

Rainbow hurriedly trotted through the measly trees of the atoll. Her excitement at seeing the siren put some more energy into her step, and now her mind was spinning a thousand miles a minute. If the siren was here, then Rarity had to be here. She *had* to. And as far as Rainbow figured, the siren would most likely know where she was.

Brushing aside some ferns and drying plants with her wings, Rainbow emerged into the interior of the atoll. There before her, the siren from before sat, majestic and grand in the sunlight of the morning. The bright summer sun glittered and shimmered off the creature's dazzling scales, shifting and flickering with each tiny movement she made like an emerald disco ball. The creature hummed quietly to herself, completely unaware of Rainbow's presence, content to work on the fish she'd caught while out at the sea.

Champagne caught up to Rainbow shortly after, huffing slightly from her sudden dash through the jungle after the prismatic pegasus. "Rainbow, what are you—?"

Rainbow quickly silenced Champagne with a wing to her muzzle. "Shh..." she shushed, slinking down into the low foliage around the edge of the lagoon. "We don't want to give ourselves away yet."

The French mare swallowed hard and nodded. "Right," she whispered, mirroring Rainbow's actions. "Good call."

The two pegasi watched the siren for several moments, trying to gauge her demeanor and how likely they were to die if they approached her. But as far as Rainbow could tell, the siren just seemed docile and calm, maybe even happy and excited. She also worked on the fish she'd caught with delicate care and precision. It was almost like she was preparing it for something... or *somepony*.

"She's definitely taking care of Rarity," Rainbow said, standing up. Swallowing down her anxiety, she emerged from the brush. "I'm going to talk to her."

Champagne chewed on her lip. "Do you want me to come with you?"

Rainbow shook her head. "Stay here and stay hidden. If she's nasty, then I'll try to lead her away from you. You can then go and warn everypony else. It would be pretty friggin' awful if this siren just ate all of us and that was that."

"Eesh. No kidding." Slinking back further into the vegetation, Champagne quickly scurried out of sight. "I'll be watching from the shadows."

"Good. You might just see the flight of your life." Then, with a deep breath, Rainbow spread her wings and fluttered forward.

The siren didn't notice her advance at first. Rainbow's heart pounded in her chest. She was putting her life on the line that this siren wasn't just going to snap her up as soon as she laid eyes on her. Not only would it be a pretty painful way to go, but it'd also be a pretty lame one. If Rainbow was going to die, she intended on dying in a fiery explosion or something similar. Not as a mid morning snack for an oversized fish dragon, and certainly not from starvation or exposure on a deserted island.

She made it about halfway from her cover to the siren before the creature's ears heard her wings. Rainbow swallowed hard when a draconian eye blinked at her, and the entire impressive girth of the powerful creature shifted about to watch her approach. A mouth full of swords widened in a grin, and soon the siren had shifted along the beach to meet Rainbow face to face.

"Another pony?" the siren asked her. "I wasn't expecting even more! I've already got my hooves full just trying to take care of everything. Who are you?"

"I'm... Rainbow Dash," Rainbow managed, feeling her heart thunder in her chest. If the siren decided to eat her, she probably wouldn't have enough time to react and fly away. "I'm looking for my friend."

"Looking for your friend? Do you mean Rarity?"

"Yes!" Rainbow's heart jumped into her throat. "Have you seen her? Were you the one who got her off the island?"

"And moved her here? Yeah that was me." The siren smiled but at least had the decency to close her lips and hide her teeth from Rainbow's sight. "My name is Melody. And we should be expecting company any moment now."

Rainbow blinked. "Wait, what? Company?"

Just then, a thunderous *bang* boomed over the islands. A bright flash of light accompanied the noise, and when Rainbow could see again, an enormous airship had simply materialized out of nowhere. The propellers on the machine began to slow, and it lowered itself down to the lagoon until its keel touched the water. A door on the side opened, and none other than Twilight and all of Rainbow's friends jumped out.

"Rainbow Dash!" Twilight exclaimed flying up to Rainbow. "We were so worried about you!"

"Yeah!" Pinkie exclaimed. "We thought you were super duper extra dead at the bottom of the sea! I even had a par—I mean, funeral for you and Rarity!"

“It really wasn’t nice of you to disappear like that,” Fluttershy said, a stern edge in her voice. “We were all really worried about you.”

“Apples!” Applejack appled.

Rainbow’s jaw fell slack in shock. “What... but how... you just...”

“Oh, you’re wondering how we found you?” Twilight asked. “Well, as soon as Melody found Rarity, she just sang a song and I picked it up on the radio. That’s how I was able to figure out exactly where you were!”

“The spirit of the radio is stronger than any magic,” Melody said. The other ponies gave a solemn nod of agreement.

“Ah! Rainbow, darling, there you are!” Suddenly Rarity was there, too, and not only that, but she had a fashionable hat and sunglasses. Also, her mane was back to normal for some reason. “It’s so wonderful to see you again. I wasn’t sure if you were going to show up or not.”

Rainbow could only stare in shock at what was transpiring in front of her. “Where did you get that?!” she eventually managed.

“Oh, this?” Rarity questioningly gestured to her hat. “There’s an island resort about five miles away. It’s really not far at all. Melody took me there to get freshened up when she found me. Really, if we had just gone a bit further east, we would have found it and been done with this whole ordeal in like a week.”

“Celestia is even sending in the Royal Guard to deal with the minotaurs,” Fluttershy said. “We’ll teach them to not be so mean in no time.”

“Through copious amounts of lethal force!” Pinkie happily exclaimed.

“And Luna’s dealing with whatever it is that you released in the archipelago,” Twilight said. She waved her hoof and shrugged. “I asked her about it, but she said that the story hadn’t gone on long enough for me to know about it, so there’s that.”

“It’s only been going on for two hundred and thirty-five chapters now,” Pinkie once more shouted. “That’s about as far as it needs to go, right?”

“Apples,” appled the Apple again.

“Now come on,” Twilight said, leading Rainbow away. “Let’s take you back to civilization. You’ve suffered long enough. We’ll pick everypony else up on the way.”

“Is... is that it?” Rainbow asked. “It’s just over... just like that?”

“Pffff! No way!” Pinkie exclaimed bouncing along next to Rainbow. “It’s only April Fool’s! You’ll be back to your regularly scheduled suffering tomorrow!”

“At least you can enjoy yourself in the meanwhile,” Fluttershy said. “Consider this a day off from Surviving Sand Island.”

“Hey, look, somepony said it,” Pinkie said. “Finally! Can you believe it’s been this long and nopony’s said the title yet? Cheese and crackers, nopony’s even called the home island ‘Sand Island’ yet! This story’s misleading!”

“We’ll fix that at some point,” Rarity said. Then, purring, she leaned against Rainbow’s side as the friends went back to the airship. “What do you say, Rainbow? Twenty-four hours to relax before we go back to Tartarus?”

“You know what?” Rainbow smiled and finally began to relax. “Deal. We’ve earned it.”

“That we have.”