

Two of a kind.

Star Butterfly hated not being able to do anything. She had just defeated Toffee for the second time, saving Mewni and probably the whole universe by restoring the source of magic. She should be the host of a giant party dedicated to her, praising her efforts for saving the world. She should be receiving the highest honors from her parents and the Magic High Commission. She should be going out for a new adventure! She... she should be with Marco, just talking, and chilling, and being thankful that neither of them was dead.

But no, she had nothing of that. There was no party since the whole kingdom was just starting the reconstruction. Her dad was trying to organize the workers, her mom had been missing since Toffee's defeat a couple of hours ago, and the Magic High Commission was, presumably, still in the Sanctuary, recovering from their magic coma or whatever Toffee did to them. She couldn't be going on a new adventure because the use of such powerful magic had left her exhausted and she couldn't even get up from her stupid bed. And Marco... well, he had been so, so happy to see her again after thinking she was gone!

The way he had hugged her and carried her to bed had made her feel like the happiest girl in the world. She wanted to be with him, to laugh at his lame jokes, to just stare at his eyes, and messy hair, and cute little nose... But he had been gone from his home for too long. His parents were probably worried sick. Not to mention that he hadn't even told Jackie about his journey to Mewni.

For someone as active and crazy as Star, to be left alone in a stupid room with no one to talk to and nothing to do was almost as bad as torture. She had stared at the ceiling, she had stared at the walls, she even went back to stare at the ceiling! She was told to try to sleep by the royal guards, but there was no way she could do that right now.

Luckily for her, the boring peace and quiet of her room were disrupted by a portal opening right in the middle of it.

"Marco?!" She asked, trying her hardest to sit up.

The one that came out of the portal wasn't Marco, however. It was none other than Queen Moon Butterfly.

"Oh, it's you mom", disappointingly said the princess, letting herself fall back onto the bed. "I-I mean, hey mom!"

It was still strange seeing her mother wearing a battle outfit. Chainmail armor didn't really suit her style. Neither did all the dirt on her face and the scratches from battle.

Moon had a thoughtful expression as she walked through the portal, frowning and pursing her lips. But as soon as she saw her little Star on the bed, her face lit up.

"Honey", she said, walking up next to her and helping her get more comfortable on the bed, "how are you feeling?"

"How am I feeling? Oh, do you care now?" Star said, puffing her cheeks. "I've been left alone in this room, without anything to do, and no one to tell me just how AWESOME it was for me to defeat Toffee... again! I thought we would have a great ball or a giant party with the Pony Heads to celebrate!"

"Star, the castle is in ruins, half the Kingdom is destroyed, we can't have a party right now", complained Moon, grabbing her daughters hands. "You know better than that."

"Well, at least you could've stayed with me, you know."

Star suddenly found the blanket really interesting, and she stared at it for a few tense seconds, just as long as it took Moon to recover from that blow.

"I'm sorry, sweetie, but I had to check on something. I had to go right away to-"

"What was so important that you couldn't just stay with me? I... I was so scared when I was trapped inside the wand, and when I came out I just wanted to be with you guys!" She said, looking back at her mother's eyes. "What was so urgent? Did you go to the Sanctuary to-?"

"I went to the Crystal Dimension because I had to make sure that Eclipsa was still imprisoned in Rhombulus crystals," Moon cut her short, dead serious.

It was as if even the lights of the chandelier flickered at the mere mention of the old Queen's name. The room became dead silent, and the tension reached a peak in a single moment.

"Oh," was all Star could say, feeling slightly stupid now that she knew what her mother had really been doing. "Eclipsa, you say?"

"Yes. I had to make sure that she is still trapped inside."

"Well, duh, she's been trapped for like three hundred years," she said like it was obvious and not worth worrying about, a weak attempt to relax both her mom and herself. "She can't escape just like that! Hahaha... can she?"

Moon sat on the side of her daughter's bed and subconsciously started to rub her forearms. For a second, Star could see the tiniest glimpse of something dark near her elbows, like the roots of a plant growing up on her mom's arm. But as quick as she spotted it, it was gone.

"Like I told you, I made a deal with her. In exchange for her darkest spell, once Toffee was killed, she... she would be set free."

Star contemplated her mother for a few seconds.

"But... Rhombulus crystals are... they are almost indestructible!"

"I know. But we made a magical contract and like she told me, the magic of two Queens of Mewni could have been enough to break her free."

"Could have? That means she's still trapped?" Asked Star.

"Yes."

The young princess sighed in relief.

