

<uSeaGM> **Group 4 Session 66**

<uSeaGM> We last left our party in the ship's galley. The midnight rendezvous with the fishing boats draws near but there is plenty of time for everyone to finish their meal. Jack and Prism have just returned from outside, the pair windswept and water logged. Prism involuntarily shivers with the cold, but a thankful Genie throwing her hooves around his neck goes a long way towards warming him back up.

<uSeaGM> However, as Jack and Prism enter, Milia slips out of the galley for some fresh air. Responding to Whisper's question had proved difficult and brought up some unpleasant memories. Trying to take her mind off things, she heads out onto the deck and leans on the side rail, staring out into the dark waters. Milia barely even notices the rain, but she does become aware of a warm tingly sensation on her right shoulder.

* Whisper turns slowly to Artifica_, looking worried. "Did...did I do something wrong?"

* Artifica_ looks unsure. She steps out after Milia, taking a place beside her in the rain.

<uSeaGM> Strange Mercy, sitting on Milia's shoulder, actually looks a little sheepish. "Hey, was that about your friends? The ones you were thinking about when we first met, I mean."

* Whisper stays in the cafeteria, where he sits in his seat, looking rather troubled.

* Milia 's face is fixed in a grimace as she stares down at the inky black water. She bristles slightly, feeling Mercy appear upon her usual perch. Her eyes don't leave the ocean, however. "...Yeah, they're usually not far from my thoughts...though I guess it's been worse since yesterday..."

* Artifica_ stands silently near, trying to be as present as Milia needs and as absent as she may desire.

* Milia glances up as her marefriend approaches her. "O-oh, heya, sweetie!" she chirps as cheerfully as possible. "Sorry I uh...left so suddenly."

* Artifica_ smiles to Milia, then joins her in staring at the water.

* Milia mumbles something about the curry maybe being too spicy and needing to cool off in the rain.

<uSeaGM> Back in the galley, Strawberry collects the empties and notices Whisper looking glum. She places a bowl of warm custard in front of him. "I have forgiven you, you know."

* Jack_sh smiles as Genie hugs Prism and then gives them some privacy nod politely at Genie.

* Jack_sh goes for a smoke break

* Whisper looks up at Strawberry. "Oh, thanks. It's not that, though. I think I just really screwed

something /else/ up, and I don't know what to do about it."

<uSeaGM> The spirit rubs the back of her neck. "I'm sorry about bringing them up back then... it's just that fire spirits are always supposed to make pacts from a position of strength and I was worried because the crowd of death spirits I snuck through to reach you was getting even bigger and they were just waiting for their chance to gobble us both up. So... sorry."

* Prism has mixed emotions. He was glad that Genie liked him, but...his repeated failures earlier in the attempts made him feel terrible, combined with the wind/cold and the amount of magical energy he expended trying to fix things, he was really in quite the daze. He just didn't know what to say

* Jack_sh futzes with his lighter. Swearing under his breath as he finally manages to get it to light but then in his surprise he fails o light it

* Cerberus is ready! wasn't sleeping at all! always ready and awake! good berry! brave berry! here, have a cookie! mmmh, cookie...

<uSeaGM> Meanwhile, Prism can't help but feel a little frustrated by how unreliable his new spell had been. He'd never had to ask a tool's permission before he could fix it before, yet he'd been unable to perform the repairs until Jack had addressed the boat itself. This kind of magic was strange and unfamiliar... but that had certainly never stopped his curiosity before.

* Cerberus turns on the other side and goes on snoring, noms her own tail

<uSeaGM> Prism's train of thought is distracted by Genie hugging him tighter. "Just... thank you."

* Whisper starts slowly eating his custard. Would be a waste to let it go cold.

* Milia lets out a sigh as she returns to looking at the water. It's almost hypnotic. "...don't worry about it, Mercy. Nothing you could say to me would make me feel worse than I make myself feel...so...hey, water under the bridge."

* Artifica_ blinks a that. Looking to Mercy, "Are they still after you two?" Then to Milia, "If you wish... just the curry. It /was/ very spicy."

* Prism hugs her back. "You're welcome...anytime."

* Artifica_ adds, "But if you're hurting..."

<uSeaGM> Mercy shakes her head at Artifica_. "No, they can't me now I'm here, and they can't get Milia unless she dies..." The spirit turns to her zebra steed. "So don't die, okay?"

