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MY LITTLE PONY
Season 9

Daring Doubt
Ep 921

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TEASER**SC. 1 - INT. RAINBOW DASH'S HOUSE - DAY**

There's a <KNOCK> at the door. RAINBOW DASH opens it, revealing... The spine of a book? Because FLUTTERSHEY has her nose buried in "Daring Do and the Ring of Destiny."

1 RAINBOW DASH
Uh...Fluttershy?

Fluttershy remembers where she is and closes the book.

2 FLUTTERSHEY
Oh! Rainbow Dash. I just stopped by to thank you for letting me borrow your Daring Do books! I love them.

3 RAINBOW DASH
(re Fluttershy's book)
You think that one's good? Wait 'til you get to "Daring Do and the Riddle of the Sphinx!"

Fluttershy smiles and admits--

4 FLUTTERSHEY
This is actually my second time through. I've read them all, from "Daring Do and the Sapphire Statue" to "Daring Do and the Fallen Idol!"

5 RAINBOW DASH
(confused)
Fallen Idol? That's not in the series.

6 FLUTTERSHEY
Oh, it just came out last week. Maybe that's why you haven't heard of it?

Rainbow Dash gapes - this wounds her sorely.

7 RAINBOW DASH
No way Daring Do's biggest fan - ME - would miss a book coming out! Besides, A.K. Yearling always sends me a copy!

8 FLUTTERSHEY
Well, I'm happy to let you borrow mine until yours arrives.

Fluttershy reaches into her saddle bag for "Fallen Idol." But as soon as Fluttershy starts to hold it up, Rainbow Dash snatches it and studies it -

The cover has a picture of handsome, vulnerable Dr. Caballeron on it, his hooves bound, with a mean looking Daring Do rearing above him menacingly, holding an idol.

9 RAINBOW DASH
(reads in growing disbelief)
"The true story of the thieving fraud known as Daring Do?!" WHAT? Why would A.K. Yearling write that about herself?

Fluttershy studies the title too and blinks in surprise.

10 FLUTTERSHEY
It looks like she didn't. This book says it's by Groom Q. Q. Martingale.

11 RAINBOW DASH
Who?

12 FLUTTERSHEY
(shrugs)
I guess he's a new writer.

Rainbow Dash flips through the pages, frowning.

13 RAINBOW DASH
A BAD one. (reads) "The only thing worse than Daring Do's destruction of temples is her cruelty to the mild-mannered Dr. Caballeron?!"

14 FLUTTERSHEY
It was written from his point of view. I figured it was an artistic choice.

15 RAINBOW DASH
More like a disaster! Listen: "Daring Do isn't just a fictional character from over-the-top adventure stories. I've met her, and she is a real, live pony." That's supposed to be a secret!!

Rainbow Dash throws the book across the room. Fluttershy goes to get it. Rainbow Dash pace-flies in consternation.

16 RAINBOW DASH (CONT'D)
We're the only ones who know Daring Do is really A.K. Yearling in disguise. But if other ponies read this book, how long will it take them to figure that out?! We have to go warn her!

But Fluttershy isn't listening; she's started reading again.

17 RAINBOW DASH (CONT'D)
FLUTTERSHY!

18 FLUTTERSHY
Hm? Oh. Sorry.

And as she sheepishly puts the book away, **END TEASER.**

ACT ONE

SC. 2 - INT. RAINBOW DASH'S HOUSE - RESUME

Rainbow Dash shows Fluttershy a FLYER with AK Yearling on it, smiling, surrounded by images of her books.

19 RAINBOW DASH
Look. A.K. Yearling is signing all her books at the bookstore today. We can warn her about what's going on!

Fluttershy holds up the "Fallen Idol" book.

20 FLUTTERSHY
Don't you think you should read Martingale's book first? Just to hear both sides of the story?

21 RAINBOW DASH
Why? The only thing true in that pack of lies is that Daring Do is REAL.

22 FLUTTERSHY
Well, there's also a lot of insight into Dr. Caballeron's life choices. Did you know he's actually a history professor and amateur bird watcher?

Rainbow Dash stops to go eye-to-eye with Fluttershy.

23 RAINBOW DASH
Are you serious right now? A random writer trashes our friend and exposes her secret and you wanna talk BIRDS?!

24 FLUTTERSHY
(very quiet)
Also spider-cruelty.

25 RAINBOW DASH
WHAT?!

Fluttershy points to picture in the book of Daring Do swiping aside spider webs.

26 FLUTTERSHY
You have to admit Daring Do wrecks a lot of spider webs in her adventures.

27 RAINBOW DASH
In ORDER to save precious artifacts from the bad guy, who you seem to have forgotten is DR. CABALLERON! Are you sure you read the same series I did?

