

Chapter 1: The Chariot of Artemis

Twilight awoke slowly, shivering slightly. Even though Winter Wrap-up was last week, it still felt cold in Ponyville. She pulled herself up out of bed and took a look outside. It was raining. She glanced at a weather schedule that was nearby. It was showing rain for the next week. She sighed and pulled her rainbow umbrella hat out of her closet and deftly put it on. Next she pulled out a couple of rain ponchos, one of which was too small for her. She hung Spike's on the corner of her bed and put her own on. She finished getting it adjusted in place by the time she got to her front door. She was glad that the baby dragon she lived with was so tidy. She was also happy that the owl that lived with her worked nights. She opened the door with her magic and trotted outside.

By the time Twilight had reached Sugarcube corner she could hear Pinkie setting something up. When she opened the door, she saw the hyperactive pink pony fall to the ground, shaking. "You had better be cold, Pinkie." Twilight said as she watched Pinkie convulse on the floor.

Pinkie slowly stood up, looking at Twilight with a concerned look on her face. "I've been shaking since I got up! And I'm not cold, either!" she said. As she started to climb the ladder she recently vacated, she started shaking in her hooves again.

"Last time you shook like that, you were able to tell where it was going to happen." Twilight said as she undressed from her wet clothes, using her magic to place them on a coat rack. "Can you this time?" Even with Pinkie shaking harder than a hummingbird flaps their wings, Twilight was able to get a definitive nod out of her sugar powered friend. Another doozy was going to happen today, and with Twilight's luck with Pinkie Sense, she was going to be caught in the middle of it. "So, what can I help you with?" Twilight asked, trying to keep her mind off of what was going to happen.

Nathan Drake stared at the aged piece of paper he held in his hands. It was covered with all sorts of chemistry mumbo jumbo. He recognized the chemical formula for water, H₂O, in a couple of places on the document. After staring at it for a minute, Drake heard his old friend (emphasis on the old) Victor 'Sully' Sullivan walk over and look over his shoulder. He couldn't seem to make heads or tails of it either. As they stood there, staring at it, the third person in the room, Elena Fisher, walked over with her camera. After getting a few good seconds of footage of the paper, she turned the camera off and walked in front of the men who were dumbfounded by some writing.

"I believe it's a German recipe for gasoline that results in water." she said, making the men look at her, even more confused. Drake shrugged at this news, folded the paper up and put it in a back pocket.

"So, how much time do you think we have before Scotty gets here?" he said jokingly. And as if to mock him, a loud pounding was heard at the door they entered from. Nate quickly reached down and grabbed his brand new 70 year old MP40 from where he had set it down. "I'm starting to feel like Indiana Jones..."

"YOU'RE starting to feel like him?" Sully said as he readied his Wes 44. "I'm the one that's too old to be doing this shit." Elena rolled her eyes as her companions aimed at the door. She then jogged over to the only other door in the room and opened it.

"Guys, I don't think any of us bothered to lock that door." Everything stopped at Elena's words. Sully and Drake looked at her like she was mad.

"Through that door!" Drake said as he turned tail and ran by Elena. Sully ran through just as a couple of mercenaries armed with M4s threw the door open. Elena and Drake started pushing the heavier steel door closed. They then locked this door. As Drake turned from the locking mechanism, he saw what they had come here for: a pure silver chariot said to have been the Moon at one point. "I never would've guessed that this was under the Vatican." Drake said as Sully walked around Artemis' chariot.

"How're we going to get it out of here?" Sully asked as he lit a cigar. Everyone started looking for a way out as they ignored a pounding on the entrance. Drake couldn't help himself from grabbing as much MP40 ammo as he could carry. As he found a potato masher*, a thought occurred to him.

"Couldn't we use the big, armored chariot that we conveniently have right in front of us?" Sully gave him some sort of look that Drake didn't pay attention to while Elena glanced at said chariot with a nervous expression.

"You do realize that Artemis was eternally chaste, right?" Elena said as she looked at Drake.

"You do realize that she never lost her virginity, right?" Sully said at the same time. This got him a quick look from Elena.

