

*Tip. Tiptip. Drip tip.*

The soft and almost unexpected patter caught the attention of a Pegasus mare. Her white muzzle peeked out of the window to her home and felt a rush of cooler air drift over her muzzle and nip at her bare nares. The patter was coming from a sudden shower, the rain cloud's first born landing upon the Pegasus' windowsill. Celestia may control the sun, but she did not control the seasons, as this arid summer was proving. The mare looked to the sky, giving a courteous tilt of her snout to the unseen Pegasi responsible for this rain.

“Well, time to get to work.” The mare stated, retreating in to fetch her work saddle.

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Ponyville was feeling the effect of a particularly roasting summer, but thanks to their Pegasi citizens, it rarely became intolerable for the average pony. The weather Pegasi were kept on their hooves by the nearly constant need for rain. Between the natural need for water, the soil for the crops seemed to be drying as fast as they could water it. Though not many ponies knew about the crop situation, all of them knew about the blaze they faced daily. No one was left unaffected, and clouds had become a joyful sight. Shade and the potential of temperature adjusting rain provided instant relief for everyone.

Though the ponies of Ponyville were making it through this with expected ease, Nature proved to be less kind to the other species of Equestria. Ponds were shrinking, as the rivers and creeks that fed them began to dissipate. The flora and the fauna that relied on these for sustenance suffered accordingly. The most notable instance was Froggybottom Bog.

Froggybottom was known for being a foreboding place, but a lush bog none the less. Having once been home to a plethora of amphibian and algae life, it was now dwindling. The 'coast' of the bog had dropped notably, the mud being a foot shallower than a few months earlier. The mud that remained was thick and syrupy. It had choked most of the aquatic plants into submission, and the recent bloom in the frog population had been completely erased – via migration. But there was one creature that could not simply migrate, one unfortunate soul literally stuck in this dying marsh. The hydra.

The behemoth of a lizard was enduring a miserable fate, all four minds were enduring the distress equally. While the hydra was reptilian in nature, it still had to reside in damp locations, it was amphibious. And so the beast stewed, it's bulk forcing it to lie in the very depths of the thickest mud, which was now not even deep enough to conceal it's body. Around half of it's body was above the mud level, caked with dry dirt, what had been mud. It's dirt-caked appearance heralded it's desperate attempts to slather itself with mud in an effort to keep it's skin damp, and now there wasn't even enough mud to accomplish this. It's anguished heads laid atop the thickening mud, periodically snapping at it's neighbor in it's fury. Beneath the earthen layer, the beast's skin was dried from exposure, turning to stiff and painful leather. Every moment, every movement brought forth new pain for the four-minded lizard.

The Second head felt a pang of pain and immediately lifted it's head up, snapping it's serrated teeth towards the Third, echoing a deep hiss as it did so. The Third submissively recoiled back into the mud with the gesture. As the Second took in a breath to refill what it'd lost with the hiss, a smell in the air made it's eyes widen and pupils narrow. What was that scent? Was it rain...?

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What was to occur, could be literally described as a potential natural disaster. A female Pegasus, who'd been responsible for the latest rain over Ponyville, was standing atop a now white and 'empty' cloud. The sky blue filly smiled down at her work, she could already tell from where she hovered that it had taken the temperature down. Even though she stood stably atop the cloud, the delicate feathers in her wings could tell the updraft from the hot air had lessened in strength.

“That aughta be enough for at *least* two hours.” Her words rung with personal triumph, “All the

more time for my practice!” The practice she spoke of was to prepare for the next show of the famous Wonderbolts. Rainbow Dash's eyes left the saturated ground below and she lifted off from the cloud at a moderate pace, but her eyes were attracted to a movement in the not-so-far distance. Ponyville was sided by woodlands, and she could see from her altitude that – the trees were shaking – but only a few. She squinted her neon pink eyes, lifting a hoof to them to shield them from the sun. All at once she gasped, realizing that those trees were not only shaking, but in a direct line towards Ponyville. Something was making a path. Something *big*. And it was coming from the bog. Rainbow Dash was one of her group of friends that did not know of the hydra, but she knew this was big. And big usually meant bad. Rainbow only paused for a moment to think, before puffing her chest up, gaining a look of determination and bolting off. She knew who she should go to first. “I gotta get Twi!” The cloud she'd been hovering over was dashed by the sudden gust created by her wings.