SC. 3 - INT. MANHATTAN - BOOKSTORE - DAY

A FEW PONIES surround a table, where A.K. YEARLING signs books (her book posters displayed). Fluttershy and Rainbow Dash walk in. Seeing the gathered ponies, Dash is relieved.

28 RAINBOW DASH
Well, at least A.K. Yearling's TRUE fans know Martingale's book is bogus.

But as they get closer, they realize all the ponies are holding Martingale's book...And they don't look happy--

29 FLUTTERSHY
I'm not sure those are all fans.

30 PONY 1
Why didn't YOUR books say Daring Do was real? This changes everything!

31 PONY 2
And why do you only write about her good side? Is she bribing you?

32 PONY 1
(re "Fallen Idol")
On page 531 it says that Daring Do kicks puppies.

A small foal's eyes well up at the harsh betrayal.

33 FOAL
She DOES?

A.K. has had enough.

34 A.K. YEARLING
What?! No! Look, are any of you here for my actual book signing?

The ponies shake their heads.

35 PONY 2

Frankly, I don't even know how you can call it FICTION if it's all real. You're as much a fake as Daring Do!

The gathered "fans" turn up their noses and go... Revealing a sad-looking Fluttershy and wincing Rainbow Dash.

36 RAINBOW DASH

I guess we're a little late to warn you about the new book, huh?

A.K. Yearling sighs and slumps in her chair.

37 A.K. YEARLING

I always feared that someday everypony would learn Daring Do was real.

38 FLUTTERSHEY

But why? Aren't you proud of your adventures?

39 A.K. YEARLING

Of course! But I'm not in it for the fame. The stories just seemed too good to keep to myself.

(then, fierce)

I wish I knew who this "Martingale" author was, and why he's determined to ruin my character...And me.

40 FLUTTERSHEY

Maybe we can ask him.

REVEAL - Fluttershy points out the front window, where across the street, ala "You've Got Mail," there's another bookstore, with a line out the front, and a poster for "Fallen Idol".

41 RAINBOW DASH

No way! He's doing a signing across the street?! (then) How many bookstores does this town have?

42 A.K. YEARLING

You'd better go without me. I can't risk the chance Martingale might recognize me as Daring Do.

Rainbow Dash nods and ZOOMS out, Fluttershy following.

SC. 4 - INT. MANHATTAN - EDGES BOOKSTORE - SOON

It's fancier and bigger. A line goes out the door and Rainbow Dash shoulders past. Fluttershy follows, apologizing.

43 FLUTTERSHY
Oops. Sorry. Ooh, was that your hoof?
Excuse us...

And then Rainbow Dash freezes in her tracks when she spots "Groom Q.Q. Martindale" - because it's really DR. CABALLERON (he's grown A BEARD and wears a DIFFERENT COSTUME that covers his cutie mark). His THREE HENCHPONIES (Biff, Rogue and Withers) stand nearby, like "bouncers."

44 RAINBOW DASH
<gasp> That's not Martingale! It's
Doctor Caballeron in disguise!
(then)
Now it all makes sense! Daring Do's
arch nemesis created a fake "author"
self so he can write books that make
him sound like a hero! Who does that?!

45 FLUTTERSHY
A.K. Yearling?

46 RAINBOW DASH
This is totally different.

Rainbow Dash strides to the front of the line to confront a surprised Caballeron.

47 RAINBOW DASH (CONT'D)
Up to your old tricks again, huh?
Just like in Somnambula! Spreading
lies to make Daring Do look bad!

Fluttershy puts her "Fallen Idol" book down on the table, determined to still be polite.

48 FLUTTERSHY
And, would you sign our book?

But "Martingale" shrugs, keeping his alter ego.

49 MARTINGALE
I am just a simple author, telling it
like is.
(to Fluttershy)
Who should I make it out to?

Dash sweeps the book off the table.

50 RAINBOW DASH
We know who you REALLY are! And unless
you want us to tell all of them, you'd
better answer some questions!

Dash gestures to the line of ponies behind them. "Martingale" sighs, then stands and waves to the crowd, charming--

51 MARTINGALE
I'm afraid that's all we have time for
today...

The crowd <AWWWWS> sadly.

52 MARTINGALE (CONT'D)
But take a free copy of my book on
your way out!

The crowd <YAAAAAYS!>. Dash glares, then follows Martingale as he ducks behind a bookshelf. Fluttershy trails after.

53 RAINBOW DASH
We aren't going to let you get away
with this, Caballeron!

54 MARTINGALE
Get away with what? I am merely
telling my side of the story.

55 RAINBOW DASH
You mean lying!

56 MARTINGALE
You think everything in A.K.
Yearling's books are true? In "Daring
do and the Quetzal's Quest" she states
that the Fangthorn Flowers are red.
When in fact, they are BLUE!

57 FLUTTERSHY
It's true. They are.

Rainbow Dash pppfffts, waving a hoof.

