

Corsairs, Cannons, and Colts

Chapter 2

By: Squall Chaser

Sweetie Bell was standing mortified over Blunder Dolt; his shining, white coat was stained magenta now. She nuzzled him gently “Please Sunder Bolt, get up! You’ve got to get up, they’ve taken Rarity!”

“Unnngh... My shoulder’s throbbing!” groaned the white pegasus. He stood slowly, releasing a slight hiss of air. His face turned grim when he’d seen the state the library was in. “Wow, they’ve taken almost every book here.” He said noting almost bare shelves.

Sweetie Bell burst into tears “And they took my sister, they took her and her friends to a big ship in the sky.”

“Why didn’t Rainbow Dash or Fluttershy come back?”

“They were tied up, they couldn’t leave the pirates.”

Blunder Dolt picked up one of the remaining books, the one he’d stumbled upon earlier. “Well, this looks like it could come useful right now, it’s got some first-aid procedures in it.” He turned it open to a page on bandaging and bleeding. “Sweetie, do you think you could get me some things?”

The little filly nodded vigorously. When she returned Blunder Dolt was standing in the door of the library. There were several, large plumes of smoke, and the Ponyville Fire Department was swarming trying to put all the blazes out. “I hope everypony’s okay.” He said, looking in the direction of the café he worked for.

With his shoulder bandaged, they walked out into town. Their first stop was the Carousel Boutique, it was actually okay except for a few broken windows, some ruined dress-forms, and some of Rarity’s jewels and mirrors had been taken. They moved towards Sugarcube Corner and stopped from the shock of what they’d found. It had been almost completely leveled, Mr. and Mrs. Cake were fine but their life’s work was sitting in ruins. They moved then to Fluttershy’s cottage which was miraculously untouched, it was just as pristine and peaceful as she’d always tried to keep it. The final stop they made was the Medowsweet Café, Squall Chaser, A solid black pony, with a Tornado and Crosshair cutie-mark stood in front of the building. “I’m sorry Blunder; it’s been burned to the ground. We haven’t found Mrs. Bailer yet, we’re pretty sure the pirates took her. Hay Bailer however was injured, he suffered some minor burns and a cut to his flank, however, he’s old and the doctors are worried about smoke inhalation.”

Blunder Dolt’s eyes flashed, “I’m going after them!” He bellowed. His brother stepped into his path; Blunder didn’t stop and slammed into him sending them both toppling.

“Look, I’m as angry as you are, but if just the two of us go then I can absolutely assure you we would be killed.”

“So what then?”

“I’m a member of the Equestrian Air-guard and so were you once. I figure, the

two of us could train the ponies here enough to handle a single ship of pirates. After all they've all lost loved ones at the hands of those monsters."

The white pony nodded "Let's spread the word" his eyes were glowing with a fierce rage.

It didn't take long for the ponies to assemble, there were so many volunteers it was astounding! Unfortunately, many of the ponies capable of fighting the pirates had been kidnapped by that very menace. Among the front of the group stood: the gray mail-mare Ditzzy Doo, Big-Macintosh and a few apples, and a rather out-of-place looking blue unicorn. The once 'Great and Powerful' Trixie had returned to Ponyville only months after Twilight had bested her. Trixie had actually returned to Ponyville in hopes of a rematch, and possibly some serious groveling, when the pirates attacked. She'd been too afraid to do anything to stop them, but now she'd found out they'd taken Twilight, she wanted the honor of doing Twilight in to herself, there was no way she was about to let some pirate take it from her.

Blunder Dolt smiled, but his brother immediately face-hoofed. "Okay, we've got a lot of work cut out for us! You ponies need to know how to hold a sword, how to use it, and most importantly how to slay with it. Now I know to most of you this is going to be a bit unnatural, I understand that you ponies try your best not to fight." He heard many a murmur of agreement from inside the gathered herd, "In this case, if you don't fight, it could be your life or the life of a loved one lost at the hands of those savages! So, my brother and I are here to train you! If we could please have all the earth ponies and unicorns come to me. And can we have all the pegasi to my brother please?!"

