

SONG OF THE SEA WITCH

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CHAPTER 1 A MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE

"The Rebellion is unstoppable!" Glimmer was saying. "Taking that fortress from the Horde was an impressive exercise in teamwork!"

In a shower of purple sparkles, she teleported from her nest-like bed near the ceiling of her bedroom and materialized next to Adora. Her mouth in a determined line, Adora practiced fencing moves with her sword while Glimmer talked.

"Perfuma created that giant Plant Golem that swatted away the Horde soldiers on foot," Glimmer

went on. "Frosta pummeled those Horde bots with her ice fists! Mermista combined her waves with Bow's electric arrows to fry the Horde's laser cannons. It was amazing!"

"Definitely," Adora agreed, thrusting at an invisible enemy.

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"And after Bow stopped that Kyle kid with one of his net arrows, I saved Bow from being blasted by that lizard guy," Glimmer said.

Bow was sitting cross-legged on the floor at a low table in a corner of the room.

"Yeah, thanks for that," Bow said, keeping his eyes on the tiny wooden figure he was painting.

Glimmer turned back to Adora. "And Adora, you—"

"—let Scorpia knock my sword out of my hands after I transformed into She-Ra," Adora replied. "If you hadn't distracted her, I might be—" "But that's exactly what teamwork is all about!" Glimmer pointed out. "When one of us is in trouble, another one of us is right there to back them up."

Adora nodded. "I know. But a team is only as strong as its weakest member. And I've got to work on my sword skills." She spun in a circle, holding her sword out in front of her.

Bow looked up. "You're not saying you're a weak link, are you?" he asked. "Because you're the only one of us who can transform into an eight-foot-tall superstrong warrior with amazing powers."

"Powers that are no good without the skill to back them up," Adora said.

Her life before she had become She-Ra seemed like an eternity ago, but it was really only a few months. It all began when she discovered the sword in the Whispering Woods. The sword was linked to her, somehow, and when she held it over her head and said, "For the honor of Grayskull!" she transformed into She-Ra, Princess of Power.

She'd had to quickly decide whether she wanted to stay with the Horde, the fighting force from the Fright Zone dedicated to defeating the princesses of Etheria—or use her new powers to join the princesses and stop the Horde.

She chose the princesses, turning her back on her best friend, Catra, a force captain in the Horde. That began a chain reaction that resulted in a huge fight, the battle of Bright Moon. The princesses won that battle, but Catra wasn't giving up. Every day there was a new battle to fight.

I have to be stronger, better, faster, Adora told

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herself. We have to defeat the Horde and save Etheria once and for all!

Glimmer touched the end of Adora's sword and gently lowered it.

"You're being too hard on yourself, Adora," she said. "The Rebellion is going to win this fight. After our last battle, I'm more confident than ever. I can't wait for our next strategy session."

"I wish the other princesses hadn't gone back to their kingdoms," Bow said. "I just can't seem to get the details right on their battle figures."

"Let me see," Glimmer said, and she teleported over to him.

Bow had created what he called a "war table" so that they could plot out battle strategies using pieces that represented the members of the Rebellion and their opponents. He'd started out by carving and painting figures of himself, Glimmer, and She-Ra, but now the other princesses wanted their own.

The original figures stood in the center of the board: She-Ra with her flowing mane of golden hair, Glimmer with her pink-and-purple hair and blue cape, and Bow grasping a tiny bow and arrow.

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Circling them were the other finished figures. Perfuma, with her long, pale hair and pink-andgreen gown. Frosta, shorter than all the rest, with her fur-trimmed jacket and blue hair. Spinnerella's purple leotard and tights matched her long, purple hair, and Netossa's figure had a sweep of white hair over one side of her face.

In his hand, Bow held a battle figure wearing a gold-and-turquoise outfit.

"I can't get the shade of Mermista's hair just right," Bow complained. "It should be a little more blue, less green," Glimmer offered.

Bow nodded. "You're right!" He dipped his paintbrush into a little jar of blue paint.

"Actually, can you finish that later?" Glimmer asked him. "Mom is expecting us to give her a report on the battle at the fortress."

Bow stuck out his tongue as he concentrated on painting, adding blue strokes to Mermista's hair. "Almost got it . . . perfect!" he announced.

"Yeah, that's good," Glimmer agreed. "You've managed to capture that 'I don't care' look on her face just right."

Adora tucked her sword into her belt. "Mermista *does* care," she remarked. "She just doesn't want anyone to know that she does."

It had taken a little while for Adora to understand the princess from Salineas. Mermista was brutally honest and acted as if nothing or nobody impressed her. But she had quickly proven that she cared about a lot of things, including saving Etheria and protecting her friends. The Rebellion wouldn't be the same without her.

"Well, I'm sure she's going to have a problem with her battle figure," Bow said. "But I tried my best." He put the figure down on the war table.

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"Are we ready?" Glimmer asked. "Mom's waiting." "Sure, let's go," Adora said.

The three friends left Glimmer's room and walked through the gleaming marble halls of Bright Moon Castle. They passed a line of guards, majestic in their flowing robes and face masks. They headed down a staircase to the throne room of Queen Angella—Glimmer's mom.

The queen's large, pale pink wings shimmered they mesmerized Adora every time she saw them.