"Oh, well, then there's nothing to worry about!" She said, resting once again against the pillow. "You had me worried for a second. I guess since we didn't kill him with her spell, the contract was worthless. Ha! *Star saves the day once again!*~"

"I wouldn't be so confident, Star", the queen said, standing up and walking back and forth, looking at the floor with a focused expression. "Eclipsa was one of Mewni's most powerful Queens, and she dived into the secrets of magic, Dark Magic especially, more than anyone else. The only person who knows more about magic than she is probably Glossarick himself and... and he's not here to help us out."

"Sooooooooo... what's your point again?"

"My point is that we need to watch out for her."

"But she's trapped!" Replied Star, trying to sit up but failing to do so, falling back into the bed, groaning in exasperation. "And even if she *did* escape, ~~which would be kind of awesome~~, she's way too old to pose a threat."

Moon turned her head around to look sternly at her daughter.

"Star, do not underestimate Eclipsa."

"You shouldn't underestimate *me*! Did you forget just how cool it was when I obliterated Toffee? I'm like, the coolest princess ever!"

"I know!" The queen exclaimed, stopping her little walk and looking positively exasperated at Star. "I saw that! You have the potential to become one of the most powerful Queens in the history of Mewni, I know, Baby told me so."

"Wait, wha-?"

"But you lack discipline and proper training! You can't yet control that kind of power. You can't even move several hours after channeling that magic. And besides, Eclipsa was known as the most dangerous Queen of all!" She continued. "The most powerful, unpredictable of them all. She's the reason why monsters learned magic, the reason the Great War began. And she's not *too old to pose a threat*, Star! Rhombulus crystals have kept her as young as she was when she was imprisoned, and she was trapped during her apogee. The stories the Magic High Commission have told me about their battle against her makes me shiver every time I listen to them. It is said that it was the only time Lekmet revealed his true powers."

Star, once again, tried to sit up, and even though her elbows almost gave in, she found the strength to do it. The story of Eclipsa was still a whole mystery for her. She had never even heard of her until she traveled inside her wand with Glossarick. And now, everything suddenly seemed to be connected with her.

The Magic High Commission. The war between monsters and Mewmans. Toffee. The deal her mother made in exchange for the dark spell. Somehow, all the red threads in Star's mind-corkboard led to Eclipsa.

She wasn't someone to think beforehand or to reach deep conclusions. But even Star began to understand that almost everything happening in the kingdom and her own life was somehow connected to Queen Eclipsa.

"Do you really think she might escape?" She slowly asked, dragging the words like it was hard to even pronounce them.

Moon sighed and took her hands up, her fingers massaging her temples in quick, circular motions.

"I think we can't and shouldn't underestimate her. All we can do is hope for the best, but be ready for the worst."

"So if she escapes we should...?" She trailed off. Star couldn't finish the sentence.

"We should go to war, yes."

"But why? I mean, I get it, she's the Queen of Darkness and bla, bla, bla, but she didn't do any-"

"She started a war!" Roared Queen Moon.

"She wasn't evil!" Star snapped back. "I read the Forbidden Chapter, she wasn't a bad person! She just... thought differently from the Magic High Commission!"

Moon clenched her fists so tight that Star could almost hear the sound of metal bending by the strength of her grip. She couldn't remember ever seeing her mom so angry, like a volcano about to erupt and spit her flaming rage upon her. She prepared herself to be scolded by her mother; she was, unfortunately, very used to that.

What she didn't expect was for her mother to close her eyes, count all the way to twenty and finally sigh, her arms meanwhile trembling with repressed rage. Once she opened up her eyes again, Moon sat on the bed near her daughter one more time and, to the utter surprise and disbelief of the princess, she hugged her. She hugged her tight, yet gently. The cold metal of her armor felt unpleasant, but the way her arms wrapped around her made Star feel somehow protected. She was definitely not used to this.

"I can't be mad at you, Star. Not today. Not after I thought I'd lost you", she told her in a soothing voice. "Even if you're right, if Eclipsa is set free and she seeks revenge we will have to face her. It's not your battle, it's not even mine. This conflict began centuries ago. And it's our duty as rulers and protectors of Mewni to defend it against any thread."

"I know, but-"

"We'll see about Eclipsa when and if it's required. Right now, we are all tired" she interrupted, standing up and gently pushing her down onto the bed. "Especially you. You just saved the world, Star, you deserve some rest."

"Mom, I'm-"

"I love you."

And after gently kissing her daughter's forehead, Moon left the room. She stopped for a second to look back at Star, but neither said any word. Star grunted and threw her head back against the pillow. She stared at the ceiling, bored, angry, confused and worried. She thought about Eclipsa, about what she did. About what she had read about her. She didn't really think she was evil. For what little she knew, Eclipsa was just someone that earned the distrust of everyone on Mewni by marrying a monster. It was definitely something unusual... but being different and doing things your way should not be something worth a life of imprisonment.

Star couldn't help but wonder, with a worried look on her face, if someday her chapter would also be considered a forbidden one.