58 RAINBOW DASH
Pfft! That sounds more like an
editor's mistake.

59 MARTINGALE
Still, if that is wrong...Is it not
possible that other, bigger things are
too? Take a look. It's in my book.

Martingale offers Rainbow Dash his book. She knocks it aside.

60 RAINBOW DASH
But I don't have to take your word for
it! C'mon, Fluttershy.

Rainbow Dash stalks off. Fluttershy follows until she hears Martingale heave a loud, sad, <SIGH>. She turns back to see him slumped into a sit, head in his hoof.

61 FLUTTERSHY
Oh dear. Is something wrong?

Martingale plays on Fluttershy's sympathy, emoting:

62 MARTINGALE
It is terrible being misunderstood.
It is true, in the past I have not
been as nice to Daring Do as I should.
But I have my reasons! <sob>

Fluttershy, drawn in, sits by Martingale and pats his back.

63 FLUTTERSHY
Want to talk about what happened?

64 MARTINGALE
My team and I were only ever
interested in researching artifacts--

WE DISSOLVE TO:

SC. 5 - EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG - FLASHBACK

CABALLERON and his HENCHPONIES (BIFF, ROGUE, and WITHERS) meticulously work on an ancient site. Caballeron uncovers a jeweled vase, and the others smile happily.

65 MARTINGALE (V.O.)
And taking them to our museum where
other ponies could study them.

Suddenly, a smirking DARING DO flies in and nabs the vase, much to Caballeron's surprise.

66 MARTINGALE (V.O.)
But Daring Do always seemed to get
there first, with her own plans.

Martingale holds out a hoof in friendship, but Daring Do turns her back on him, haughty.

67 MARTINGALE (V.O.)
I offered to team up with her, but she
refused. She had her own ideas of
where the treasures belonged...

SC. 6 - INT. DARING DO'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK

Caballeron and his henchponies peek in as Daring Do puts the artifact on her own shelf near other treasures and smiles.

SC. 7 - INT. MANEHATTAN - EDGES BOOKSTORE - RESUME

Fluttershy looks surprised, then thoughtful.

68 FLUTTERSHY
Daring Do DID have a lot of artifacts on her shelves. But didn't you try to sell them to the highest bidder?

Martingale shakes his head, rueful.

69 MARTINGALE
Only because I had to.

SC. 8 - EXT. "DARING DON'T" FLASHBACK

CABALLERON and his HENCHPONIES (BIFF, ROGUE, and WITHERS) run from DARING DO's house with the gold ring.

70 MARTINGALE (V.O.)
Since Daring Do kept taking our artifacts, our museum closed. We were desperate for money to keep it open.

SC. 9 - EXT. DARING DON'T FLASHBACK - TEMPLE

ON AHUIZOTL'S TEMPLE.

71 MARTINGALE (V.O.)
We just wanted to protect the history of Equestria! Unlike Daring Do.

Ahuizotl's temple collapses, with the creature vowing revenge. PULL BACK to reveal a horrified Martingale and his henchponies watching.

SC. 10 - INT. MANEHATTAN - EDGES BOOKSTORE - RESUME

Fluttershy is unsure about all this, but reflects--

72 FLUTTERSHY
She does destroy a lot of ancient sites... Not to mention the homes of the animals that live there...

73 MARTINGALE
And I felt it was my duty to tell the world about that. Thank you for listening and understanding, Miss...

74 FLUTTERSHY
Fluttershy.

Martingale sheds his disguise with a flourish, revealing his regular Caballeron clothing beneath. He bows deeply.

75 MARTINGALE
And I am Dr. Caballeron. Martingale is merely a nom de plume to build my brand. (then) My team could use an insightful pegasus like you, Fluttershy. Have you ever thought of being an adventurer?

OFF Fluttershy's surprised look.

SC. 11 - EXT. MANEHATTAN - EDGES BOOKSTORE - SOON

Rainbow Dash is pacing, but flaps over when Fluttershy exits.

76 RAINBOW DASH
Finally! What took you so long? Did those henchponies give you trouble? Cause if they did...

77 FLUTTERSHY
Oh, no! I decided to find out which author is really telling the truth, so I joined Dr. C's Tenochtitlan expedition! They're my new coworkers.

She happily gestures behind her to: the henchponies and Dr. Caballeron (who is just finishing shaving off his beard).

ON Rainbow Dash's GAPING DISBELIEF...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SC. 12 - INT. MANEHATTAN - BOOKSTORE - SOON

The foal is questioning a worn-down A.K. Yearling.

78 FOAL
So Daring Do doesn't kick puppies?

79 A.K. YEARLING
No.

80 FOAL
What about turtles?

81 A.K. YEARLING
That was ONE time. Accidentally!

Rainbow Dash bursts in, freaking out.