"It would probably do something horrible to any man that touches it, and possibly something to a woman that had lost her virginity. So you two get ready to open the door while I see about getting on this thing." Elena said after glaring at Sully.

"Drake, I've already said this, but I'm getting too old for this." Sully said as he moved to

the back of the chariot with Elena.

“Of course, I’ve got to do everything myself. First zombies, then yetis...” He trailed off as what he was saying got even lower under his breath. Just as he was about to unlock the door, an explosion threw him back. Right onto the chariot. As Drake passed out, he saw a flash of silvery light engulf the room. “This is going to hurt...” He muttered as he passed out.

Twilight and Pinkie both jumped at the loud thud they suddenly heard from the roof. Just as they got the cake into position, Pinkie’s tail had started twitching, independent of the rest of her body. They cantered outside to see if they couldn’t get a better look at what had fallen on top of Sugarcube Corner. After going about 20 feet from the door and looking up, they could see a dark red pegasus with a grey mane, wearing saddlebags, laying up there. From the distance they were at, they couldn’t make out what his Cutie Mark could possibly be. Twilight focused her magic to levitate the newcomer down to the ground. About halfway down, he woke up. And panicked.

“What’s going on?” he shouted in a gruff voice. He sounded about as old as the Mayor.

“Twilight will let you go if you start flapping your wings!” Pinkie said with enthusiasm as her tail started to twitch again.

“Wings?!” the elderly stallion replied. “I don’t have wings!”

“Yes you do.” Twilight and Pinkie said in unison. The stallion looked back and gave a yelp as he opened one of his wings. And that startled Twilight enough that she lost her concentration. The stallion hit the ground hard. “Oops...” Twilight said as she trotted up to the senile pegasus.

“Oww...” He said as he started to get to his hooves. “I’m really too old to be doing anything other than telling stories to...” He trailed off as he got a good look at the mares before him. As he stared at the pink pony and the purple unicorn, he fainted. Twilight looked at Pinkie, who had a look of understanding come over her face.

“I think he’s the doozy...” she said. Twilight picked him up in her magic again and started trotting towards the hospital.

“Sorry, Pinkie, but I think that I should probably take him to the hospital now. After all, a pegasus pony that doesn’t know they’re a pegasus pony? That shows something wrong right there.” As Twilight went out of view of Sugarcube Corner, Pinkie went back inside to put a few

more finishing touches on the party. "This is going to be a long day..."

Drake awoke to find himself hanging in the air. At least his upper body was hanging. It felt like his lower body was stuck in something. "At least I'm not covered in my own blood." he said trying to lighten his own mood. As he opened his eyes, he saw that his legs were probably stuck in a tree, he now had hooves instead of hands, there was a zebra wearing a brown travelling cloak looking up at him, dumbfounded, and his ring was right in front of his left eye. "That had better not fall before me." he said to nobody in particular. Then a thought struck him. "Why is there a zebra wearing something with a hood?" he thought aloud.

"Just because I do not live in Ponyville, does not mean that I am part of a hill." the zebra said. The zebra had just said something. Something even more important than what he thought was a talking zebra was that he now had hooves. Hooves. Something that humans didn't have. Drake just hung there for a while, staring at his new hooves, when the zebra spoke up again. "Stay there, I'll be right back, I'm going to go get strong AppleJack." she said as she ran off.

And now Drake had put a gender to a hallucination. Great. He really did need to spend less time raiding long forgotten tombs alone, it really was affecting him mentally. He than had another thought. "Why would a hallucinogenic, talking, female zebra get me some hard cider? Well, nothing to but hang here, I guess..."

Luna yawned as she got ready for her midday nap. She'd been up all night planning something new with Celestia, she called it an eclipse. It gave her an excuse to bring up the moon during the day. It had taken some convincing (and some blackmailing) but Celestia had finally agreed to it. She was giddy over the thought of it. She did some more stretches and jumped onto her bed. Just as the princess of the night had gotten comfortable, a loud thud made her open her eyes. She looked to her left and saw a silver chariot resting perfectly balanced on it's 2 wheels next to her bed. As young unicorn with a white coat and blonde mane lifted her head, Lune sighed. Her nap would have to wait.