* Milia leans against Artifica. "...yeah, curry..." she murmurs, trailing off to an awkward silence. A few moments later, however, she pipes back up, speaking softly. "...it's really fuckin' tragic that

/I'm/ the one who gets to live."

* Milia tenses up at Mercy's comment.

* Whisper pushes his empty bowl away. He stares into space, with his head resting on one foreleg. "Strawberry?"

<uSeaGM> "What is it hun?" Strawberry replies.

<Whisper> "Do you...have any booze?"

* Artifica_ puts her tail over Milia. "I'm... glad you're alive."

<uSeaGM> Strawberry raises her eyebrows. "I'm not sure if you can be trusted with more of that stuff."

* Whisper puts his head down on the table between his forelegs. "You're probably right," he sighs.

* Milia shudders as Artifica's tail wraps around her. It was nice. Warm. A different kind of warmth than the sort she could now emit thanks to her bond with Mercy, and a kind she sorely needed at the moment.

* Milia glances up to the unicorn. "...have you ever lost anypony, sweetie?"

* Artifica_ nods solemnly.

* Artifica_ waits a moment, then simply says, "Friendship City."

* Milia wraps her forelegs around her marefriend, her expression falling. "...I'm sorry." she gently responds.

<Milia> "...c-can I ask...h-how...how do you get over it?...D-do you...do you still...think about it?..."

* Jack_sh approaches Whisper. "know where Mercy is? I need a light..."

* Whisper doesn't even raise his head. "Probably with Milia outside."

<Jack_sh> "ah...she...looked like she could use some privacy..."

<Jack_sh> "So...how about you what are you up to?"

* Prism goes to eat some curry. Because he hadn't had any yet on account of helping Genie.

* Whisper shrugs, which looks odd with his head laying on the table. All of a sudden he sits up. "Wait...Jack, have you got any more of that grog?"

<uSeaGM> Genie sits and eats with Prism. She was pretty hungry too.

<Jack_sh> "none of the primo stuff...,but I've some...why do you ask?"

<Jack_sh> "I thought you'd learned your lesson."

<Whisper> "Because when I'm sober I remember all the stupid, embarrassing stuff I do. I can't remember anything from when I was drunk."

* Artifica_ is silent for a long time. Contemplative. Then, finally, she answers softly and with a smile, "Friends."

* Artifica_ then adds, "And I think about them a lot."

<Jack_sh> "if you're really sure."

* Jack_sh searches his coat and pulls out a dusty bottle of grog popping the cork off and ducking as it bounces once.

* Whisper thinks for a minute, then sighs. "No...I'm not sure about anything, Jack."

* Artifica_ admits, "Not as much as I used to. And sometimes I feel guilty about that. But a lot."

<uSeaGM> Strawberry frowns at Whisper and Jack_sh but doesn't say anything. She does give Cerberus a bowl of custard. "Here you go, puddin'."

* Prism smiles at Genie. "So are you feeling better now?"

<Whisper> "Jack...is it raining outside, still?"

* Cerberus is mostly snoring, still she hugs the bowl.... mh, warm bowl, best tummy warmer ever

* Whisper sags. "Never mind, they're already out there. You think the shower would work?"

<Jack_sh> "I believe so."

* Jack_sh hoofs the bottle over. "The showers do work."

<Jack_sh> "even a ghoul has to keep clean."

<uSeaGM> Genie nods at Prism and smiles back. "Yes, much better now. Usually I just try to ignore it until we get back to port."

* Milia can't help but smile at her marefriend's answer. It was a sad smile, but any smile was a step in the right direction. "...Yeah...maybe...that's how it's supposed to be...I don't think you're supposed to dwell on thigs forever..." She snorts at her own comment. "...Shit...listen to me, I'm such a hypocrite...It's so easy to say something like that to someone else..."

* Whisper takes the bottle and stares at it thoughtfully. "I meant would it work for the being all contemplative about one's failures while getting soaked. I read a couple of pre-war stories, and that's what ponies did in them when they had a lot on their minds."

<Milia> "...I think you all scare me, honestly."

* Artifica_ hugs her marefriend.

<Prism> "So is it only while you're on the ship, or even when you're on shore?"

* Jack_sh chuckles. "they're romantized tales...like pirates."