There were many grunts and groans as ponies shuffled into their assigned areas. Squall Chaser's eye immediately fell onto the blue unicorn with the rope wrapped around her. "What, may I ask, are you doing with that rope?"

"The Great and Powerful Trixie has a very special talent for knots! Watch and be amazed as The Great and Powerful Trixie brings this rope to life!" Her horn glowed with a bright blue light as the rope slithered off of her. It swayed like a toxic snake in front of the black pegasus, it lashed out and coiled around him, it bound him so tight he could barely breathe.

The rope eased off quickly, after a few deep breaths he looked at her "impressive! I'm sure that may come in handy."

Trixie had a very smug look on her face. "The Great and Powerful Trixie is ALWAYS IMPRESSIVE!" Trixie was in the habit of holding out her fore-hooves while fireworks sparked around her, however her collection of fancy sparklers was destroyed in her last visit.

"Ummm.... Okay then, if you could do me a favor and just move over there.... Very far over there, we'll get started shortly."

Trixie walked off, her rope-snake following behind her. Squall's eyes returned to the ponies in line. "Let me guess this one, you're Big-Mac?"

"Eeyup!"

"Uhuh, I've seen what your family can do on my many flights over your farm. Step over there please."

Big-Mac and all of his able-bodied family members stepped into the box that'd been drawn on the ground. He looked over to see his brother's recruitment box, nearly bursting with pegasi who'd come from Cloudsdale to reclaim missing family members. Squall shook his

head; this was going to be a VERY difficult task.

After a few hours, the recruitment drive was over. Swords, helmets, and other useful battle regalia had been distributed. Blunder Dolt had taken to the air and the Pegasi had followed, "Now the secret to fighting in the air, is a series of dives and retreats. My brother and I shall now demonstrate the proper method of dueling in the air."

There was a loud clash as the two brothers crossed blades. The wild hit-and-run fighting lasted almost an hour before Squall Chaser's blade flew from his mouth. Blunder Dolt spat out his own blade as he gazed toward the stunned pegasi, "Now, we'll let you practice, I'll be back up in a moment to check your progress."

"How soon can we go after them..." A voice called from the crowd.

"It'll take a week, or two AT LEAST, for you to be ready for battle."

A silence fell over the crowd. The ponies began to pair up and practice battling. The two instructors settled back onto the ground. This time Squall Chaser spoke "We shall now attempt to show you how to fight a winged enemy without you, yourselves, having wings."

Blunder Dolt took off again, the swords clanging and shining in the fading light of late afternoon. Eventually the grounded pony threw Blunder Dolt's sword into a nearby tree. Before he could speak, another sword landed inches in front of his face. He looked up to see Ditzzy, a look of embarrassment on her face, and her sword missing. "Well, we shall now drop back a ways and see what happens. We'll coach you whenever you need it. Just remember, disarm your friends, and slay your enemies."

It was a long night of training for sure; it had lasted until they were training in moonlight. Blunder Dolt blew sharply on a whistle. His mouth opened and a sword landed in front of him, "Ditzzy, can you please keep a better grip on.... Dwah?"

Ditzzy's sword was well secured in her mouth; her opponent however was searching frantically for his. Squall Chaser smiled, "Well, it looks as if our first night of training went pretty smoothly! Right now, I'd like you all to take your gear home, clean it, polish it, and get a lot of sleep! Tomorrow, we'll be working you into shape; the ponies that perform the best will be rewarded. If you fall behind, that's ok, just keep going! However, if I hear an 'I can't', the pony who said it will be working out, instead of eating lunch! Do we all have an understanding?"

The crowd rang out with one voice "Yes, sir!"