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A congregation had gathered in the span five minutes, consisting of nearly every resident of the town. Rainbow hadn't been the only pony to start to ring the proverbial alarm bells. Other Pegasi had seen the disturbance as well and hustled off to their authority of choice. The family of Sweet Apple Acres was directly in the path of the beast, so they'd heard it's physical disturbance early. The social commotion that followed even brought Fluttershy from her reclusive home on the outskirts – though how she'd heard was not exactly known. From the rabble, only a few voices were able to reach levels to be understood, one of which being the Mayor. Her gentle but rumbling voice attempting to ring out over the crowd and restore order, if not just for the sake of communication.

“Everypony!” She started with a pleasant tone, trying to sound respectful. “Do not be alarmed!” She was a little more serious now. “We are trying to figure this out, if you all would be so kind as to *lower* your voices.” There was an immediate response, but still a dull radiance of whispers from the gathered ponies, “If any pony knows what is happening, raise your hoof!” She was asking for volunteers. She'd been hearing whispers of every flavor, and hopefully now only the true witnesses would speak. A hoof was raised and the mayor nodded to it.

“It's coming from Froggybottom!” Was the first answer, one of the weather Pegasi.

“But there's nothing in Froggybottom!” Was an answer, one unsolicited by the mayor.

“It's an Ursa! Just like last time!” Another call, from a female.

“Every pony! Wait your turn and be respectful of your peers!” The mayor shouted in an attempt to stop what she sensed as panic trying to break out. The cries and false accusations continued to spout, despite the mayor's protest. From dragons, to Ursas – major and minor – to spell work, to potentially rival countries. The logical and the fanatical all came out, all at once.

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The hydra had struggled it's way through the woodlands, it's dried and leathery skin being susceptible to cracking, meaning every strike from a branch threatened to leave a bleeding wound in it's passing. The four heads of the beast all grasped forward as it's bulk finally escaped the forest, relieved to be free from the smothering and bristle branches. It seemed it was the Second head that was truly in charge, as the beast came to a stop in the first clearing – just outside of Sweet Apple Acres – the Second head hoisted up and took a deep sniff. It had smelled rain, that was what had driven it to this voyage. The other three tilted and swerved, surveying the surroundings as they awaited orders from the Second. It took but a moment for confirmation, the scent of rain had weakened and there wasn't a rain cloud in sight, but it could still smell water! The second gave a lowly pitched groan before starting to steer the body in a new direction, cutting directly through the orchard. It's two awkward feet tore up tree after tree with each step it made, leading to further breaks in it's fragile skin. The pain was nothing to it right now, right now it was running for it's very life.

It was but a minute before the hydra reached what it'd been looking for, the drainage ditch

running between the actual town and Sweet Apple Acres. The ditch flowed with clean and clear water, as though it were an artificial river. The frequent downpours onto the town and farm had left consistent runoff. But the hydra was not the only one on the scene. Being so big, and so noisy, tended to prevent stealth. Applejack, a member of the Apple family, and one of the caretakers of the land the hydra was standing on, had taken quick note of the beast and barreled towards it – her friends not but a few hoof beats behind.

Applejack's hooves were naught but a blur, barely making any sound against the saturated and soft soil. Though she galloped with all her might, frightful of what this beast might be planning, she saw the downed apple trees in the hydra's wake. That was her livelihood. And not just her's, but her family's too! Her eyes narrowed with indignation. It was one thing to deny her comfort, but to deny her family stability! That was a step too far. She approached the ditch where the behemoth was standing, seeming to be oblivious with it's back to her. But from Applejack's point of view, she saw the heads of the beast lowering and it taking steps forward. It had to be going for more of her trees, or worse – her family!

