

CHAPTER



A Whole New Ball Game



Sunset Shimmer dashed toward Canterlot High. Her red-gold hair wafted behind her like a pony's wavy mane. She was so excited! She glanced at her phone one more time. Could the news really be true?

She ran over to the statue of the Wondercolt. Rainbow Dash and Applejack were



already there, and the other girls were seconds behind her. “I got your text, Rainbow Dash,” Sunset Shimmer exclaimed breathlessly. “Did something come through the portal? Is Equestrian magic on the loose? Did Twilight come back with a problem that only we can solve?”

Pinkie Pie giggled. “Has a giant cake monster covered all the cakes in the world in cake?”

Rainbow Dash was surprised that all the girls had overreacted. What did they want? Another trio of evil Sirens to infiltrate their school and try to sow disharmony? She held up her guitar. The emergency was that she had broken a string—and she really wanted to practice some new songs for their band, the Sonic Rainbooms.



Sunset Shimmer wrinkled her forehead.
“I don’t understand.”

“I was just telling Rainbow Dash here”—
Applejack sighed—“that a broken guitar
string doesn’t really qualify as an emergency.”

“It totally does!” Rainbow Dash couldn’t
believe that Applejack, who played the bass,
didn’t understand.

But no one did.

Rarity was put out. “Really, Rainbow
Dash, I was in the middle of sewing a very
complex appliqué on my latest frock.”

“And I was just about to tuck in my pets
at the shelter. Now we’ll have to start stories
all over again.” Even gentle Fluttershy was
annoyed.

Something just didn’t seem right, but
Sunset Shimmer couldn’t figure out what it



was. “Why would you send all of us an emergency text for a guitar string?”

Rainbow Dash whirled around and pointed at a trio of girls sitting on the school steps. Apple Bloom, Sweetie Belle, and Scootaloo were all looking at the Rainbooms expectantly.

“Fans!” explained Rainbow Dash. “I was going to show our fans some awesome guitar licks, but I kinda need all six strings to do that. Got any extra?”

Rarity rolled her eyes. Fluttershy shook her head. Pinkie Pie threw up her hands, and Applejack turned out her pockets. They were empty. But Sunset Shimmer was always prepared. She rummaged through her backpack and pulled out an extra set of strings for Rainbow Dash.

She handed them to her fellow guitar

player. “But I’m pretty sure the music rooms are locked now. It’s the end of the day after all.”

“No problem!” said Rainbow Dash. She restrung her guitar and gave it a triumphant strum. “The acoustics in the hallway are perfect for power chords. C’mon, let’s go!”

“You coming, Sunset?” Applejack asked.

“I’ll catch up in a bit,” answered Sunset Shimmer.

The girls followed Rainbow Dash into the school while Sunset Shimmer looked up at the pony statue, disappointed. It was a portal to Equestria, but she had no idea when it would open again. She loved her new friends at Canterlot High, but sometimes she really missed Twilight Sparkle. When would they see her again?

Sunset Shimmer took out her magic



journal. When she wrote in it, Twilight Sparkle could read her letter in Equestria. Sunset Shimmer was so busy writing that she didn't pay any attention to the yellow bus rolling to a stop in front of the school. She didn't notice when the doors slid open and a dark-hooded figure slunk out and slipped between the shadows to the statue.

The shadowy figure removed an electronic device that began emitting high-pitched beeps. For a moment, Sunset Shimmer looked up. What was that? But it was probably just feedback from Rainbow Dash's guitar.

A needle spun wildly on the strange device and pointed directly at the Wondercolt statue.

Sunset Shimmer read over what she had written.



Dear Princess Twilight,

How's life treating you in Equestria? Any cool new magic spells? It's been pretty quiet here at CHS since the Battle of the Bands. We still pony up when we play music, which Rainbow Dash just loves to show off, but I still can't quite grasp what it's all about. I would love to hear what you think about it when you have a sec.

Your friend, Sunset Shimmer

Sunset Shimmer closed the journal and went to put it back in her backpack. But why was the Wondercolt glowing? Was the portal opening? How strange! That's when Sunset Shimmer saw the hooded figure slinking into the shadows. "Hey!" she called.

Startled, the figure pointed the strange device right at Sunset Shimmer—and it went wild, beeping and buzzing and glowing.



The figure shoved the device into a pocket and took off running.

“Hey!” Sunset Shimmer shouted. “Wait! Stop!”

Sunset Shimmer raced after the hooded stranger, but the person managed to cross the street just as the light changed and traffic streamed across the road. A car honked its horn as Sunset Shimmer stepped from the curb. A bus pulled up. Sunset Shimmer saw the hooded figure peeking out from one of the windows. Too late!

“Who was that?” she wondered out loud. And what were they up to? Sunset Shimmer was worried—but she was also a little bit excited. Could a magic adventure be about to begin?