one of the clouds appeared to have sprouted a rainbow-coloured tail. He smiled, thankful that he would be able to talk to Dash in private.

"Rainbow Dash!" he yelled. "I need to talk to you!"

The tail hanging off the edge of the cloud vanished, only to be replaced with a similarly-coloured mane and a pair of cerise eyes as Dash peered over the edge of it. A small smile came to her lips as she saw Spike looking up at her with his arms folded and a claw tapping impatiently against the ground.

"Hey, Spike." she said nonchalantly. "What's up?"

"Come down here," Spike replied, "and I'll tell you."

Dash descended from the cloud and landed in front of Spike, who was wearing a look of complete determination on his face. He unfolded his arms and held his hands out in front of him, before taking a deep breath.

"Dash, ever since I met you on my first day in Ponyville, I have always admired you. You're brave, loyal and kind. Oh, and you also enjoy tormenting the heck outta Twilight. I think you're a great friend, but I want to be more than that. I guess what I'm trying to say is... will you be my special somepony?"

Dash sighed.

"Spike, you're a great guy." she said. "You're always eager to help me with my training, you're not one to let life kick you in the flank, and you are just as awesome as me at pranking... so of *course* I'll be your special somepony!"

She punctuated this by planting a kiss on Spike's lips, causing him to blush. He quickly regained his composure, and returned the kiss eagerly, which in turn caused Dash to blush. After what felt like an eternity, but was in actual fact thirty seconds, they separated.

"I guess we'd better tell our friends." Dash said. "That way we'll get the Pinkie Pie party out of the way as soon as possible."

Spike nodded as Dash motioned for him to climb onto her back. Spreading her wings, she took off for Ponyville, Spike clinging onto her neck out of love... and fear for his safety.

Dash landed in the middle of Ponyville, where a grateful Spike slid off her back and kissed the ground. Chuckling at her new-found drakefriend's antics, Dash began walking towards Sugarcube Corner — only to be overtaken by a small purple blur, which raced towards the door of the bakery.

"Let me get that for you." Spike said, as he opened the door and bowed slightly. "Mares first!"

"Er, thanks Spike." Dash replied as she entered the establishment to a chorus of greetings from five mares who were sitting at a table in the corner. "Hey, girls. I've got some news."

The others looked at Dash with raised eyebrows and smiles on their faces. But just as she was about to tell them, Spike rushed over, a large smile threatening to engulf his features.

"Dash and I are together!" he blurted. "Isn't it great? I finally got up the courage to tell her how I felt! Then I asked her to be my special somepony and she said yes! I'm just so happy!"

Dash facehoofed and shook her head.

"I was just about to tell them!" she said.

Spike's smile faded slightly.

"Sorry, Dash..." he said, "... but I'm just so excited that this is really happening! A whole year of longing, and for you to accept me like this, it's just... wow."

Dash forced a smile as she looked at the rest of their friends, all of whom were looking back warmly.

"Well I for one," Rarity said, "think it is wonderful that you two are together! Treat her well, Spike... or you'll answer to the rest of us!"

"Don't you worry, Rarity." Spike relied. "I intend to. And I'll start by doing this!"

He pulled a chair out and motioned for Dash to sit down, which she did with some hesitation. Tittering like a schoolcolt, he then proceeded to order up a round of cupcakes for all his friends, making sure that Dash got the biggest.

As the group dug into their treats, Spike pulled up a chair next to Rainbow Dash, and sat still, looking at her as she ate, with a far away look on his face.

"Er, Spike?" she said, waving a hoof in front of him. "I kinda like to be left alone while I'm eating. So, d'ya mind?"

Spike nodded and turned around in his chair so he was facing the wall. Letting out a sigh of relief, Dash finished the rest of her cupcake in peace — only for Spike to wrap an arm around her waist once she was finished.

"You're not eating now," he said by way of explanation, "so there is nothing stopping me from doing this. And don't tell me you don't like it. Because I know you do."

"You're right," Dash replied, "I do enjoy a hug. But there will be plenty of other opportunities for it. Besides, we're here to talk to our friends, and we're kinda ignoring them. That's a bit rude, wouldn't you agree?"

Spike withdrew his hands and sighed.

"I guess you're right." he said. "We are here to talk to our friends, so let's do that."

"Great." Dash said as she stood up. "Uh, I'll be right back. I gotta use the little filly's room."

"Uh, yeah." Spike added. "Me too... the little colt's room, that is."

Dash rolled her eyes and walked away, her drakefriend following closely behind. However, as she entered the room, Spike stopped and waited outside the door, making sure he wasn't acting too suspiciously. The sound of flushing caught his attention, followed by running water and hoofsteps.

Spike pushed open the door to the male toilets and stepped inside, reappearing a moment later as Dash left the mare's room. He let out a theatrical gasp and grinned.

"Finished at the same time, huh?" he said. "How great is that?"

"Fantastic." Dash muttered through gritted teeth. She went back to her seat, only to find that Spike had beat her there, and pulled it back out in a show of manners. She mentally cursed, but accepted the gesture and sat down, thanking Spike with a peck on the cheek.

"See, Rarity?" he said. "I told you I would treat her right. I intend to be the best drakefriend Equestria has ever seen. Whatever Dashie wants, Dashie gets. If anypony hurts her, they answer to me. And every single day that we're together, she can expect me to be the perfect little gentledrake, always ready to give her a compliment or a helping hand."