“I'm not ganna let sum' overgrown salamander lay a claw on mah family!” She shouted as she circled around the side of the hydra, who now had all four heads lowered to the drainage ditch and was greedily lapping up every drop of water it could hold on it's tongues. Without another word, the Fourth head of the hydra was suddenly shoved down into the running water, wearing an orange pony for a hat it seemed. Applejack had jumped and landed on the Fourth head with stiff legs, her rigid hooves cutting into the dried skin of the hydra, causing exaggerated streams of blood to rush from around them. The other three heads shared the pain of the submerged Fourth head, and all three swerved around and locked eyes with the brave country pony. “Go on! Git!” She hollared at them, expecting some other response. The Third head, the closest to her now made a lightning fast snap towards her perch on the top of the Fourth head. Applejack had not been expecting such a quick response and made a clumsy dodge from the Third head's snapping teeth, stumbling backwards off of the Fourth with a wave of bloodied hooves and flaxen hair. Her body quickly fell into the drainage ditch, and it would be at this time that the other five arrived.

Twilight Sparkle had seen Applejack leave the meeting so suddenly, with an expression that was clearly concern. Any good friend would've followed, would've made sure everything was okay. And just like a flock of birds, the other four followed suite. Eventually they congregated, falling further behind Applejack as each waited for the other one to catch up. Twilight was leading the charge, and was shocked at the scene they came upon. She found herself staring at the back of a hydra, one that was attacking Applejack. Violet eyes grew wide for a moment as her mind raced, running over possible solutions and negating each in turn. In this moment, she didn't hear the hoofbeats of her friends stop, and Rarity address her,

“Twilight! What shall we do?” Her question went unanswered, as Twilight only saw the oh-so-small head of Applejack pop up above the water. She wasn't the only one to notice as the frustrated Third head reared up and lashed out again with a speed that would make most Pegasi jealous. With a brief yelp, Applejack flailed once in the rushing water as she felt the rough head of the reptile strike her. She felt her body leave the water, but saw nothing, suddenly feeling her body strike solid ground. Dazed, with the wind knocked from her, she managed a hollow groan as she started to lift her head up. All four of the hydra's heads were lifted upright, staring opposite of her. It seemed the hydra had lost track of her. Wait...no. Something else had it's attention. Her slightly blurred vision quickly came back to focus. No. Something didn't have it's attention. Some*pony* had it's attention.

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Just as the Third head reared up to try and snatch Applejack from the rushing water, Rainbow Dash lifted herself off of the ground, looking down to the stalled Twilight,

"It's gonna eat her if we don't do something! Come on, Twi!" She shouted, attempting to bring Twilight from her own mind. It worked. Twilight's eyes came back into focus, everything seeming to freeze and make sense to her. She did not know how to defeat the hydra. But she knew what had to be done right *now*. The purple unicorn turned her head to Rainbow Dash who's expression mimicked a soldier awaiting orders,

"We need to get the hydra off of Applejack!" That was all she had to say for it all to make sense.

"On it!" Rainbow retorted, rushing off with only a slight rainbow left in her wake. In but the blink of an eye she'd locked on to the Third head, the one that had just lashed at Applejack twice. It had just lifted it's head back from the ditch below, when it's eyes were caught by a small blue filly circling it. The Third head tried desperately to follow her with it's eyes, as did the other head's. The Second head, the boss, was watching eagerly as well. And just when the Second thought it had it's timing down it lashed out towards Rainbow, just as she'd anticipated. At the last moment the agile flier bolted out of the way and the Second head collided harshly with the Third, momentarily stunning the Second, and just agitating the Third. "Come on! You can do better!" She baited the hydra before she attempted to repeat the stunt again with the Fourth head. But just as she circled around, she noticed something out of the corner of her eye. A purple glow.

