

*This was Episode 01, Scene 1 in the first version of Lost Legacies to be published on FIMFiction. This scene is still considered to have happened within the canon of the story, but was replaced during the Equestria Daily submission process for a variety of reasons. All important information conveyed here is also contained within its replacement.*

## THEN

A leather-bound book fell from high atop the enormous white tower. The cover flew open as it plummeted through the empty air, pages tearing away from the binding like feathers from a falling bird. In the fields far below, a gray pegasus filly watched the descending object with awestruck eyes and an open-mouthed smile. Five seconds later, the open volume landed flat across her upturned face with a muffled smack.

"Hey," said the pegasus filly, her every word causing the book to bounce up and down. "You can't park here." She giggled and leaned forward, allowing the tome to complete its journey to the grass below. It fell open before her, its thin pages turning in the breeze and rustling with a sound reminiscent of trodden pine straw. The filly blew the long bangs of her blonde mane back into place with an exaggerated puff, allowing her amber eyes to examine the book's contents. One of the irises disobeyed her command, drifting high and to the right. If she realized this, then she paid it no heed. "Same thing again?" she asked in the ascending tone of a complaint. She stopped the turning pages with a sure hoof and squinted for a moment before letting out an exasperated sigh. She closed the leather volume and used her teeth to tuck it securely under her right wing just before trotting off across the open fields.

The land at the base of the white tower stretched flat in all directions as far as the eye could see. Emerald waves of knee-high grass swayed back and forth in the breeze, their consistency uninterrupted save for the odd scattering of boulders and willow trees. A single orb of violet flame shone down from the night sky, casting a pale ethereal light that one would normally expect of a full moon. Stars, auroras, and swirling rainbows drifted about in the darkness above the tower as clouds might in any normal sort of sky, yet their strange beauty was lost on the pegasus filly as she dashed about between indistinct rock formations.

"Sis!" she called out with her frail and boyish voice. "I found another one!" Cool air rushed in to fill her lungs as she stopped and looked about. "Sis? Did you move again?" The first flutter of worry rose in her young chest, but the filly's stray eye happened to catch sight of her quarry in the very next moment.

An earth pony mare of similar gray hue rested amidst a grouping of stones, her straight sable mane draped entirely to one side to give her violet eyes an unobstructed view of the tome laid out before her. The book held in place by her hoof had many brothers. Stacks upon stacks of the leather-bound volumes sat all about like miniature towers that swayed to and fro in the breeze.

"Sis!" the pegasus filly shouted.

The earth pony's face shot up from the pages, her eyes wide for a moment before settling on the pony before her. "Derpy?" in a soothing voice, her expression softening as she spoke. Her expression softened. "Sorry, I didn't hear you."

Derpy rushed forward, the book falling out from under her wing and flopping on the grass as she nuzzled the soft neck fur of her sister. "I thought I lost you," she half-whined.

"How would that happen, kiddo?" the mare replied, placing a comforting arm about the younger one's shoulders. "We're the only two here. That's how it's always been."

"I know," said Derpy as she backed away sheepishly. "I just get worried sometimes."

The earth pony's lips pursed for the briefest of moments before she turned to the fallen book. "You found another one?" She sighed and gave a disarming smile. "Is this ever going to stop?"

"At least *you* can read them," said Derpy as she moved to place it on one of the shorter stacks. She turned back to her sister, face aglow with an expectant smile. "What's in the one you've got now?"

The elder sister closed the volume to her front and sat up straight. She lowered her eyelids and tilted her head toward the whirlpool of lights in the sky. "There's so much more to this world than what we've seen, Derpy."

Derpy tilted her own head to the side. "No there isn't. I've been all over; it's just the same as always." She brought a hoof to her chin. "I mean, there's the tower, but there's no way to go in there."

Derpy's sister smiled. "I've seen it in the pages; there's a whole other world beyond the tower. A place where there are things called 'day' and 'night.'" She opened her eyes and stared at the lights above. "A place where you have to 'drink' and 'eat' just to survive." She turned her excited gaze to Derpy. "A place where you can do a thing called 'dreaming.'"

Derpy's mouth hung open. "What's that?"

"The wildest thing I've ever heard of," her sister replied, her eyes looking at something far in the distance. "When you sleep in this other world, you can visit even more worlds beyond the one you're in."

"Whoa," Derpy gasped. "How many worlds are there?"

"There doesn't seem to be a limit," said the older sibling. "Not to the number of worlds, and not to anything within them."

Derpy shook her head and whickered. "My head hurts just thinking about that. Are all those books full of crazy stuff?"

Her sister chuckled. "Yep, every single one." She turned about and pulled a glittering object

from one of the stacks. "They even have things like this."

Derpy's eyes became round saucers, her pupils dilating at the pretty sight. Before her hung a necklace of sterling silver that refracted the whirling lights above in glittering flashes. A simple domed pendant hung from the end, its flawless amber jewel matching the shade of the irises that gazed upon it. "How do you put that in a book?" she wondered aloud. She dared not move as her sister undid the clasp and leaned forward to drape the jewelry about her neck.

"It's yours," whispered the mare as she pulled away.

"Thank you," Derpy said quietly, her eyes locked on the perfect gem that now adorned her clavicle. As if struck by an epiphany, one of her eyes darted upward and met those of her sister. A giddy and unrestrained smile blossomed on her face. "Thank you! I love you so much, Big Sis!" Unable to contain her rising mirth, Derpy leapt forward and hugged her sister with all the might that her small body could muster. The amber jewel dangled between their chests. She quivered in anticipation of the inevitable "I love you too."

It did not come. The elder sister's voice broke the silence with the gentle force of an ancient bell ringing out over a misty morn.

*Birthright of the unborn  
Corpse of the lifeblood  
The stone possessed of amber flame  
Destroys the dream of stagnant waters*

Derpy Hooves giggled and softened her embrace, nuzzling her sister's elegant mane. "Quit talking like those weirdo books do. Come on, hug me back." The familiar arms pulled her close, and Derpy's spirit rose to towering heights.

"I love you, little sister. Never forget that, not even when I'm gone."

Derpy closed her eyes and smiled. "That's silly. We'll always be together." She felt the cold wetness of a teardrop falling onto her forearm. Her smile faded. "Sis?"

A book slipped from the top of a nearby stack. It fell open upon the grass, its thin pages rustling loudly in the gentle breeze.

**NOW**