* Cerberus sniffs some yummys. brain registers yummys being sniffed and asks permission to wake up. eyes deny permission for another 5 minutes. tummy uses priority emergency wake up, eyes formally protest but the little filly is now awake, hugging her own nommy dessert

* Artifica_ whispers, "Boo."

<uSeaGM> Strange Mercy jumps but tries to hide it.

* Whisper looks up at Jack_Sh glumly. "So then what am I supposed to do?"

* Milia desperately tries to suppress a giggle. The operation fails systematically.

"D-dammit...*snrk*...you know I didn't mean it like that!" she awkwardly protests, flushed red with embarrassment.

<uSeaGM> Genie bites her lip for a moment, but decides to be truthful. "It fades the farther I get from her, but if I'm too far away then I don't feel very well and my friends tell me I get all gloomy. When I was young I used to cry if Thunder Child let the harbour without me."

* Cerberus finishes the custard and licks the bowl clean, thanks the cook and takes a look around

* Cerberus sees if it is feasible to sneaklick some more custard from any distract party member

* Artifica_ smiles. Mission accomplished.

* Cerberus "so... did i miss anything relevant?" asks vaguely to her friends

* Jack_sh shrugs and takes a small pull. "You see...that is one of those questions ponies can go their entire life without an answer."

<Prism> "While it's nothing I've even ever heard of happening before, I think I can understand. It's more than the ship means a lot to you, there's a very important connection there. Well, I guess that means if we get attacked again, I'm going to swear an oath right here to do my damndest to prevent any damage whatsoever."

<Jack_sh> "I find...do what brings a smile to ponies and try not to cause too much trouble." He

smirks a bit at that. "It makes me happy."

* Whisper frowns. "Well, too late for that, I think. Any other ideas I can try?"

* Milia lets out a contented sigh. Her mood was making a considerable comeback, and though dark thoughts still swam in her mind...they didn't seem to sting as much as they did a few minutes ago. She leans in and plants a loving kiss on Artifica's muzzle. "...I love you, sweetie...thanks for being there for me. Sorry to get all mopey on you."

* Cerberus notices that there is very love, much social and so romance going on here... decides not to interrupt many beauty and simply goes again i idle mode

* Artifica_ smiles back. "Any time. I suffer they mopeys on occasion too."

<Jack_sh> "take a look at those you travel with."

* Jack_sh offers the bottle. "Make them laugh and keep them safe."

* Artifica_ looks forward to having Milia there to help her through the next bout.

<Jack_sh> "don't dwell on revenge. You'll spend ages fighting giant squid over stupid shi-....Jack Shit." He chuckles. "nearly missed an obvious name drop." none the less his tone is fairly serious compared to his usual mirth.

* Whisper shrugs. "Like I said, I already screwed it up I think. Heck, I've only been hanging around them for a day. I don't really know any of them that well."

* Milia smiles at the mare. "Well...when you do...I'll be here for you. No matter what."

* Milia finally realizes they've been sitting in the rain, which, wasn't too uncomfortable when you were...partially made of fire, but for those who WEREN'T...

* Cerberus trots next to whisper, listening to what the ghoul and the shy pony are talking about.

* Milia raises an eyebrow at Artifica. "...aren't you cold?"

<uSeaGM> Genie finishes up her curry and smiles at Prism. "Thanks again. I'm always scared that ponies might think I'm a freak... but you don't have to be too worried. Thunder Child is tough. She's kept us safe since long before I was born."

<Jack_sh> "You've made a friend in that spirit. You've befriended Prism despite your fears...and you're talking to somepony that you were utterly terrified of at first sight...I would say you are doing quite well."

* Jack_sh smiles toothily.

* Cerberus me frowns "how could somepony be afraid of anypony who did the carameldansen?"

really..."

<Jack_sh> "You've not had a fine chance to see me unwind with my cutlass."

* Jack_sh laughs heartily. ",but you've seen the mayham my jokes have wrought."

* Whisper looks at Jack cautiously. "Yeah, I've seen your jokes. I think I might have /been/ one." He sighs. "I suppose you have a point. I've never gotten this close to other ponies for...a long time. I'm ashamed to admit it, but I think I already am starting to rely on them."

<Jack_sh> "There is NO shame in relying on others."

* Jack_sh looks seriously at whisper. "Most of us would have lost ourselves long ago without tha' Captain."