"R-really?" Dash asked. "That sounds... great, Spike. Thanks. I'm really glad you found the courage to talk to me. In fact, I think that it was the best decision you've ever made. You think I am awesome, and that I need an awesome special somepony to go with it, right?"

Spike nodded enthusiastically.

"And I can expect this treatment for as long as we're together?" Dash added. "Which, given how long dragons live for, will be... the rest of my life?"

Spike nodded so fast it seemed like his head would fall off.

"Great." Dash replied.

"It sure is!" Spike said. "I want everypony in Equestria to know that we are the best couple who ever lived. Rainbow Dash, the best flyer in Equestria, Element of Loyalty, and all-round good mare... and Spike, her loyal drakefriend, who would do anything for her... and I mean *anything*."

Dash chuckled awkwardly.

"Perfect." she said weakly.

Yeah, too perfect.

"Goodnight, girls!" Dash called as she and Spike left the bakery, the latter looking more like an extra appendage than a dragon as he clung to his marefriend's neck. "And don't worry about Spike, Twi. I'll make sure he gets home safely!"

"Awww," Spike moaned into Dash's coat, "but I want to spend the night with you at your place!"

"Sorry Spike," she replied, as she shook herself to try and get him to let go, "but you're forgetting that I live in Cloudsdale, and the last time I checked, you couldn't walk on clouds."

Spike took the shaking as a hint and climbed off Dash's back before folding his arms and pouting.

"Then let's get Twilight to cast the cloud-walking spell on me!" he said sternly. "And then we'll have all night to spend together!"

Dash sighed.

"Twilight is really tired, Spike." she said. "It wouldn't be fair to make her waste more energy casting a spell. A spell she could cast tomorrow when she's feeling more refreshed. Now come on, let's get going."

Spike groaned and followed Dash to the library. He took the key out from under the mat and unlocked it. The door swung open and he took a few steps inside before freezing and turning suddenly.

"If I can't stay at your house tonight," he said, "then you can stay here with me! I don't think Twilight will mind. In fact, I'm sure she'd appreciate an impromptu sleepover."

Dash shook her head firmly.

"No can do, Spike." she said. "I've gotta get back to my place and feed Tank. I can't leave the little guy alone all night, because Fluttershy would probably kick my flank."

Spike banged his head against the wall in frustration.

"Whoa, take it easy!" Dash soothed. "We'll be able to spend all day together tomorrow. Okay?"

"Okay." Spike muttered, his face still pressed against the wall. "Tomorrow it is. Goodnight, Dash."

She gave him a peck on the cheek, which he returned.

"Goodnight, Spike." she said. "See you tomorrow."

The library door closed with a dull thud as Dash took off for home.

Spike awoke the next morning full of life and love. After completing his morning routine, he stood outside the library, scanning the sky above for signs of his marefriend. When he saw her trotting down the main road, his heart soared and he rushed to meet her, throwing himself around her neck in a tight hug.

"There you are!" he said breathlessly. "I thought you weren't going to show up. It was so dull and boring without you."

Dash extricated herself from Spike's grip and gently pushed him to one side before clearing her throat.

"We need to talk, Spike." she said. "In private."

Spike nodded and led the way back to the library, oblivious to the pained look on Dash's face.

The door closed behind them and Spike sat on one of the chairs in the middle of the room. He watched as Dash paced nervously back and forth in front of him.

"Twilight's not here." he said flatly. "So you can say whatever you want. But be quick, I've got a whole day planned for us!"

Dash sighed.

"That's what I want to talk about, Spike." she said. "Us."

She let out a hollow laugh.

"I'm not supposed to be scared of anything, and yet here I am too afraid to tell a baby dragon that..." she trailed off.

Spike raised an eyebrow.

"Tell me what?" he said worriedly. "Has somepony said something to hurt your feelings? Does nopony appreciate us being together? Do they have a problem with our relationship?"

"That's the thing!" Dash snapped. "Our relationship *is* the problem!"

Spike's face fell.

"W-what do you mean?" he said. "Is it me? Have I done something wrong? Whatever it was, I'm sorry!"

"You haven't done anything wrong, Spike." Dash sighed. "In fact, you've been the perfect drakefriend... but you're just *too clingy*. I know you mean well, but you're just too perfect for me. I don't want the *perfect* guy, I just want an *average* guy. And you... are anything but average. I'm sorry Spike, but I think it'd be best if we just went back to being friends."

"Too perfect?" Spike said tearfully. "I-I guess I was, huh? B-but, I can change! If you want me to be a jerk, I'll be a jerk!"

Dash shook her head.

"But that would just be an act, Spike." she said sorrowfully. "And that's just not you. I'm sure one day you'll find a mare — or even a dragon — who will love you for the perfect guy you are. But as for me, I'm just happy to have you as a friend."

Spike nodded.

"Okay." he said softly. "Friends it is."

He held out a hand, which Dash shook.

"Thanks for being so understanding, Spike." she said, giving him a small peck on the cheek before heading for the the door and opening it. Casting one final glance back, she spoke again.

"It was fun while it lasted." she said before leaving, the door closing softly behind her.

And as the clock struck eleven, Spike fell to his knees, weeping pitifully for his lost love.