

## Dumbfounded

“Anything *you* can do, *I* can do better! Any takers? Hm? Or is Trixie destined to be the GREATEST EQUINE WHO HAS EVER LIVED?”

The Great and Powerful Trixie’s words echoed over the crowd of awestruck ponies. But one, a normally sweet-tempered and humble mail-carrying pegasus, gave a rare scowl. The effect of the expression with her lazy eyes made for a comical sight, but no pony was looking at her... except for the boastful unicorn on stage.

*These small-town hicks won’t be any challenge, Trixie thought. Look at that one... looks like she doesn’t know up from down, but she’s glaring daggers at me! At least, I think it’s at me. I’d call her out, but it’s not nice to pick on the mentally challenged...*

Just then, as if she’d been reading the blue unicorn’s mind, the gray pegasus stepped up to the stage, a look of what can only be called determination in her spacey eyes. Trixie raised an eyebrow. *Well, if she makes a total fool of herself, at least it’s not MY fault.* She stared coolly at the pegasus, waiting for her to make the first move.

The gray pegasus glared back (at the floor, and somewhere above and to the left of Trixie), took a deep breath, flicked her tail, and spoke in a threatening tone that no pony had ever heard her use before:

“Anchovy gauntlets are a nuisance to woodchucks all. Villainous oranges must derail curtains. I bid muffins good calibration.” And with a snort of contempt, she turned and took flight into the distance.

Trixie stared, dumbfounded. She regained her composure and went on with her show, telling herself it was just the local crackpot. *But why, said a tiny voice in the back of her mind, do I feel like I just got the cussing-out of a lifetime?*