<Jack_sh> "and many more if we didn't watch each other's flanks."

* Cerberus laughs too. laughing is fun. "yeah, only the stupids think that they could rely only on themselves! and usually they ed horribly"

<Jack_sh> "going it alone, Means being alone when you need help most."

<Cerberus> *end

<Prism> "You're definitely not a freak. You're a good pony with a connection to the ship."

* Whisper speaks softly, to nopony in particular. "I think the time I needed help most passed long ago."

* Jack_sh takes another swig and sets the bottle down between the three of them. "What time was that?"

* Cerberus "yeah! tell us a story! i like stories!"

* Whisper shrugs yet again. He's getting good shrug practice tonight. "It's not really one specific event, just...growing up. In my family." His mouth twists on uttering the last word, as though the word itself tastes foul.

<uSeaGM> Mercy blinks at Milia. "You're cold? Why don't just shaman something up to keep yourself warm?"

<Jack_sh> "Kid...family isn't always blood...,but sometimes it's something you find..."

* Cerberus "alright, that wa a lame reply if i heard one... we want some meat! did they dent you out hunting for the whole tribe? the other cubs chewed on your butt while you slept?"

* Cerberus "you wanted a better cutiemark?"

<Cerberus> *sent

* Artifica_ offers, "Like a tiny fire spirit?" Then nods. "Yes Maybe a little more of that spicy curry..."

* Milia stares back at Mercy. "What do you think I did when I came out here? I'm warm and toasty on the inside, thank you very much! But, uh, Arti doesn't exactly have the same control over her temperature as I do, sooo..."

* Milia nods at Artifica. "...shall we head back inside?"

* Artifica_ shivers a little. "Yes. Let's."

* Whisper looks between Cerberus and Jack_Sh, trying to figure out how to answer two strings of questions. "First, I don't want a family. That word is ruined for me. I don't know what you want to call it, but not family. And I wasn't in a tribe, nobody chewed on my butt, and my mark was actually pretty useful considering."

* Cerberus "you should try tribes. it's like family, only they eat ponies sometimes"

<Jack_sh> "you want to belong."

* Cerberus "but they don't eat you if you are a member of the tribe... well, they tried, but... you know what? forget about it. you should try friends"

<uSeaGM> Genie hold's Prism's hoof. "Your offer to help does make me feel better. Thunder Child is already starting to like you, so you can fix her on the water even if I do get hurt."

* Whisper stares at Cerberus. "Yeah...I'll try friends. No cannibalism for me, thank you." He then looks back to Jack_Sh. "That's...one way of putting it."

<Jack_sh> "You'll find a place. I'm pretty sure of it."

* Milia giggles and gets up, heading back to the galley with Artifica and Mercy. her mind drifts to other topics as the three of them make their way back. "Say, Mercy...you mentioned you had a sister before...what's all /that/ about? I didn't know spirits had...uh...families."

* Cerberus "well, until you find your place, you can stay with us. probably we won't try to eat you but i think we lost all of our money when milia did the stupid burst-into-flame thing... so we will have to work all together to avoid starving"

<Prism> "It's very difficult for me to do it...I've never encountered something that actually resisted my attempts to fix it because it didn't trust me." He sighs. "I guess I'm just naturally uneasy around spirits, since it's never I had anything to deal with. Well, the rangers weren't exactly big on that sort of belief. It just means I still have a lot to learn."

* Whisper says nothing in reply to Jack_Sh, simply looking down and away.

<Jack_sh> "well you're all quite welcome to stay with us."

* Cerberus "i already have a èplan. i'll take some really badly weathered not working gun, jump in front of a caravan and say something in the line of 'yur muny, give 'em to me' they'll have pity and share something."

<uSeaGM> "Well she wasn't, like, family or anything. She was one of the few big spirits that didn't try to eat us small spirits..." Mercy notices what she just said and tries to double back. "Err, I mean, she didn't try to eat any small spirits and she couldn't eat me anyway because I was big too." She glances between Milia and Artifica_ to see if her super clever not-at-all-obvious lie had worked.

* Whisper doesn't look up. "Thanks, Jack." He gives a hollow chuckle to Cerberus' remark. "Pity, why didn't I think of that?"

* Cerberus "because i'm the smart one 'round here"

* Cerberus smiles proudly of her filly smartness.