82 RAINBOW DASH
A.K.! You have to help me! Groom
Q.Q. Martingale is really Dr.
Caballeron, and he has Fluttershy!

A.K. Yearling snaps to worried attention.

83 A.K. YEARLING
That's... A lot to process.

84 RAINBOW DASH
The book thing was his new plan to
ruin Daring Do's reputation. AND he's
trying to make my friend a criminal!
They're off to Tenochtitlan right now!

A.K. frowns, realizing--

85 A.K. YEARLING
He must be after the Truth Talisman of
Tonatiuh. It requires the wings of a
pegasus to retrieve it!

86 RAINBOW DASH
That's gotta be why Caballeron tricked
Fluttershy into joining his band!

She ducks under the table and comes up as a heroically posed
DARING DO - much to the foal's SHOCK.

87 DARING DO
Then it's up to us to stop him!

88 FOAL
Whoaaaaaaa.

SC. 13 - EXT. TENOCHTITLAN BASIN - JUNGLE - LATER

Dr. Caballeron (no longer in disguise - beard shaved, etc.)
studies a map through the jungle to a temple.

He tucks the map away and keeps up his "concerned eco-pony"
act as he speaks to his henchponies - and Fluttershy, wearing
a CAMPING HAT and SADDLEBAGS.

89 DR. CABALLERON
Watch where you put your hooves,
everypony. We do not want to disturb
the fragile jungle ecosystem.

90 FLUTTERSHY
That's so thoughtful.

91 DR. CABALLERON
Yes, unlike Daring Do, who slashes
plants aside with her cruel machete.

Caballeron lifts a vine gently so that Fluttershy can pass
under it. She smiles.

92 FLUTTERSHY
Thank you.

Dr. Caballeron nods, then, startles at something O.S.

ON ROGUE - about to bite a tropical red fruit. A spear WHIPS
through the air, knocking the fruit away. REVEAL -
Caballeron glaring at Rogue. He drops the act in anger:

93 DR. CABALLERON
FOOL! Don't you know that's poison?!

ANGLE - Fluttershy's eyes are wide as she looks at Dr. C. He
realizes he's slipped, and makes a show of recovering his
smooth demeanor, moving to pat a sulky Rogue.

94 DR. CABALLERON (CONT'D)
I...Don't want you to get hurt, my
friend.

95 ROGUE
But I'm HUNGRY.

96 FLUTTERSHY
Oh, I can help with that! Here!

The surprised henchponies gather around as Fluttershy
produces tasty apples, hay cakes, and juice from her pack.

97 DR. CABALLERON
(surprised)
You are...Willing to share?

98 FLUTTERSHY
Of course! That's part of the fun of
having an adventure with friends!

The henchponies and Caballeron share a disbelieving look,
then dig in. Fluttershy smiles.

There's a loud <GROWL> from the bushes.

99 FLUTTERSHY (CONT'D)
Ooh, Rogue, you DO sound hungry.

But Withers is looking into the jungle; the sound's source.

100 WITHERS
That...Wasn't Rogue.

And suddenly FIERCE JUNGLE CATS (and one fluffy WHITE ONE) burst from the trees, <GROWLING> at Dr. C's band.

The henchponies FREAK OUT and stampede away into the jungle. Dr. C grabs Fluttershy and tugs her after him.

The cats follow, <ROARING> (white cat riding the jaguar).

Finally, Fluttershy digs in her heels and stops, turning to face the cats. Caballeron grabs her, trying to tug her away.

101 DR. CABALLERON
Fluttershy! Run! These ferocious
beasts want to eat us for dinner!

102 FLUTTERSHY
That's a common misconception. Have
you ever tried just talking to them?

103 DR. CABALLERON
No, that's crazy! I am sorry but...
You are on your own!

Caballeron races after his henchponies into the bushes. They watch as Fluttershy approaches the furious, attacking cats.

ON Dr. C and his henchponies, watching from the bushes.

104 WITHERS
She's a goner.

Rogue nods. Biff covers his eyes.

105 BIFF
I can't watch.

The sound of O.S. <PURRING> causes Biff to peek and see-

FLUTTERSHY, giving one giant cat an ear-rub, the others twisting around her to rub up against her, the white cat batting at her tail playfully.

106 FLUTTERSHY
Oh, aren't you the sweetest? We're very sorry for coming into your territory. But we're just passing through. I hope you don't mind.

Caballeron pokes his head out of the bushes in shock.

107 DR. CABALLERON
How...Did you do that?

108 FLUTTERSHY
Everycreature likes to be listened to. You just need to take the time to understand them.

Caballeron moves closer. The white cat <HISSES>, and he startles back. Appraising, he genuinely observes:

109 DR. CABALLERON
You are more talented than I realized.

Fluttershy blushes as the other henchponies nod and <AGREE>.