Twilight had sent Rainbow in as a distraction, as immediate relief from the assault on Applejack. Twilight could see Applejack was managing to climb to her hooves again, but there was no guarantee that the third strike would be as harmless as the prior two. Fear for the safety of her friends made her mind buzz as she tried to plan, but there was nothing in her repertoire that could deal with a *hydra*. But she had to do something. They all had to do something. Twilight started to focus, drawing magic into her horn, being bought enough time to do so thanks to Rainbow. The good news was; Rainbow figured out what she was doing and bolted away just as Twilight finished the spell and released it, the streak of purple light shooting through the air like a bolt of lightning. It struck the hydra in the back and made it's body seize up, a low resounding sizzle etching from every inch of the hydra. But after a few seconds, the lizard's muscles stopped contracting and the awkward and singed monster spun on one foot and locked on to Twilight. Step one of her plan had worked perfectly. Now for step two.

"Move!" She shouted to the three other ponies around her, as she reared up onto her hind hooves and turned abruptly, immediately bolting into a full gallop. Sure she was running away, but she was trying to lead it 'home'.

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Rarity had heard Twilight's order, but that didn't mean she was going to follow it, and apparently she was not in the minority. She understood what her friend was trying to accomplish, and it was simply fool-hardy. Rarity quickly matched pace with Twilight, half a body length behind, with Fluttershy and Pinkie Pie flanking her to either side. There was a moment of silence among the quartet, processing everything that had happened so far. The silence was punctuated by an angered roar from the pursuing hydra.

"You have to let us help!" Rarity called to Twilight, looking to the fellow unicorn as they all ran.

"I'm leading it back to the bog."

"And what will you do when you get it there, hm?"

"I – don't know."

"This isn't a solo mission, Twilight." Rarity now took notice that the hydra was gaining on them steadily. For such a large beast, it knew how to use itself. Rarity's dark blue eyes turned forward, scanning the path they seemed to be taking and spotted a low lying branch that seemed to be perfect for

what she planned. Her alabaster horn glowed for a moment and caused the bough of the tree to bend down, the four ponies escaping beneath. The hydra wasn't as lucky, two of the heads colliding with the sturdy branch. The two afflicted were the First and the Second, both being stunned. Since the Second head had been affected, the whole body slowed notably, letting the ponies gain some more room between them. This was a temporary solution. Unfortunately.

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Applejack wasn't down for the count, despite what it looked like. Rainbow Dash had returned from fleeing Twilight's spell to check on the well-being of Apple, and both seemed to be shaken but unharmed. The orange pony was standing securely on all four hooves now, with Rainbow looking at her uneasily, as if asking a silent question. Applejack looked to where the others had run off, no longer able to see them, but only the slowly shrinking heads of the hydra. Her eyes narrowed a moment in thought,

“Wait 'ere.” She said stoically, turning and running off as if nothing had happened. But a few moments she returned with coils of rope resting atop her frame and another coil swaying from her teeth, “We're gonna hogtie that no-good toad.” She met eyes with Rainbow, who gave a stern nod, Apple responded by tensing her body. They had a plan.

“Yes!” Rainbow cheered in excitement, lifting off the ground and taking a hold of Applejack, having no difficulty carrying the both of them. Her wings pumped with renewed strength, it was a new challenge for the otherwise unchallenged filly. She raced down the path the hydra had left until the both of them could see their friends still frantically fleeing ahead of the hydra. The closer they got to the beast, the fewer branches had been taken down, so the flight path wasn't as clear. Rainbow had to slow her pace in order to dodge and weave around broken and unbroken branches, eventually passing her friends. Rainbow slowed beside the galloping four, allowing an exchange.

“Afternoon, ladies.” Apple chirped with a grin, forehoof coming to her hat and tipping it. Rainbow didn't give enough time for a response, the other four just staring at them with confusion as they passed, but never slowing their gallop. Rainbow surged the two of them forward and began to lower herself even closer to the ground,

“Ready?”