<uSeaGM> Mercy continues. "Anyway, she was quite old and she taught us about stuff. Like how to interact with shamans from the other world. It turns out they aren't always impressed by you setting things on fire."

* Artifica_ asks Strawberry, "Any of that delicious curry left?" She casts Clean, drying herself, and looks to see if Milia wishes the same.

* Cerberus remembers of something "oh yeah! in the squid at the port i found this!" shows a half cutlass to Jack_sh "was it someone you knew?"

* Milia simply chuckles at Mercy's expert cover-up. Though, she can't help but speak up at the spirit's second comment. "Well...to be fair...it was pretty impressive when you torched my leg."

* Artifica_ quickly adds, "But setting things on fire without permission is a no-no."

* Jack_sh takes a look and checks the handle he hugs Berry suddenly.

<Jack_sh> "It appears you found one of my Lucky Cutlasses..."

* Cerberus me hugs back and gives the cutlass to the pirate "well it was in a squid... here you go"

* Milia grins at Artifica, nodding at the offer for seconds. There was always room in her stomach. ALWAYS. Usually the food ran out before long before she was 'full'.

<uSeaGM> "Yeah, but I couldn't have done that from the other side... at best it'd be some dry twigs or something."

<uSeaGM> Strawberry shakes her head at Artifica_. "I'm sorry my lovers, but the curry's already

been given out to the crew... now we're on to the custard!"

* Jack_sh takes it and then considers a moment and offers his own cutlass.

* Milia turns back to Mercy. "Well...trust me, there'll be plenty of crap to set on fire with the way things usually go around here. How, uh...how do spirits get bigger, anyways? Is there a way to like...give you some extra bulk? Like...a spirit version of pumping iron or whatever?"

<Jack_sh> "It's a cut above the rest. I keep it razor sharp."

* Cerberus hugs whisper too "see? positive attitude and will to share! it's a good place where to start to make friends!"

<Jack_sh> "and you can call yourself an honorary pirate."

* Cerberus "nah, thanks. i can't use blades..."

* Milia quickly adds: "Not that you /need/ to be bigger! You're already a mighty, giant titan of a spirit, of course!"

* Whisper regards Cerberus. "Um, right. Sharing," he says numbly.

* Cerberus "but i'll accept booze!"

* Prism finishes his curry, and gives Genie a hug.

<uSeaGM> Strange Mercy nods in approval of Milia's statement. "It depends on the spirit," she answers. "Fire spirits want to be worshipped, death spirits want sacrifices, machine spirits want to be loved and respected. You know, that kind of thing. Spirits can also eat other spirits and get stronger that way, but a link to this world is always better."

<uSeaGM> Mercy thinks for a moment, then adds, "I don't think your friend knows that about machine spirits yet. The horny pony I mean, who got busy with the mecromancer."

* Cerberus looks at Whisper for a moment, doubtfull "sharing is important, you know... it shows that you care. once i laughed about these things but when i stopped being a moron, everything got better. really"

<Whisper> "Okay, I get it. Sharing is good. It's not like I have anything to share, though. Unless you want a pre-war snack or something."

* Artifica_ smiles. "Custard it is then!"

<uSeaGM> Strawberry Custard pours a bowl each for Artifica_ and Milia.

<Jack_sh> "I think you've plenty to share."

* Milia raises an eyebrow at the sprite. "...worshipped, huh?-" she grins, briefly imagining the tiny

Mercy perched upon a grand, ornate, golden throne in the comically opulent throne room of a grand castle. Thousands of ponies lie prostrate before her in fervent exaltation. Naturally, Mercy is cackling like a mad mare while this occurs.

* Milia nods to herself. "...yeah I can see that."

<Jack_sh> "could tell me how things went with you and Mercy."

* Artifica_ finds the word mecmancer awesome.

* Cerberus "i like snacks, but i'd like booze better" looks at Jack_sh with hope of getting all she needs to become a drunkard

* Whisper 's eyes widen as Jack's inquiry. "Oh...uh, well we talked. And, you know, we kinda like each other, so we're going to try. A relationship, I mean."

* Milia cocks her head at Mercy. "...Prism, you mean?"

* Milia quietly mouths the phrase 'got busy' to herself.

<uSeaGM> Strange Mercy points at Prism and nods. "You could give him some of your shaman smoke stuff. That make your eyes go all-" she makes a stoner face with half-lidded eyes.