110 FLUTTERSHY
Thanks. I'm having the best time with you all!

SC. 14 - EXT. TENOCHTITLAN - OTHER JUNGLE AREA - SAME TIME

Rainbow Dash and Daring Do fly beneath the jungle canopy, dodging trees and vines.

111 RAINBOW DASH
Fluttershy must be having the WORST time with Caballeron's goons.

112 DARING DO
We need to catch up to them before they reach the truth talisman!

113 RAINBOW DASH
Why? What's so special about it?

114 DARING DO
It has the power to make the pony holding it tell the truth. But Caballeron only wants it because it's made of solid gold. He'll melt it down and use it to get rich.

115 RAINBOW DASH
If this talisman is so important, why
didn't you already save it? You said
only a pegasus can get it, right?

116 DARING DO
Yes. But the temple traps are far too
dangerous to face without a map. And
maybe even WITH one.

Rainbow Dash gulps and races even faster.

SC. 15 - EXT. TENOCHTITLAN BASIN - ARCHWAYS OF THE SUN - SOON

Caballeron studies that very map... Which shows a temple at
the top of a hill. He leads his band up a set of steep steps
(think the Inca Trail). Biff notices an easier side-trail.

117 BIFF
Boss, how about we take the shortcut?

118 DR. CABALLERON
How about you be quiet.
(catches himself, fakes nice)
I mean... No thank you, Biff. Let's
just follow the map.

Biff hangs his head. Fluttershy sympathetically moves up to
him, pats his shoulder. Biff opens up to her--

119 BIFF
I'm suposta be Dr. C's second in
command. But he never listens to me.

120 FLUTTERSHY
Well, keep trying! I believe in you.

Biff brightens at this. The group reaches the top of the
steps, ending in a terraced plateau (like Machu Picchu) with
several stone archways (think the Sun Gate).

121 DR. CABALLERON
At last! Now we simply have to wait
for the sun to reach its highest
point, and our path will be revealed.

The ponies nod, and Withers flops down under the shade of a
tree. Suddenly, Fluttershy is there. Calm but tense:

122 FLUTTERSHY
Withers. Don't. Move.

Withers's eyes roll up to see-- a <BUZZING> FLY-DERS' nest
right above his head. Sweat begins to trickle down his face.

Fluttershy lifts a hollow log and <BUZZES> through it, communicating with the fly-ders. They boil out of their nest and follow her.

Fluttershy beckons to Withers, and he slides out from beneath the nest. Fluttershy drops the log, and the fly-ders return.

The henchponies <CHEER> and Fluttershy blushes. Caballeron looks thoughtful.

SC. 16 - EXT. TENOCHTITLAN - STEPS BELOW ARCHWAYS - SAME TIME

Daring Do and Rainbow Dash stare up from the bottom of the slope, seeing the far-off figures of Caballeron and his band.

123 DARING DO
There they are! We can catch them
before they enter the temple!

Daring and Dash leap into the air to fly up the steps, when--

A VINE LASSO <WHIPS> IN from OS to encircle Daring Do, pinning her wings and yanking her to the ground.

Rainbow Dash <GASPS>, then flies back and struggles to untie the lasso, but Daring Do tries to warn her--

124 DARING DO (CONT'D)
Get back, Rainbow Dash! It's Ahuizotl--

Too late. Another vine <ZINGS> into FRAME and captures Dash. REVEAL - Ahuizotl steps from the jungle, grinning wickedly.

125 AHUIZOTL
Ah, Daring Do. My old nemesis. You may
have outsmarted my jungle cats, but
you can't escape me!

Rainbow Dash struggles and keeps Ahui's attention, while Daring Do inchworms over to grab a rock in her teeth.

126 RAINBOW DASH
(struggles)
We didn't see any cats! We're just
here to rescue Fluttershy! We don't
care about your truth talisman.

Ahuizotl puts a hand to his chin wryly. Meanwhile, Daring Do uses the rock in her teeth to saw through the vine.

127 AHUIZOTL

Then why did you bring it up? It must be a coincidence that only a pegasus can retrieve Tonatiuh's treasure... And there are two of you here.

Ahuizotl reaches out his hands toward them... And Daring Do bursts free! She grabs the vine lasso around Rainbow Dash and flies, dodging Ahuizotl, to zoom up the steps.

Behind her, Ahuizotl <ROARS> in rage!

SC. 17 - EXT. TENOCHTITLAN - ARCHWAYS OF THE SUN - SAME TIME

Meanwhile the sun rises to its peak! Dr. C's band watches as: A shaft of light zings through one of the archways, then bounces through others in a pattern before shining a door-shaped SPOTLIGHT on the ground.

With a <RUMBLE>, the sunlit "door" sinks into the ground, revealing a staircase.

128 DR. CABALLERON

Quickly! Before the sun moves and it closes!

Dr. C, the henchponies, and Fluttershy hurry into the door. It begins to slowly <RUMBLE> closed, the sun fading...

