

Spoiler Warning:

Sprout did nothing wrong.

Now, that isn't to say that Sunny isn't the goodest pony for revealing the magic of friendship or whatever, but y'all are getting it wrong when you say Sprout is the villain because first, your read of the conflict in the film is surface-level at best, and second, Sprout is now my husband, I'm fighting for my fucking life over here. I can fix him.

"But then who is the villain responsible for the antagonism of the film if not Sprout?" you ask while shaking, and crying, and diarrheating yourself. First of all, you're asking two separate questions, and third, it's Phyllis. But despite being only 20% of the main cast, Hitch Trailblazer bears the majority of the responsibility for the antagonism of the film. Sprout is simply the logical and even the defensible result of Hitch's actions.

Quick history lesson:

In one of the opening scenes, Sprout tells Sunny, "My Mom says the pegasi and unicorns tried to eat up all the earth ponies by zapping 'em with lasers and frying 'em to a crisp. So, the earth ponies kicked their butts in an epic battle, and if they ever try to come back to Maretime Bay, we'll kick their butts again."

This is corroborated by Hitch who says, "Well, that is kind of what our teacher said in history class..."

Now, we've learned two things. We've got this history lesson from a literal child so we must assume it has been simplified, but we've learned that earth ponies command the most powerful military in Equestria because they were able to win a war waged on two fronts simultaneously. If you've ever wondered why the United States' defense spending is so astronomical compared to other countries in the real world, it's because the U.S. was waging war on both Japan and Germany at the same time during WWII, and the U.S. doesn't want to get caught with its pants down like that ever again. Only one other country fought on two fronts during WWII, and while the USSR may have won the space race, the United States won the still-is-a-country race, so there you go. BUT, communism is trash jokes aside, the following is not an allegory for real life, this is simply an analysis of the events in the movie, and the movie alone.

Because!

The non-existence of the literally immortal princesses from Friendship is Magic should be all the proof you need that the events of Generation 4 is the mythologized history of Equestria. Much in the same way that Abraham Lincoln was ride-or-die with black folk which is why dude came through and be them freein' slaves, nawmsayn? Is not even close to accurate, there is a half truth in there. Abraham Lincoln was a real person, and he did sign the Emancipation Proclamation. So, the Mane 6 from Friendship is Magic were real ponies, and

they did keep Equestria safe, but the details have been exaggerated nearly into urban legend territory.

With me so far? Good.

The other thing we learned is that Maretime Bay, Bridlewood, and Zephyr Heights are geo-political adversaries. The narrative among Maretime Bay residents is that the unicorns hate the earth ponies... which is true as reported by Izzy Moonbow who has about 4 working synapses, so she struts right into Maretime Bay without any forewarning or contact with the Maretime Bay leadership... who is Hitch Trailblazer.

Sheriff Hitch is the only elected official that ever appears on screen, and because Deputy Sprout didn't have to depose anypony in order to declare himself emperor, and also, because Hitch refers to "bylaws" instead of "laws", it is assumed that Maretime Bay is essentially a stateless community which doesn't have a formal political system. It is the ultimate direct democracy where Hitch has been chosen by the ponies, for the ponies, of the ponies... but the ponies are retarded.

So, Phyllis Cloverleaf is the owner of Canterlogic which, let's be real, is a defense contractor. She maintains the narrative that unicorns and pegasi are evil as explicated through the company slogan, "To be scared is to be prepared."

Quick side note: It is not lost on me that market forces driving the culture of a stateless pony society is, in fact, anarcho-capitalism in Equestria which is pretty fucking funny.

Anywho, back to Izzy Moonbow walking into Maretime Bay:

Everypony, including the Sheriff, interprets her presence as an attack on Maretime Bay. So, put yourself in their HORSESHOES haha, this is so dumb.

So, let's back up and pretend we're an average dumbfuck of Maretime Bay:

A geo-political enemy of my community has launched an attack on us and Sunny Starscout, close friend of the only elected official of the commune, is a defector meaning that earth pony secrets about vulnerabilities in our defenses have been compromised. At this point, it is entirely within the reason to believe that Izzy Moonbow was a dry run and a hostile invasion is imminent.

Now, at this point, Sprout has been shown to be lazy, cowardly, and unambitious EXCEPT with regard to his intense oedipus complex... but he's so cute omg I CAN FIX HIM.

But, Hitch leaves Maretime Bay in the hooves of his deputy, Sprout. He says, "Try not to start a war." on the way out, but Hitch, the elected law enforcement and peacekeeping element of Maretime Bay who is entirely on board with the narrative that unicorns and pegasi are evil, is

leaving the commune just hours after what he believes was an attack by a foreign enemy. So, Sprout takes control of the situation. He rises to the occasion and does what Hitch failed to do.

Hitch is abandoning his post and failing to uphold his oath to keeping the peace in Maretime Bay which is why Hitch, not Sprout, is responsible for the events that follow. Now, with Hitch gone, Sprout becomes acting Sheriff of Maretime Bay. Phyllis's company slogan is invoked as the situation comes to a head because she's been the driving force behind stoking fear about the other races of ponies which makes Phyllis, NOT SPROUT, the villain behind the conflict in Maretime Bay.

Just like Argyle says in the beginning, the main takeaway of the film is to always stand up for what you believe in, and Sprout believed in the tenacity of the earth ponies' military might to stop the impending invasion and keep everypony safe. Just as he was engaging Sprouticus Maximus against the unicorns, the unicorns were arriving in Maretime Bay with Sunny, a pony that Sprout was left to believe was a defected unicorn soldier with a history of sympathy for the enemy.

In conclusion, the ponies of Maretime Bay demanded that Sprout makes them feel safe. The unicorns returning for a subsequent attack wasn't even Sprout's idea, and the ponies demanded that something be done about it. Maretime Bay is a stateless community so there were no institutions that stopped him from rising to becoming an emperor who had nationalized Canterlogic to manufacture offensive weapons to mount a counterattack on Bridlewood.

Now, a lot of you wanted Sprout to be punished, but you're also wrong.

Because Phyllis knows that her narrative was bullshit, at the last minute, she retracts all of her statements and puts a stop to Sprout's attack on the unicorns before shit got too real. This would be like if I told my kid every day of his life that another kid named Jim was a piece of shit, and wanted to punch him in the face. I ran a boxing gym and I hyped my kid up to punch Jim in the face for years and years, and then he meets a kid named Jim who mistakenly leads my kid to believe that he was gonna punch my kid in the face... and then I get mad and want to punish my kid for punching Jim in the face? No!

The town of Maretime Bay recognizes that THEY wanted war with Bridlewood based on things that weren't true, so it would be wrong to make Sprout the fall guy for a mistake that they all made.

Point is, Sprout did nothing wrong, and while the way he went about some things was not of, quote, "sober thinking", the actions that he took were not only justified, but ultimately reasonable given the social state of Maretime Bay and the geo-political climate of Equestria.

This has been a defense of Sprout, and I've been Stallionslaughter.