Ponies of the Maribbean

By Jverne

It was a dark and stormy night. Pinkie Pie slumped down at her desk in the captain’s quarters, bumbling with a compass that wouldn’t stand still with the waves rocking their ship, The Alicorn, side to side. “At this rate we’ll never find the island...” She mumbled to herself. She and her crew had been spending weeks at sea, and they were running low on supplies. The cabin door burst open, revealing a drenched and exhausted mint-colored unicorn. “This better be important, Lyra. I’m pretty busy at the moment.” grumbled Pinkie. “This storm is too much, captain. We need to turn back!” said Lyra. “No!” yelled Pinkie, now irritated, for she had heard the same complaint from the rest of her crew. “If we turn back now, we will lose all of our progress! Just a few more days, I know we will reach the island. I know it.” Lyra sighed. She wished Pinkie Pie was like she used to be. The ecstatic adventurer she used to know was no longer in the pink pony. “The crew is in terrible condition, captain. We are running low on food. Heck, we’re running low on everything!” Pinkie Pie knew that. But she also knew that she was closer than she would ever get right now. She didn’t want to give up on this chance. Suddenly, the rain halted from its usual thumping on the roof of her quarters, and the thunder subsided a second after. She was going to speak, but another pony’s voice rang out from the crow’s nest. “Land ho!” It screamed. Pinkie got up and rushed out onto the deck, followed by Lyra. When they finally adjusted to the surprising brightness of the sun, they looked over the railing and couldn’t believe their eyes when they saw it. Right there, far out in the distance, was an island. The island. Finally, after all that time at sea, she had reached the island of Celestia. “Drop anchor and prepare the life boats.” she ordered to a pony. She was surprisingly casual, but she wasn’t excited, not in the slightest. This island has been the center of numerous ponytales, all of which told of mysterious forests and the foul creatures that inhabited them. Though these tales were merely used to make foals stay in bed, they were by all means true. What those old fables didn’t tell is that the island held an incredible treasure, one that would give fame, fortune and power to anypony who obtained it. She and the rest of the crew climbed into the lifeboats, fear and excitement raging in their hearts. When they started moving, nopony spoke a word. One pony managed to break the silence, though it was just a whisper, it was like a horrifying scream to everpony around. “What if Fluttershy got here before us?” Said Applejack. Pinkie Pie looked to her left and realized that her first mate had been sitting there the whole time. “If she got here before us, then we will just have to catch up.” Said Pinkie flatly. Applejack shivered. “But what about when we catch up to her?” She said. “When we catch up to her, we will make sure she can’t get to the treasure first.” Applejack did not think it could be done that simply. Fluttershy was a cunning, vile captain, despite her calm, bored appearance. She was Pinkie Pie’s sworn enemy, always fooling around with her and making sure she got everywhere Pinkie before she got there, always following her, knowing that treasure would wait wherever Pinkie Pie went. That is exactly why Fluttershy never really kills anypony. She just follows around random pirates seeking fame and fortune, just so that she can get whatever they want. Along with her crew, she was the richest, most infamous pirate in the sea. Applejack just hoped that she hadn’t followed Pinkie on this voyage, because the crew needed money and supplies, or else they may not survive another year as pirates. When the life boats finally hit the shore, Pinkie was the first to get up and trot onto the warm sand, followed by every other pony. The beach was completely devoid of life, hitting the woodland like a wall of trees. Pinkie Pie pointed to three ponies. “You three. Stay here and make sure nothing happens. Everyone else, follow me.” Pinkie grabbed her scimitar from its sheath on her hip and started slicing at vines to make a path into the mysterious forest. After getting a few feet in, she hit a clearing in the forest and ushered in her crew. The inside of the forest was nearly pitch black, just a few mere rays of light from the canopy keeping everything only slightly visible. After taking a few moments adjusting to the light, they trudged on through the misty wood, keeping swords and muskets at ready in case the encountered anything that could give them trouble. After a few hours of walking, the forest began to thin out and the crew reached a wide, violent stream ending at a waterfall. Pinkie Pie picked out two small teams from her crew and ordered one to find a way across. She ordered the other to go and pick berries from a collection of fruit trees behind them. “We’re camping here for the night.” She announced. Immediately, all of her crew slumped down on the grass, exhausted from the hike that they just endured. Applejack spread out her bedroll on the soft, short grass. She was just about to lie down and fall asleep when she noticed something. Rising above the trees on the other side of the river was a thick plume of smoke. “What in tarnation is that?” She mumbled. Apparently a few other ponies heard her and soon everyone was staring at the cloud of ash. “She’s here” Said Pinkie. She turned to Applejack. “Has that group I sent to find a way across come back yet?” She said. “Err… Yes, they ha-.” Pinkie’s eyes went wide. “What did they say?” She interrupted. Applejack took a step back. “Um… They said that they found a shallow spot upriver, with not as many rapids.” Pinkie Pie almost immediately started picking out ponies from her crew. “But sir, you don’t really mean-““Yes, I really mean. Ten years Fluttershy’s been following me all over the Maribbean, claiming every last piece of treasure I hunt before I can even get to it. I am not going to miss the one chance to get rid of her.” Said Pinkie. Applejack was taken aback. She knew that her captain really despised Fluttershy and her crew, but she never knew that she would go as far as to kill her… Or do whatever Pinkie was going to do. She snapped out of her thoughts when Pinkie said her name. “Applejack, you, me and this group will head out to that camp - or whatever it is - early tomorrow morning. Everypony get some sleep.” By then all of her crew had already laid out bedrolls, and most already had their eyes closed. Pinkie Pie growled. “Most worthless crew ever…” She mumbled. She was