* Jack_sh smiles and gestures toward the bottle. "go ahead." He smiles toward Whisper. "Glad to hear it. This place needs more Love."

* Whisper blushes. "W-well we haven't...you know. I mean, it's kinda hard with her being a spirit and me not..."

* Cerberus grabs the bottle and drinks some

* Milia glances back and forth, not entirely knowing what 'shaman smoke stuff' referred to. "...you think I should give Prism drugs? I don't, uhh...make it a habit to keep chems around anymore..."

* Jack_sh nods. "understandable."

<uSeaGM> Mercy rubs her chin. "Huh, I thought shamans were supposed to make it... oh right, it must have all burned up during the, err, pact-making."

<Jack_sh> "I've heard of stranger couples...but I am sure you two can work it out."

* Whisper chuckles nervously. "Yeah, we're gonna figure...something."

* Cerberus puts down the bottle and smiles "that was good!"

* Milia stares incredulously at Mercy. "I dunno if you've noticed yet or not, Mercy, but I'm not exactly the wisest shaman to walk the land. Wanna throw me a bone here? Most of the crap I

know how to make is either real basic, or weird ass shit conceived in dreams or pain induced hallucination. Learning a recipe without having to go through some fit of madness or agony would be a REAL nice change of pace."

<uSeaGM> "Well, err, I think you take a red plant... mash it up... then smoke it. Hey, you should try it now!"

* Cerberus hugs whisper again, only, this time her breath smells of whatever she drank "you're me besht friend..." yawns widely

* Milia blinks a few times, disbelieving. "...Really? That's it? Huh...why have I never tried that before?..." she mumbles.

* Milia gets up from her seat, having (astoundingly enough) only taken a few bites of custard. Curious to test this SUPER COMPLEX RECIPE out, she heads toward the kitchen and taps a hoof a few times on the entry way. "Knock knock! Hey Strawberry...got any red herbs back here that I can use? I need to make drugs. Zebra drugs. It's...debatably important, I swear."

<uSeaGM> Strawberry shrugs. "Sure thing. We have a few spare in the cupboard."

<Prism> "So you said the Thunder Child is starting to trust me then, Genie?"

<uSeaGM> Genie nods.

* Jack_sh laughs as he over hears that. "Hey can We get in on that?"

* Cerberus pokes whisper in a flank "but... but shtay away from my gorfriend, got it?"

* Milia pumps a hoof. "Woohoo! Thaaaank~!" she sing-songs out as she swipes enough to make a test batch. She glances up over the counter as Jack speaks up. "Yeah, yeah! I'll make enough drugs for everyone, don't worry!"

* Whisper stares at Cerberus, not knowing how to respond. "Ah...and...who might this...'gorfriend' be?"

* Cerberus giggles "it's-ah seeee-cret! es, eee, see... tee... ah.... secret!"

* Jack_sh laughs.

* Cerberus then, tries kissing the pony i the nose

<Cerberus> *on

* Whisper looks confused. "So...how am I supposed stay away from her?" He then leans away from the incoming kiss. Too far, it turns out, as he falls backwards off the seat.

<Prism> "Yay!"

<Jack_sh> "yeah Berry now you've gotta tell us YOUR story"

* Cerberus falls following whisper, faceplants in the floor and stays there for a while, like a bearskin rug "mh.... why so comfy, mistur floor?"

* Whisper pick himself up off the floor and circles around to the other side of the table, where he takes a seat away from the unsettling filly.

* Milia heads back out of the kitchen and returns to her seat. Hungrily, she slurps down the yummy custard and stares down at the empty bowl. "...Eh, any port in a storm, right? Maybe the custard will make it...taste...better. Yeah, that sounds right." she reasons with herself. She unceremoniously plops a small bushel of the herbs into the custard-coated bowl and begins smooshing in up.

* Prism looks at everyone else. "Just...what are they doing."

* Cerberus starts scooting without getting up, follows whisper "mah shtory? it's a shtoopid shtory! shtay away from blue flowers! that's all"

<Whisper> "Right, no blue flowers." Whisper pauses. "Wait...blue flowers...no way. There's no way you survived a run-in with Killing Joke."

<uSeaGM> Mercy frowns at Milia's custard concoction. "I'm pretty sure you're supposed to smoke it. Or at least boil it."