Mean while on the *Countess Marilyn's Revenge*, Storm sat over Twilight. She was patting her head with a damp cloth, "Shhh, there, there my little pony, it's okay. I know how miserable it is to have the dragon-pox. I had them too when I was your age."

Twilight's eyes opened slightly, she saw the pegasus mare sitting there, she was slightly taller than Twilight, and even though she didn't look it she was probably at least ten years older than her. "Where, where am I?"

"You're on my ship, just lie back and be quiet now." The captain turned, "I'll go get us something to eat, and then we can talk more, okay?"

Twilight nodded, she lay back in the soft bed. After getting comfortable, the lavender unicorn looked at her new surroundings. The room was full of charts, maps, navigation tools, and most of all books. Twilight looked at the books on the table, a strange feeling of familiarity

washing over her. 'Wait a minute, I think those are my books!' she thought to herself. She used her magic to pull one over towards her. Opening the small green book to the first page she saw it, a small red stamp that said, 'Property of the Ponyville Municipal Library'

She took a second glance at the table, this time she remembered Spike was there. "Spike, where are we? Who's that weird blue pegasus? Why are my books here? And, come to think of it, why aren't you talking to me?"

Spike turned, he had tears in his eyes, and a small seal was placed over his mouth. Twilight gasped, without a second thought she used her magic to pull the seal away. "TWILIGHT!" He cried as he ran over towards her. The little dragon hugged her as hard as he could. "Twilight, these ponies are pirates, we're on their ship right now!"

"I should've trusted Pinkie Pie; I just thought she wanted to play with me." Twilight sighed, her head started to whirl again from all she'd taken in so far.

Rarity also had a considerable headache. She'd tried insisting to the boatswain that she just couldn't keep doing this, "The mop water is making my mane filthy, and my beautiful tail is starting to get mats in it from where it's been wet, and I'm not going to do this ANYMORE!" She sat on the deck with her lip poked out.

The boatswain let out a hardy laugh, "If ye insist, I be thinkin' ye can spend a little time in the brig, wit' da nice, clean, RATS!"

It took three of the pirates to haul Rarity down into the bottom deck, and throw her head first, into the small, metal cage, big enough to hold maybe five ponies. She sat rubbing her head, "I say, such brutish behavior, you'd think none of them had seen a lady before!"

The white unicorn sat back in the small cage, it was extremely cold, and there wasn't much to fight it with. Without meaning to, Rarity let herself slip into a state of quiet sobbing.

Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy were in the kitchen with Firebrand when the door opened. Captain Grimskies stepped into the large galley area. "Brand, I'd like supper soon, I'd also like you to fix my guest a special bowl of soup. You think you can handle that?"

Firebrand nodded, "Yes Captain, I'll have it up to you in no time flat!"

The Captain's gaze fell onto Rainbow and Fluttershy; she could tell that Rainbow Dash was still seething. "Oh, and Firebrand, can I trust you, to discipline these two should they get out of line?"

Firebrand's smile faded, "Yes Captain."

With a joyous laugh, Storm left the trio alone in the kitchen once more. Dash had an expression of pure rage on her face, "Yes Captain? Firebrand, I'd never have guessed you'd be such a kiss-up!"

Her cousin didn't meet her gaze, "I'm part of her crew, and I have been for some time now! I'm indebted to her Dash; after mom and dad died she took me in. If it wasn't for Storm I'd have starved." He covered his face with his forehooves, among the pirates you can't show weakness openly. "Now Dash, you and your friend here should get to work, I don't want to have to turn you over to the boatswain and his whip." He laid a cook-book down in front of Dash. "Dash, you make the soup, Buttercup..."

"Fluttershy" the shy pegasus corrected, quietly.

“Whichever, you start on the crew’s dinner; after Dash is done she’ll help you. I will work on the Captain’s supper. I don’t think I trust Dash anywhere near it.”