A few beats behind, Daring Do and Rainbow Dash fly through the door...And it closes behind them.

SC. 18 - INT. TUNNELS OF TRUTH - CONTINUOUS

Daring Do and Rainbow Dash crash land on the floor. Dash examines a few frizzy hairs on her tail.

129 RAINBOW DASH

That was cutting it close.

She turns to see Daring Do frowning at 5 identical archways.

130 DARING DO

And without a map, we'll have to guess which way to go.

Daring Do picks the far right archway. But we PUSH IN ON a different archway to find...

SC. 19 - INT. TRUTH CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

The large chamber opens into a bottomless cenote, with a "catwalk" of stone around it and several decorative OBELISKS.

THREE BAT-WINGED PONY GARGOYLES loom above each of the three doors in the wall that surround the pit. Above the maw of the cenote floats the gold and jeweled pendant of the truth talisman strung on a necklace, mid-air in a magic bubble.

Caballeron feigns shock at what he sees.

131 DR. CABALLERON
Oh no! I knew the truth talisman could not be moved by magic, but I never realized we'd have to fly to retrieve it! Our journey has been for nothing!

Caballeron looks dramatically sad. Fluttershy is moved by his sorrow, and she eyes the talisman.

132 FLUTTERSHY
Don't be upset, Dr. C. I can get it.

Fluttershy spreads her wings.

133 DR. CABALLERON
Oh, Fluttershy, you are too kind. But I could never ask that of you. It might be dangerous!

But Fluttershy looks determined now.

134 FLUTTERSHY
I want to do it! For all of you, my new friends. And to protect a historical treasure!

The henchponies start to share nervous looks, shifting on their hooves. They don't feel good about this.

135 WITHERS
Uh, boss, maybe we shouldn't...

But before anypony can do anything, Fluttershy has flapped toward the talisman. She reaches her hooves through the bubble and takes the talisman...

But as soon as she does, GEYSERS OF HOT LAVA SHOOT FROM THE CENOTE BELOW. Fluttershy is forced to dodge the lava mid-air! She's not a fancy flier and barely manages to maneuver out of the way in time. She <STARTLES!>

Meanwhile, Biff throws his shoulder against one of the obelisks and yells to Rogue and Withers.

136 BIFF
Give me a hoof here!

Rogue and Withers shove alongside him, and they crack the stone obelisk, making it fall to be a peninsula/bridge out over the lava/bottomless pit.

Fluttershy's wing is nearly scorched, and she flaps into a tailspin, about to plunge into the darkness below...

But Caballeron charges out across the peninsula to catch her with a hoof and pull her to safety! The lava geysers stop as soon as the talisman is out of the cenote area.

Fluttershy rejoins the others on solid ground, and they all shakily rejoice as she holds up the talisman!

137 HENCHPONIES
We did it! / You're safe! / Thank
Celestia!

138 FLUTTERSHY
Thanks, everypony.

Fluttershy hands the talisman to Dr. Caballeron. He slips it over his head. Then, a door in the wall <SMASHES> open. Revealing... Daring Do and Rainbow Dash in heroic poses.

139 DARING DO
Give us the talisman, Caballeron!

140 RAINBOW DASH
We're not takin' no for an answer!

141 FLUTTERSHY
Wait! You don't understand. My friends are researchers! They only want to study the talisman and keep it safe in a museum! Right, Dr. C?

142 DR. CABALLERON
Errr.... No.

Fluttershy is horrified / disillusioned.

143 FLUTTERSHY
But... You said...

Daring Do smirks - Caballeron is caught.

144 DARING DO
Now that he's holding Tonatiuh's talisman, he has to tell the truth.

145 RAINBOW DASH
Admit it, Caballeron. You're only pretending to like Fluttershy because she has the wings you needed to steal the truth talisman! Isn't that right?

146 DR. CABALLERON
No!

Rainbow Dash and Daring Do are totally shocked. Caballeron explains to Fluttershy, apologetic.

147 DR. CABALLERON (CONT'D)
I admit, that was the original reason. But my henchponies and I have come to value your friendship and kindness.

148 RAINBOW DASH
Didn't see that coming.

The moment is ruined as Ahuizotl smashes in through a door.

149 RAINBOW DASH (CONT'D)
Or that.

150 AHUIZOTL
More intruders? And you dare to steal Tonatiuh's talisman?! Guardian-goyles, attack!

At Ahuizotl's summons, the THREE bat-pony gargoyles detach from the walls and come to life! Ahuizotl <LAUGHS> and backs out of the room, using his tail-hand to pull a lever...

That SLAMS STONE SLABS OVER THE DOORS, trapping the ponies inside with the Guardian-goyles. As they swoop to attack...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SC. 20 - INT. TRUTH CHAMBER - RESUME

The bat-pony gargoyles dive, fanged mouths wide and red eyes glowing! The ponies frantically duck and dodge the attack.