* Cerberus smiles and for a brief moment her teeth resemble scarily the ones of some sort of nightmarish predator, all pious and fangs, probably just perspective, right? "but i didn't survive... i'm not the same as before"

<Jack_sh|> "nah you said something about a girlfriend." He mimics her pronunciation

* Whisper stares at the filly. "Cerberus," he says evenly, "you're really, really freaking me out now."

* Milia uses her right hoof to grind up the herbs, applying the ever-so-slightest amount of heat as she does. She wasn't sure if it NEEDED heat, but something in her gut told her it was what she was supposed to do, and that's (usually) worked out for her before! By the time she's done, she's got a bowl full of red-and-yellow slurry. "...it looks like a bloody hair ball mixed with stomach bile..."

<uSeaGM> Genie stands up. "Okay everypony, it's time for us to meet up with the fishing boats."

* Cerberus "i said nuthin'! you can't prove it!"

* Prism stands up with her. "Oh! Right."

* Milia shakes her head. "...hmmm...nah this isn't right. Needs some time to simmer." She glances over at Genie. "Gimme one sec and I'll be right there!"

<Jack_sh|> "fishing boats?"

<uSeaGM> She nods and heads out. "I'll see you all up on the bridge."

* Jack_sh| looks to Whisper. "do keep pesturing her about her girlfriend." he chuckles and leaves the bottle of grog for them before heading for the bridge.

* Milia quickly takes her bowl of custard and crushed plant matter to the kitchen. "Hey Strawberry, can I toss my bowl of drugs on the stove for a bit? The herbs gotta steep in the custard. Probably."

* Whisper looks up at Genie's call. "Yup. Fishing boats. Time to go." He stands up and heads towards the bridge.

* Cerberus doesn't get up. he filly scoops after the oters, probably stopping at the first stairs. "claptrap, now i feel your pain..."

* Jack_sh| picks up the Berry and gives a pirate pony ride.

* Cerberus "weeeeeeeeeeeeeee!"

<Jack_sh|> "come on lil' Lass we've got adventure to get to."

* Cerberus "look mom, zombie pirates are nice! i told you!"

* Prism heads up to the bridge.

<uSeaGM> Pretty soon the whole party arrives back on the bridge.

<uSeaGM> Two other boats have joined you in the darkness. These fishing vessels are much smaller than Thunder Child and are each crewed by half a dozen ponies at the most. The crews look quite young, around Genie's age, but they seem fairly cheerful and wave up at you.

<uSeaGM> The acting captain smiles sadly. "The only ponies I could get to help us were my friends. I don't think Hook Line or Sinker asked before sailing off with their dad's boat, either. The grown ups didn't want to risk their ships against the monsters when their only protection was a bunch of 'mouldy pirates and untried kids'." She sighs. "Still, this is the best chance we have of saving my dad and the others."

* Jack_sh| waves to the young ones. "They're already on the way to being little pirates almost brings a tear to my eye."

<uSeaGM> By now you've left the clouds way behind you and a moon hangs in the sky above. Patches of beautiful blue light shimmer beneath the waves. "These are the schools of Moon

Fish," Genie explains. "They come out at night, depending on the phases of the moon."

* Whisper stares out at the schools of glowing fish in awe.

<uSeaGM> "Do you remember when I told you about seeing a giant beam of light last week?"

<uSeaGM> "It came from around here. I can tell we're in the right place because the sonar goes all funny and the sub-surface imager gets scrambled. I was a little distracted at the time, but I'd bet that beam came from the middle of the interference."

<uSeaGM> "And look at this," she says, tapping another screen. "You can see there's some kind of long, thin structure on the seabed that heads straight into where the interference is. The western end goes back towards the Equestrian shore and the other end stretches away to the east."

* Whisper looks at the terminal, then at Genie. "So...what do we do?"

* Cerberus "uh.... yes, but.... when do we go swimming?"

* Milia grins. "Jackpot. We just need some way of...getting...down there...uh oh."

<Jack_sh|> "Well I know how I'm probably getting down there."

<Prism> "Oh dear..."

<uSeaGM> "Well, we act like bait while the other boats let out their nets."

* Cerberus "YES! WE'RE GOING TO BE SEAPONIES!"

* Whisper shrinks a little. "Oh...we're waiting to get attacked by a giant squid...again. Great."

<Jack_sh|> "I am not really seeing a downside."