determined to end Fluttershy once and for all, but she knew that she would need some rest, like her crew. So she laid out her bedroll, plopped down on it and went to sleep. When she awoke, the sun was just barely above the trees where the smoke was still rising, though in a smaller column. In a split second, she began packing weapons and snares into her saddlebag. When she was done, most of her crew was awake from the clanging of metal as she packed her tools. Applejack approached Pinkie. “Y’all ready to head out?” She asked. She nodded. “We’ll head upriver in a few minutes.” When the crew was done preparing, they began trotting upriver until they reached the shallow area farther away from the falls. The crew carefully walked through the cold, rocky waters, using discretion when taking steps for worry of slipping. When they reached the other side, Pinkie ordered everypony to be quiet and try not to step on leaves before entering the forest. “We’re getting close to the source of the smoke.” She said. They sneaked over to the forest, now watching their hooves as they crept their way into the wood. Every time a pony made the slightest crunching sound by stepping on a leaf, Pinkie Pie gave them an irritated look. After a few minutes of walking, they reached the edge of a large clearing with a tiny, dying fire in the middle. Sitting on the opposite side of the clearing from them, there was a small shack decorated with the bones of animals and knotted palm leaves. A thin stream of smoke seeped out through the small, makeshift chimney located on the top of it. The windows were lit by an eerie green light that seemed to illuminate the whole room inside. As they slowly stalked into the clearing, they began to hear what sounded like chanting coming from the inside of the strange hut. A few cowardly ponies of Pinkie’s crew tried to cede back into the forest. Pinkie Pie noticed this and immediately ordered them to come back into the group. “Get back here before I make you go into that thing first.” She said without even turning around. This frightened them even more and they hurried back to join the group. After this, the crew continued to slowly trot towards the strange building. When they reached the door, Pinkie peeked through a small crack in between the door and the wall. What she saw was not Fluttershy or her crew at all. She saw a white pony with strange patterns of black all over her pelt and a weird, stiff mane of the same color scheme. Flashy, golden bangles covered half of her legs and her neck. She was performing a bizarre chant over a bubbling cauldron that emitted a dark green light and smoke. She was speaking a language that Pinkie could not understand, though it sounded like a spell. The odd enchantress slowly raised her fore hoofs upward and ended the sorcery with the shouting of three more mysterious words. The cauldron she was over made an enormous explosion of smoke and she gave a satisfied look. Pinkie’s crew was horrified. “She’s going to kill us with magic!” said one pony in the group. “I’ll bet that’s some evil poison she’s brewing.” said another. “Be quiet! She’ll here us!” Applejack whispered. Everypony shut their mouths immediately, but it was too late. Standing right behind Applejack, an evil look on her face, was the witch. Applejack’s heart skipped a beat. She slowly turned around to see the frightening black and white pony right over her. After waiting a few seconds, it spoke. “What are you doing on the island of Celestia?” she said. Nopony spoke. They were too frightened to move a muscle. Pinkie rose up from the crowd and faced her. She was going to speak, but the pony interrupted. “Let me guess. It is fame and fortune you seek, so you come to the island to reach the peak.” Applejack gave a puzzled look. “The peak?” she asked. The pony turned to Applejack. “Yes, young one. If enough you yearn for the treasure, much gold you will earn and achieve pleasure.” She said with a strange set of rhymes. Pinkie gave her a suspicious stare. “We are searching for the treasure on this island. If you can’t help us with that, then we will be on our way.” The mysterious pony giggled. “Where to find the treasure, I can advise, but for the slightest price.” Pinkie pie frowned. “What kind of price will we have to pay to get information on how to get to the treasure?” She asked. “If you must know the price, it is, by all means, SACRIFICE!” She said with horrifying volume and power. Everypony screamed in fright, and a few began to gallop back into the jungle from which they came. Pinkie Pie and Applejack sheathed their scimitars and prepared for a fight, but the pony was already laughing boisterously. “Aha, I see you fell for my trick. Yes, I will tell you for no price, not a single bit. Zecora, that is my name. I’m sorry your crew was scared, you have me to blame.” Pinkie Pie was not amused. “Just give us any information you can and we will be on our way. We wouldn’t want to interrupt your occupation, now would we?” She said sarcastically. “Oh please, have some feel, for my remedies are just meant to heal!” Said Zecora reassuringly. Pinkie was still not satisfied. This crazy pony was all on her own on this jungle island, and she spends her time making medicine, even though there are no ponies to fix up anywhere around her. She clearly hasn’t seen anypony in a fairly long time. Zecora invited Pinkie and Applejack into her house, while the rest of the crew stayed outside and listened through the windows and the cracks between the door and the wall. Pinkie and Applejack slumped down on the wooden logs that Zecora had placed by the table in the center of her small room. Just in case, you know if anypony just came along and Zecora welcomed them happily into her house. Zecora sat down at the opposite side of the table and said: “Cozy place, no? I made it all myself, you know.” Pinkie’s expression did not change a bit. “Now, let’s get down to business. What can you tell us about how to get to this peak?” Zecora frowned. “Well, there is a place where the overgrowth thins out a tad west of here. If you get there, it will be much easier to get to the mountain quicker.” Applejack gave a puzzled look. “Hey, why’d y’all stop doing your rhymes?” She asked. Zecora turned to her with a plain look. “Because business is business, and apparently business needs to be discussed seriously.” She said. Applejack frowned. Zecora noticed this and said: “Unless, time to time, you would like me to rhyme.” Applejack’s face lightened up, but Pinkie Pie just groaned. “So, about this area where the trees thin out, could you point us to it?” She said.