“Sure as sugar.” And with that Rainbow swung her head down and took hold of one of the coils atop Apple's back, then released Applejack all together. Rainbow tilted one wing down slightly to bank to the side but a foot then shut her wings tight against her body. The two of them were moving at an even speed now, momentum from the flight carrying them. They both hit the ground with hooves blazing. Rainbow carried one end of the rope and Apple worked to get the other end of it in her teeth. Ahead there was a duo of trees that worked perfectly for this plan, and Rainbow bolted to the right tree, quickly circling around it in a cyclone fashion – fastening a knot securely to the tree. Apple had harder work with her end. Taking the tree to the left she circled the tree as well, but made sure to let the rope hang lax. It was but a few seconds later that her friends caught up and each pony passed over the limp rope with no problem. Just after Pinkie Pie's hooves cleared the rope, Apple pulled back on the rope with all her strength, and braced herself against the tree for leverage. This was going to hurt.

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Fluttershy, in all her meek nature, was genuinely regretting investigating what the commotion had been about. She followed wordlessly beside her friends, with yellow ears flattened back against her head. Her silence did not mean she was useless, it meant that she had not yet thought of a *good* idea. She'd dealt with the hydra before and knew it was an easily confused beast. But most importantly was that it was a beast. She should be able to figure this out. She was snapped from her thought by the sight of a rope on the ground, and as she passed over it, she craned her head to the side to watch it. Were they going to do what she thought they...? Boom. Question answered. Fluttershy was the first of the four to

come to a sudden halt, spinning on her hooves with a single flare of her wings. Now she found herself staring directly into the face of the downed hydra, it had clearly been tripped by the rope. It's body was so unbalanced from the start, a simple trip brought it down. Fluttershy was staring at the Fourth head, the first one that had been submerged into the running water. The mud being removed from it's face, she noticed it's skin was still damp, and seemed to be not suffering from as many splits as the other faces did. All at once she recalled the recent weather changes. After carrying a generation of frogs to Froggybottom, many of them had ended up at their original pond. Some of them had been ill, and she'd been taking care of them. Their illness was not bacterial or viral in nature, it was physical. They were all suffering from dehydration, their skin stiffening and splitting just like this hydra's was. She knew how much pain the frogs had been in, but she also knew the frogs had been nursed back to health in a matter of days. All they needed was a good soak. Her eyes widened for a moment, a short gasp leaving her lips,

“Girls.” She tried to call to the others, but her soft voice went unanswered, drowned out by the frantic words of the other five.

“Did you see that!? That was great!”

“I know! You were all 'vwoosh!' and it was all 'Raaaww!’”

This was not the end of the hydra though.

“Girls!” Fluttershy tried to call out again. This time she did get the attention of at least Twilight, it seemed Rarity was paying attention now too. “It needs -” She was cut off by a low hissing noise, the hydra was coming from it's stupor. All four heads elevated one by one, and each had it's eyes fastened on a pony in turn. The Second had it's attention directly on Fluttershy, the closest to them. “ - water!” She managed to squeak out, but she wasn't sure if anypony else had heard her, what with the giant and ravenous beast standing but a body's length from her.

The Second head of the hydra arched it's head down and let out a furious bellow, sending all six of the ponies scattering. There was no time for anypony to organize them, only fright. As the Second head ended it's roar, it found it's sights on Fluttershy once again, and it intended to get blood from one of these ponies for what pain they'd put it through. The pounding of it's legs resumed as it attempted to pursue the fleeing Fluttershy. As the hydra began to close the distance between itself and Fluttershy, it started to lift it's head up in a striking position, barring it's teeth. The First head issued a threat, releasing another full bodied roar even as the hydra reached it's full speed. The fright of the sound prevented Fluttershy from using her wings. Eyes wide in fright, the gentle filly was looking desperately for a way to lose the hydra, and her revelation was found. A hollow log. With a squeak and a sudden swerve to the side, the narrow filly managed to pounce into the hollow log, just as the hydra struck. The Second head made full contact with the log, wrapping it's jaws around the log and biting down in the blink of an eye. Just as quick as it'd struck, it released the log, never having even moved it, and it's attention now wandered, looking for the others.