Rainbow Dash stared at the cook-book, she issued a small moan. Fluttershy looked over her shoulder, “Rainbow Dash, you’re going to need, three cups of water, two potatoes, and....”

“What are you doing? Did you not understand me when I said we were making dinner for the WHOLE CREW?!” Firebrand roared.

“Yes, I did, but you see um, Rainbow Dash can’t um, well...”

“SPIT IT OUT!”

“I CAN’T READ!” Rainbow Dash, sat back a little, “I can’t read, I never learned how to, Fluttershy knows because we went to school together.”

“Yes, I tried to tell her that she should learn, but she said she wanted more flight practice. So far, she’s never told anybody but me.”

Firebrand’s expression became one of legitimate sorrow. “Oh, okay, yeah I’m used to working on the crew’s dinner as well as the Captain’s; I’ll be fine working on both. You two just work on the soup okay?”

“I think that would be fine,” Fluttershy squeaked.

Applejack and Pinkie Pie were currently being escorted below deck to the brig. The small metal cage was opened again, the orange and pink earth ponies were filed in and the door was slammed behind them. “Whew, I’ve never been so tired, or hungry, my stomachs a rumble, grumble, tumbling.” The bubble-gum colored pony sighed.

“Ah know the feelin’ sug, this was harder’n a day’s apple-buckin’.”

Applejack stopped when she heard whispers, “Who’s there? Show yerselves!” She squinted; she was barely able to make out a white unicorn. “Rarity, Is that you sugar-cube?”

“No, she’s not in this cage; I’ve talked with her though.” A pleasant, yet strangely energetic voice replied.

“Hey, I know you! You’re that DJ at Buckin’ Bill’s Night-Club.”

“That’s right! I’m D.J. PON-3! But you can call me Vinyl Scratch.”

Pinkie Pie began bouncing, “Almost everypony I know is here!” She paused “But that means, no one’s coming to rescue us!” There was a loud pop, and a rattling sound as her hair deflated.

“Well we’d better settle down, it’s going to be a long night for us.” Vinyl said, she patted the hay on the floor next to her.

The three ponies talked for quite a long time before the cell door opened again. Rainbow Dash, Fluttershy, and even Rarity were thrown into the cell. In their wake five trays of food slid into their midst. “Oh dear, I’m afraid there isn’t enough food for all of us!” Rarity cried dramatically to the pirates who’d locked them there.

“That’s right missy, the boatswain ordered us not to give you any grub.”

“What?! But I’m simply famished! Seriously, isn’t there any way, you two boys could sneak a pretty lady some food?” Rarity fluttered her lashes at them.

The pirates both looked at each other for a second or two, and then they burst out laughing. The door to the upper-deck closed and the six ponies were left in the dark again.

All around stomachs started rumbling.

Rainbow Dash sighed "I'm really sorry I slept through lunch now."

Rarity put on her bravest face, "I insist I take the punishment they've intended for me."

"That's awfully nice of ya Rare, but aren't you hungry sug?"

"Not really, I had a big lunch." She smiled, trying to look content, but her stomach was quick to give her away.

Vinyl spoke at last, "I had a big lunch too, I think you and I can share."

The two unicorns split the food between them. All six friends sat for a while, eating in the darkness. When the food was done they all settled down in the hay. Fluttershy began to sing softly

"Hush now, quiet now, it's time to lay your sleepy head. Hush now, quiet now it's time to go to bed," it wasn't long before they all went to sleep, curled up to stave off the cold.

Above deck, even the pirates' shanties had become softer. The *Countess Marilyn's Revenge* sailed softly downward, headed into the deep ocean where it could conserve its fuel, and use the power of the wind. In Ponyville, and aboard the ship, dreams of the days to come tore their way through the minds of the ponies.

To be continued.

Pink fluffy unicorns dancing on rainbows,
Pink fluffy unicorns dancing on rainbows,
Pink fluffy unicorns dancing on, dancing on rain!
~Songs to wear pants to.