"You there, get off of my chariot and come with me." Luna said as she pushed herself off of her bed. The unicorn followed her silently, as if in awe of actually seeing Luna up close. Luna noted just how dirty this newcomer was, and the strange object she had with her. She also noticed that she had a camera with her. That made sense, given that her Cutie Mark was a camera with a trigger.

As Luna passed through the halls of the palace, various servants gave the unknown unicorn differing looks. Luna eventually made her way to the throne room, where Celestia sat, bored out of her mind. When she saw Luna enter, she raised an eyebrow. When she saw the unicorn that was following her, she perked up. "Where did you find her?" Celestia asked as she got up and walked over to get a better look.

"You know those chariots we used to use before we realized we could just use our magic to move the Sun and Moon?"

"Yes?"

"I found her in mine." Both sisters took a look at the young unicorn that was in the throne room with them. She looked thoroughly confused, glancing back and forth between the two.

"Apollo's a chick." was all that she said before passing out. Celestia and Luna stood there, looking at the unconscious anonymous unicorn that appeared to be getting the floor wet. It was then that Celestia said something else.

"Let's go get a stick!"

Drake gave up of trying to pry himself from the tree for the fifth time since getting stuck in it by some mysterious force. It was still better than age old zombies trying to claw his face off. Even if it was going to hurt about as much when he hit the ground. He was going to try and figure out why his psyche was helping him deal with being next to another explosion by sticking him in a tree, giving him hooves and having a talking zebra go get him help. That almost made as much sense as drinking pitch. It was still more realistic than a double barreled shotgun firing three times before it needed to be reloaded. As he thought about why they gave revolvers six shots, he heard the thundering of 2 sets of hooves coming towards him. As they got closer, his ring started to slide some more. When the zebra from earlier came into view with an orange pony with three apples on her flank, he felt it fall.

"No! Dammit..." He said as he tried to catch it. As he watched it fall, he noticed the orange pony pull a rope out of her (again?) saddlebags and began swinging it like a lasso... successfully. No wanting to lose his ring (and not having an Elena to grab it when he wasn't looking) he intently watched it fall and land in front of the zebra. When he relaxed, knowing where his ring was, he felt something tighten around his chest. Before he could look at the offending rope, he was pulled out of the tree with a loud pop.

"I was right, it would hurt," he said as he started to get up off of the ground. "A lot..." he added as a heavy weight fell on his rear legs. Remembering his ring, he clawed his way along

the ground until he was fishing his ring out of the dirt with his mouth. He stood up as soon as he had a part of the cord he kept the ring on in his mouth, complete with copious amounts of dirt. As he watched the pony and zebra while trying to get the ring back on, they exchanged confused glances.

“Well, you were right when ya said that he wasn’t exactly all there.” the orange pony said as she put the rope away. “We should probably take ‘im to Twi, just ta see if she can do anythin’ fer ‘im.” she said as she started off in the direction she had come from. Since he was the only he there, and since he had no idea what had happened to Sully and Elena, he followed her. He noticed the zebra fall in behind them. As they walked he decided to take a good look at himself. His coat was a dirty light grey color, and his black mane and tail had hairs sticking out in every direction.

“If Rarity were to get a hold of you, you would be groomed before you could count to 2!” the zebra rhymed behind him.

“Don’t say anything, don’t say anything, if you say anything, then it will.” Drake said under his breath. He said it louder than he thought, as the pony in front of him looked back.

“What will?” she asked.

“Life will get worse.” he replied. As soon as his mouth was shut, a roar rang out through the forest. “Cue Bigfoot...” He replied to it sarcastically. Both of his current travelling companions gave him looks that showed worry and confusion.

“Do not say anymore, for it is just a manticore.” the zebra piped up.

“H-how far away is it?” the pony replied.

“From the strength of the roar, the distance in miles is four.” the pony let out a sigh at this news. Then something struck Drake.

“Is your name AppleJack?”