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Twilight had barely heard Fluttershy's input, let alone be able to think it out. But as the terror from the beast's roar began to fade away, her mind was free to process.

“Water?” There was a moment of realization, evident on her face. She knew what the problem was. While she did not have first-hoof experience with the frogs as Fluttershy had, that didn't mean she couldn't understand. It explained everything. The straying from it's territory. It's hostility. The wounds covering it. This was a very sick animal, and it was just trying to survive. She stopped her fleeing, turning her head to survey the scene. The hydra had just lashed out at the log, and the rest of the ponies she could clearly see – except Flutter. That must have been why it attacked the log, she was in it. She focused on Rainbow, “Rainbow! We need rain. Now!” She hoped Rainbow would understand the situation, but it didn't seem to be so cut and dry.

“What? Don't you think *now* isn't the time to be worrying about the heat?!”

“Just go!”

“...Fine.” Was the answer, more surprised than upset. Twilight better know what she was talking about. The young flier quickly weaved her way out of the tree canopy and hurried off to find a raincloud.

“We need to get it to stop moving.” That was easier said than done, of course. The three other ponies all quickly trotted to Twilight's side as the hydra started to size them up. Four ponies versus four heads.

“And how in all of Equestria do you expect us to do that?” Objected Rarity, noting how the First head was eying her.

“I – uh. Don't know. We need to stall it, Rainbow will be back soon. I'm sure of it.” Applejack didn't need to be told this twice. There were lots of ways to get something to stay still, and she knew one of them. Taking a length of rope from out of her saddlebag, she quickly and aptly fastened a lasso and tossed it perfectly around the First head. She gave the rope just one tug, making sure the rope caught firm, but then released the rope, letting it dangle from the base of the reptile's First skull. She knew she didn't stand a chance at winning a tug-of-war challenge with a hydra. But that might distract it. It seemed to work...for that head at least. It turned it's attention down towards the rope around it's neck, but given the angle, it wasn't able to actually reach the 'noose' part. It was able to reach the 'lead' part, and upon clenching it with it's jaws, it only succeeded in choking itself a little. Releasing the rope with frustration, it looked to it's neighbor, the Second head who realized the First's plight and started to try and grab at the noose.

And then, it suddenly got darker. Yes. Rainbow was back, and with a decently sized raincloud.

“You better know what you're doing.” She fussed as she positioned the cloud overtop the distracted hydra, giving the cloud a sharp kick and immediately rain started to pour from the top of it. This got the attention of the hydra, though the rope was still around the First's neck. It didn't seem to be protesting any more. A swath of mud and blood was flowing from the body of the beast, and the leathery skin seemed to be sated immediately. Though not entirely fixed. It seemed the animal's pain was lessening, it was being pacified. Rarity looked towards Applejack, seeming to be the only one who wasn't stunned by what she was seeing. Perhaps it was because the rain was flattening her hair.

“Applejack! You must lasso the other three. This is our chance to lure the beast back to the swamp!” And sure enough, she was right. Apple took forth a new draw of rope one at a time and was able to encircle each head in turn. Though the beast was not stunned, it was certainly not pleased with the rope being attached. But it did not want to disrupt the flow of water it was receiving. The cloud wouldn't last forever though. Once each head had a strand of rope harnessing it, the four ponies on the ground needed no instruction. Each dashed forward and took charge of a rope, gently tugging their hydra head down and starting to guide it towards Froggybottom; as a team. Rainbow was not pulling a rope, but she was guiding the rain cloud, working it as best she could. She made sure it stayed over the hydra, keeping it calm, for fear of it becoming agitated and slinging her friends into the air with ease. She was a good flier, but she wasn't sure she could save four separately thrown ponies at once. It was a long walk, and a stressful one, each pony was worried if they stepped too fast or tugged too hard that the hydra would snap from it's psuedo-trance and realize it was being guided like an oxen with a ring through it's nose. But the rest of the trek went without incident, the beast was guided back to it's muddy bog that was in just as horrid of a state as it left. But there was a difference. There was less pain now. Twilight gestured to Rainbow, and everyone knew what had to be done. The bog had to be restored. That meant it needed water, and lots of it. Each of the four ponies tied their ropes off to gnarled and aged roots, keeping the hydra from being able to truly rebel, while a fleet of weather Pegasi brought in a downpour, hoping a flash flood would help at least start to restore the bog to it's original state. For the