151 DR. CABALLERON
Fluttershy! Can't you ask them to stop, like the jungle cats?

152 FLUTTERSHEY
Uh, excuse me? Guardian-goyles?

The creatures ignore her. Daring Do shakes her head, dodging.

153 DARING DO
It's no good. They're only stone and magic, not alive. I encountered some like this in Marapore.

154 DR. CABALLERON
Ah, yes. I seem to recall similar creations in Flankladesh.

Rainbow Dash is doing fancy flying to dodge a persisting goyle, snapping at her tail.

155 RAINBOW DASH
So? How do you get rid of them?!

156 DARING DO
I know they don't like bright light.

157 FLUTTERSHY
Oh dear. There's none of that in here.

158 DARING DO
Not yet... (then) Caballeron. Do you still have the Diamond of Lapis-Lux?

159 DR. CABALLERON
(tries to lie)
Yes. I mean, YES. I mean... Grr!

Caballeron growls at the truth talisman, then reluctantly digs in a pouch to produce a huge DIAMOND.

160 DR. CABALLERON (CONT'D)
How did you know I stole it?

161 DARING DO
Lucky guess. Hold it high!

Caballeron does as he's told. Daring Do whips two flashlights out of her bag and points them at the diamond.

Their light refracts from the diamond surface...Sending bright beams of light into all corners of the room.

The guardian-goyles recoil, <HISSING>, and land on their perches, covering their faces with their wings... And becoming inert stone once again.

162 FLUTTERSHY
Wow! You two make a great team!

Dash wrestles with her fan-feelings.

163 RAINBOW DASH
I'm not sure how I feel about that.

164 DARING DO
Feel later. Now, it's time to escape.

But as Daring Do tries to move a door-slab, it won't open. She spins and kicks at it, but to no avail.

165 BIFF
Look. If we want to get out of here, we're all gonna have to work together.

166 DR. CABALLERON
That's...Actually a good idea.

Biff looks happily surprised. Fluttershy smiles at him.

167 FLUTTERSHY
See? Told you he'd listen.

But Daring Do is eyeing Dr. Caballeron, suspicious.

168 DARING DO
A truce until we escape? But how can we trust you?

Caballeron holds up the truth talisman.

169 DR. CABALLERON
I cannot lie. Now, all together...

Caballeron and his henchponies kick the door while the pegasi fly up to shove it...

And the door finally GIVES WAY!

SC. 21 - INT. TUNNELS OF TRUTH - CONTINUOUS

The ponies break free, only to find Ahuizotl chilling outside, filing his regular nails with a file held in his tail-hand. He startles. So do they.

170 AHUIZOTL
You again?!

Ahuizotl lunges to grab Caballeron. Thinking fast, the pony hurls the truth talisman in the air.

Daring Do flies up to grab it. Ahuizotl drops Dr. C, furious, and lunges for the pegasus.

171 AHUIZOTL (CONT'D)
<growl> If I wanted to play games, I'd
get out my pinochle set!

172 DARING DO
This way!

Daring Do flies toward a small passage ahead, too tiny for Ahuizotl to follow. Rainbow Dash is in happy-geek mode.

173 RAINBOW DASH
This is just like the chase scene in
"Hope of Somnambula," remember?

174 DARING DO
Not really...All these temples look
alike. I usually check the unofficial
fan guide to remember which is which.

Dash gapes, and Fluttershy, racing next to her, explains--

175 FLUTTERSHEY
Truth talisman.

Ahuizotl bounds ahead to block the passage, making Daring Do pull up sharply. He lunges for her and she tosses the talisman to... Rainbow Dash.

176 DARING DO
Rainbow Dash!

Dash catches it, then twists to dodge Ahuizotl's fists.

177 RAINBOW DASH
Whoa! I'm gonna need the deluxe spa
package after this adventure.
(then reddening)
That doesn't leave this temple!

Fluttershy smiles at her friend. Dash hurls the talisman to Fluttershy, who passes it to Biff, Withers, and then Rogue in a keep-away from Ahuizotl - each time luring him farther and farther away from the passage...

Enough for the ponies to duck through! Rogue is the last to charge through, yelling...

178 ROGUE
That's it! I'm quitting the henchpony
business to finally follow my dreams
of becoming an opera star!

SC. 22 - INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The other ponies look at Rogue in surprise. Embarrassed, he passes the talisman to Dr. Caballeron.

179 ROGUE
Uh...Maybe you should hold this.

180 AHUIZOTL (O.S.)
You can't hide in there forever! It's
a dead end. <LAUGH>

The wall behind them <SHUDDERS> as Ahuizotl hurls his weight against it from the outside. Dust falls. Dash winces.