<Jack_sh|> "...oh right most of you can't fight underwater."

<Whisper> "Fight? I've never even been /in/ water deep enough to swim in!"

* Milia glares at Jack. "...most of us need to BREATHE, too. You can imagine this isn't a thrilling prospect for our little group." she glances down at Cerberus, noticing the filly's excitement.

* Cerberus "is the water warm? is it worm? i bet i can eat a worm! wanna bet?"

<Milia> "...for the most part." she quickly adds.

<Jack_sh|> "You are a shaman you can whip up some kind of breathing potion."

<Jack_sh|> "now how are your guns going to work?"

<Whisper> "I'm pretty sure they don't. Unless they're energy weapons, which I've never used."

<Jack_sh|> "pretty sure energy weapons don't have a track record of working well either."

* Milia rolls her eyes. "I don't think I have the materials to even TRY to make gill talismans. The jury's still out on if those even exist, either."

<Jack_sh|> "well get toking the shaman weed and tell us what you need."

* Milia taps a hoof to her chin, thoughtfully. "...I /should/ try to make gill talismans, one of these days..."

<Prism> "I'm guessing that rebreathers are right out then?"

<Jack_sh|> "If it's anything underwater I can take a stroll."

<uSeaGM> Genie looks confused. "Why are you talking about going under water? If the squid are awake they'd just eat you down there... and why would you want to anyway?"

<Jack_sh|> "Well they got to get that place don't they?"

* Cerberus water is no good for magic... it getsall fuzzy and menty

<Cerberus> *melty

* Artifica_ blinks. "seaponies?"

* Cerberus "YUSH! seaponies! they're said to live in the magical city of calamari! they are beautiful and live in peace and harmony! i totally did not make this up right now! honest!"

* Milia returns Genie's confused look with one of her own. "...there's sort of a facility down there we need to access. Did we...uh...not mention that to you? That's where the light comes from! It's a megaspell detonation facility!"

<Whisper> "Wait...whoah, you all never said anything about diving to the bottom of the sea for a damn /megaspell/!"

* Cerberus "they also sing seaponies song! they are all shoo-bee-doe! and doo-be-doo!"

<Jack_sh|> "I'm not going to be allowed to bring alcohol am I."

<Prism> "Hmm, that would be a tunnel down there of sorts....like a train tunnel."

* Milia facehoofs. "...Damn, we need a secretary or something...I swear..."

* Cerberus "gimme the alcohol! gimme gimme!"

<uSeaGM> Genie looks a little shocked. "Oh... my. That doesn't sound so good... so the light I

saw was from that..."

* Milia glances over at Prism, intrigued. "Wait...there's a tunnel? Where?"

<Prism> "On the screen, there's a long straight structure. That reminds me of a train tunnel type thing."

* Jack_sh| passes the bottle she left behind.

<uSeaGM> Genie blinks a few times to clear her head. "We need to get started anyway. Perhaps you can tell me about it later." Thunderchild sounds her horn, and the three boats head towards the glowing water.

* Milia takes a good look at the screen. There'd be no way someone like her woulda noticed that, had someone not pointed it out first. "Woah, good eye...that seems a lot more convenient than diving to the bottom of the ocean. Where do you think the entrance is at?"

* Milia awkwardly clears her throat. "Uhh...right, yes, later. Woops."

* Cerberus yawns and falls asleep... again

<Jack_sh|> "Well I suppose that it's somewhere on land."

<Whisper> "Something tells me it being on land isn't going to make things easier..."

<Jack_sh|> "sure it will."

<Jack_sh|> "find the base and the tunnel and trace a straight line."

<uSeaGM> A strange tingling sensation fills the air. The hair in everponies tails stand on end and consoles flash and flicker. "W-wait, what is this?" Genie stammers, "Is it going to fire again?! All the instruments are going haywire!"

<Prism> "Uh, oh no..."

* Whisper whimpers. "Why...?"

<uSeaGM> Then there is a burst of light from above the boat, just in front of the bridge. Out of the light comes a pony; a unicorn wearing night guard armour... he hangs in the air for a moment before gravity catches up with him and he falls a short distance onto the turret of the magical cannon in the middle of the deck. Watch Tower looks up at the bridge, then collapses.

* Jack_sh| draws his cutlass...the broken one and looks about.

<uSeaGM> **End of Session**