The pony in front of him replied without looking back. “Yep!” was all that she said.

After a few more minutes of walking, a small town could be seen off in the distance. It seemed like it was raining over the town and the immediate area. Even though there was a light wind, it didn’t seem like the clouds were moving an inch. Drake looked to the ground to see if the raindrops were being blown, and about 5 feet in front of him was a distinct line from where the edge of the water was coming down. As he heard another roar from inside the forest he had just left, he thought back to the last time something different had happened in the rain.

“Hey! Ya coming?!” Drake was snapped out of his thoughts by the sound of the orange pony’s voice. He jogged (trotted now?) to catch up to the pony that pulled him from the tree.

She doesn’t seem like she’s intoxicated at all. Drake thought as he slowed his pace to stay with his companions.

Luna sighed as she watched her sister do something incredibly... different. Celestia had a stupid grin plastered across her face she she sat there, holding a stick, poking the strange unicorn with the camera that had relieved herself on the floor of the throne room. Luna rolled her eyes as she set about finishing the letter she was writing.

Dear Twilight Sparkle,

From what I’ve been hearing about your time in Ponyville from ~~Tro~~ Celestia, you have likely encountered a strange pony that either thinks this is a dream or that they aren’t a pony. There is a reason for how and why they are here, and I’d like to explain that in person. I will arrive myself with one of the ponies of which I speak later tonight.

I will be coming with only the pony that arrived in my chariot, no guards, no ~~Tro~~ Celestia, just me and her. Expect me around 10:00.

Princess Luna.

As Luna looked over letter to Twilight, 2 problems with it came to her. First was that she didn’t know how to remove ink. Second was how she was going to get it to Ponyville discreetly. When she looked up to ask Celestia about it, she found that Philomena had arrived with her own stick, and was perched on the horn of the unicorn and poking her. Luna sighed again.

“Tia, I need to send a letter.”

“Then put in the mailbox and put the flag up.”

“Express.”

“Take it to the post office.”

“Instant express.”

“To whom?”

“Your faithful student.”

“Why?”

“Because from what you’ve told me about some of her reports, she got herself a pony similar to this one.”

“You mean one that passed out of her floor that she is now poking with a stick?”

“No, one that appeared out of nowhere with no warning, that most likely wasn’t a pony before arriving in Equestria.”

“Then use dragon fire.”

“But wouldn’t fire destroy it so that I have to write it again?”

“Just go grab one of the bottles of fire from my room and open it with the note just over the opening and Twilight will get it. Just don’t forget to use your seal on the letter.” Celestia said in a flat voice. She put her stick down and walked over to a box that was sitting in the corner. “And before I forget, your new blanket arrived!” Celestia pulled out a pure white blanket covered in copies of her Cutie Mark.

Luna spent the next minutes glaring at Celestia with enough intensity that Philomena started to feel uneasy. Once the pony that was tasked with cleaning up messes in the palace arrived to clean up a mess he had never seen in the palace before, Luna started heading to Celestia’s room. Once there, she found the closet full of bottles of green fire. Luna grabbed one, put her letter just above it, and used her magic to pull the cork out. She nervously watched as the fire engulfed the paper and disappeared. It was now time to get that unicorn up.

Twilight sighed as she walked home from the hospital. The pegasus she had pulled from the roof of Sugarcube Corner was walking beside her, flapping his wings experimentally. While the doctors were examining him, they found that he had about half a dozen pieces of metal in seemingly random places in his body, and none of them were replacement joints. After wrapping his head in some bandages, he woke up, just as confused, but calmer. It had taken some convincing, but they weren’t going to cut him open any time soon. He had called the bits of metal trophies from his adventures when he was younger. Because Twilight was the one the really wanted some answers out of him, she was taking him home.

She glanced back at the pegasus to see him hovering just off the ground similar to Scootaloo. Only his wings weren’t going a mile a minute. He was also about 30 strides behind

Twilight. She walked back to him asking “Just what exactly is your name?”