181 DARING DO
Ahuizotl won't give up til he catches
us. We have to find another way out!

Daring Do begins frisking the walls for a secret passage. Fluttershy looks thoughtful, listing to Ahui's <ROARS>.

182 FLUTTERSHY
I think our problem is the solution.

Fluttershy starts BACK toward the small passage they came through. Rainbow Dash grabs her to stop her.

183 RAINBOW DASH
Did you forget there's a monster out
there that wants to crush us?

184 FLUTTERSHY
But WHY? No pony ever asked Ahuizotl
what his side of the story is. He must
have a reason for being so upset.

185 RAINBOW DASH
Or MAYBE he's just a bad guy! Do I
need to remind you he's tried to
squash Daring Do like a hundred times?

186 DR. CABALLERON
And me as well. I was so scared, I
had to change my ascot.
(then)
Aaah! Curse this truth teller!

Caballeron hurls the talisman away. Fluttershy catches it.

187 FLUTTERSHY
Understanding begins with listening.

And with that...She steps out of the passage.

SC. 23 - INT. TUNNELS OF TRUTH - CONTINUOUS

Ahuizotl stops in surprise to see Fluttershy. Then he grins wickedly and looms down over her.

188 AHUIZOTL
Prepared to meet your doom?

189 FLUTTERSHY
Not really. Just here to ask... Why are you chasing us, Mr. Ahuizotl?

Fluttershy holds out the talisman to Ahuizotl. He takes it, surprised and taken aback by the unexpected turn of events.

190 AHUIZOTL
I...Well...The thing is, I'm in charge of protecting this jungle. If another artifact goes missing on my watch, I'm going to be in SOOOO much trouble with the other guardian creatures.

Fluttershy pats Ahuizotl.

191 FLUTTERSHY
That sounds like a lot of responsibility.

192 AHUIZOTL
It IS! And those two have taken so many relics from my land, my job is on the line!

Dr. Caballeron and Daring Do share a surprised look.

193 AHUIZOTL (CONT'D)
So...Maybe I'm a little violent and ferocious. Can you blame me?

Ahuizotl puts down the talisman and <BLOWS> his nose on a hankie that Fluttershy provides.

FROM THE PASSAGEWAY entrance, the other ponies have been eavesdropping in surprise. Daring Do and Caballeron share a look, then march out to lay their hooves on the talisman.

194 DARING DO
The only reason I've been taking the artifacts is because I thought I was protecting them.

195 DR. CABALLERON
Well, I was stealing them to get rich.
(off Ahui's snarl)
(MORE)

DR. CABALLERON (CONT'D)

But I never realized you had a noble cause. I thought you were just being a monster.

196 AHUIZOTL
<sigh> I get that a lot.

Rainbow Dash moves to Fluttershy's side, thoughtful.

197 RAINBOW DASH
Maybe...There is something to this whole "listening to everypony" thing.

198 FLUTTERSHY
It doesn't always mean they're telling the truth...But everycreature deserves kindness.

Ahuizotl nods to this and decides, gripping the talisman--

199 AHUIZOTL
True. And because you returned the talisman and took the time to understand me... I will let you all go. One one condition!
(to DD and Caballeron)
You swear to never steal artifacts from the Tenochtitlan basin again.

He holds out the talisman, and Daring and Dr. C place their hooves on it again.

200 DARING DO / DR. CABALLERON
I promise.

Daring Do tells Ahuizotl--

201 DARING DO
I'll even write that in my next book.

202 DR. CABALLERON
YOUR next book? You mean...You're actually A.K. Yearling?

Daring Do jerks her hoof off the truth talisman. Glaring:

203 DARING DO
Don't tell anypony!

204 DR. CABALLERON
Actually, that gives me an idea...

SC. 24 - INT. BOOKSTORE - LATER

Rainbow Dash excitedly approaches a table, where Martingale and A.K. Yearling sit next to each other, a He Said/She Said style book cover advertising their latest co-written novel.

205 RAINBOW DASH

Hey! What's going on? I thought your first co-written novel would bring out a ton of fans!

A.K. smiles wryly.

206 A.K. YEARLING

We've been upstaged by a new author.

She points out the window, to the bookstore across the street-

SC. 25 - EXT. EDGES BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS

Where Ahuizotl wears reading glasses, reading from his book (tail hand) for a throng of the LINE PONIES we saw earlier. His cats are clustered around him, listening intently.

207 AHUIZOTL

(continues through fade)

And so the noble Ahuizotl bravely toiled day and night to protect the jungle's precious artifacts. But the craven Caballeron and dastardly Daring Do plagued the kind temple guardian! And there was only so much a cat-based security system could do to stop the sneaky thieves!

(cat hiss in protest)

Sorry, but it's true. But our hero, Ahuizotl, never gave up, no matter how many times the greedy ponies snuck into his realm...

FADE OUT - END SHOW.