safety of everyone.

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It seemed the crisis was over. A saturated Applejack stood slightly away from the rest of the group, but that didn't take away from the moment. A calm smile came to her face, glad that everything was on the path to balance again. Her family, her friends, and her land were all safe. But then that smile vanished. One. Two. Three. Four. Five if she counted herself. Where was Fluttershy?

"Fluttershy?" There was a hint of alarm to her voice, "It's okay now. Y'all can come out now?" She called in no direction in particular. This got the attention of the other four, and they realized the problem...no one had seen Fluttershy since the Hydra had been tripped. The five formed a search party, logically splitting up to cover where they'd last seen her and where they'd gone to. Rainbow took to the sky, to see if she was hiding among the clouds, and the unicorns and earth ponies took to the ground.

Applejack took to where the hydra had been tripped, aiming to recover some of the rope they'd used for that trick in the process. She'd seen Fluttershy duck into that log to avoid being eaten, but she'd never seen her again after that. "Fluttershy!" She hollered, trotting around the clearing the hydra had made with it's fall. Then she saw the log she'd taken refuge in and cantered up to it, bowing her head down to look into the entrance of the log, "Flutter-" Her eyes went wide with what she saw. "Oh, mercy." She breathed and lifted her head up. "I found Fluttershy! Someone get help! Hurry!" She yelled, trying to keep her voice within a normal octave. It was Rainbow who heard the call, and as soon as she got a visual on Applejack, she was off like a rocket. Hearing the tone in Apple's voice sent a new adrenaline rush through her. This was really bad.

"Fluttershy..." Applejack whispered, trying to figure out what best to do. What she saw before her eyes was the yellow Pegasus filly lying still, with no movement to her. What appeared to be a large fang was pierced through the frame of the hollow log and imbedded deeply and directly into the neck of the Pegasus. A slow stream of blood had just started to leak out of the wooden prison. "Jus' hold on. You'll be okay." The element of honesty wasn't so sure she was being honest though. If her friend could hear her, she needed that confidence. She withdrew her head from the log again, "Somepony! Help!" She didn't know that Rainbow had already left for help, and now the other four were starting to arrive at the clearing. They all heard Applejack's booming voice, but they all came from varying distances. "We're gonna git ya out of there. Promise." She said the last word grimly as she turned and slammed her hind hooves into the shell of a tree, cracking some of it clear open. "Jus' hold on!" she repeated and repeated the buck, taking another piece of the tree with her hooves. Slowly she picked away at the log until she was able to take Fluttershy's tail and drag her from the log, fang still pushed into her neck, but now sagging slightly as it no longer was being supported by the log. They feared to remove it, frightened the small Pegasus might bleed out before help arrived. They all stood solemnly. Some looking to Fluttershy, and some looking to the sky for help.

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Help finally came. Though it'd only been a few minutes, it felt like hours to those four. A Pegasus mare, white in color wearing a gray saddle landed beside the five with Rainbow in tow. This mare's saddle seemed to be specially equipped for this situation, grooved in such a way with a support for a head. With the aid of Fluttershy's friends, the injured Pegasus was hoisted into the mare's saddle and gently the Pegasus took off without another word. Carrying the yellow filly back towards civilization. Towards help. And the remaining five followed at the fastest their weary and worn bodies would allow.

*To be continued...*