He landed before replying. “Name’s Victor Sullivan, but most peo- err, ponies call me Sully. And now may I get yours miss?” He added that last bit hoping for something less than orthodox.

“I’m Twilight Sparkle.” Twilight said. She had more questions to ask, but she wanted to get out of the rain first. “Can we please get back to my home first, this rain is driving me crazy.”

As Twilight turned around, she was face to face with a certain orange earth pony. “Twi, you ever find a pony in a tree?”

“In a tree? Like how?” she responded to AppleJack’s strange question.

“Like from the flank in stuck in a tree.” the work pony replied.

“Why?”

“Because Zecora found him like that in the Everfree Forest.” AJ said as she motioned to a grey earth pony behind her. “She came an’ got me, an’ I pulled him out.” she added as Twilight noticed the strange look he seemed to be giving Sully.

“Sully, is that you?” he said as he walked past AJ and Twilight.

“The one and only!” Sully replied with a hint of pride in his voice. “Now what’s this I hear about a tree Nate?”

Nate didn’t reply. He was transfixed by the protrusions that Sully had. He glanced back at his own back, as if he should have them as well. “How did you get wings and I didn’t?”

“You expect me to know that?”

“YES!”

“Well, I don’t. And we are in front of a couple of ladies, so perhaps you should introduce yourself.”

“Oh. Well, okay.” Nate said as he turned back towards Twilight and AppleJack. “My names Nathan Drake, and I...” he trailed off as he noticed Twilight’s horn. “Sully, pinch me.”

Sully, not really knowing how he would pinch Drake, instead kicked in the side, sending him to the ground. When Drake looked at him angrily, he only offered “Do you see any fingers?”

Before Drake could respond, Twilight interjected something. "Perhaps we should head somewhere private before everypony in Ponyville gathers." Drake and Sully looked around after Twilight finished speaking. A large crowd had gathered and was growing by the second. "Now follow me."

A couple of minutes later, the four ponies were safely out of the rain in the library. At seeing the tree, Drake flinched before staring. Sully had just stared. As Twilight took off her poncho, a young voice called out from the bedroom.

"Twilight, have you ever been woken up by a letter?" Spike said as he came into the main room. As he came into view, he saw 3 more ponies than he was expecting. While none of them were ones he thought were easy on the eyes, he still looked at the unfamiliar faces. And they looked at him.

"Spike, these are Nate and Sully. And you know that only you get that privilege." Twilight replied with some sarcasm. She was tired. She was wet. She was annoyed. She did not need a letter from Celestia right now. She had too many questions for the stallions now in her house, and she wanted them sooner rather than later. "The letter from Princess Celestia can wait for now. "I've got questions that need answering."

"Umm, Twilight, it's not from Celestia. It's from Luna." Twilight looked at Spike he was crazy after he finished talking. After a quick flash of light, she was next to Spike and walking into the bedroom to look at the letter. She walked out about a minutes later with a blank expression on her face.

"The questions are going to wait until tonight. Would you mind telling the girls to meet here just after nightfall AJ?"

"Uh, sure thing, Twi, but why wait for the answers that ya want?"

"Because Luna has a pony that is in a similar situation to these two and she'll bring her with her. Answering questions multiple times is not fun, even if it is only twice."

Drake and Sully watched the exchange silently looking between the ponies. Drake then glanced over at Sully and thought of something. "Is there anywhere we can leave our, um, saddlebags while we wait for night to fall?"

Twilight looked at the former human and grimaced. "I don't actually have anywhere that would remotely qualify as a guest room. This tree is one bed one bath."

Spike piped up at this. "Twilight, just let them leave their stuff in the bedroom! It's not like they're going to be sleeping here, is it?" The indigo mare blushed at the implications of having not one, but 2 stallions sleeping in her bedroom.

Before the situation could get anymore awkward (and before Sully could voice his opinion on sleeping arrangements) AppleJack quickly dashed out the door at a speed that would impress Rainbow Dash. Sully took this chance to speak his mind. "I actually wouldn't mind mmfh!" but was quieted by Drake shoving a hoof into his mouth.

"Just make sure that nob- er, no pony touches it."