

THIS POST CONCERNS MURKY 7 FANFICTION and has spoilers.

Thought of the day: "A good slave obeys without question. A good Master commands without doubt".

I wrote this on Murky 7 tumblr, but am ready to elaborate.

> I really liked the first three chapters, but as with all FoE stories the first chapters are the best. There are only a couple of mistakes or things that just don't seem right, such as too much talking during the stable scavenging which should be hasty, some of the things about how the slaves are used, etc. The biggest of them is that at the end of chapter 6 it is unclear why Murky has to go alone in the dark. He was supposed to stay with them, and didn't even get a task other than "go in alone".

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Your answer:

>> The first three as personal favourites in a way. I just enjoyed writing the short 'first story' of Murky in Fillydelphia.

I admit I am a little perplexed by your problem though, Chapter 6 pretty clearly states that the door won't open for him to get out, so he has to take the back door away to escape.

"I blocked the signals to the room, Murky, but this door won't open because of the pressure change safety protocols. But the door at the back, that's open. You have to go quickly before the pressure sequence restarts!"

Stable scavenging, at least to my eyes, isn't something you can rush. Those places are deathtraps, especially when they're already suspicious of touching or doing anything that the Stable considers a reason to vent the room.

What bits of the slavery is it that you feel is wrong? I'm genuinely interested to know. Please, understand I'm not just knocking this down and going "You're wrong!" I'm just offering my side and seeking to understand is all.

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About the door: I've looked at the text around that quote, but it still wasn't clear to me that Murky got trapped on the OTHER side of the door from them and how it happened.

Well, I normally try to give fanfic writers some feedback, but anonymous comments on FiMfiction are disabled for some reason and I can only write 500 characters on tumblr. Your deviantart page is likely the best place for this. I want it to be viewable by others, so I'd rather not send it as an email. My comments often seem hostile, but consider it just another point of view on your story. Some of this stuff may be wrong or contradict itself, but I promise you this: My feedback is like no other. Some of the problems I pointed out are also fixed or explained in

later chapters or are Murky's misconceptions. The tone of what I wrote didn't come out quite right. It was meant to just point out the problems I see, not be condescending or anything. Much of this was written as I read it, so there may be some errors from that. Ah, and those are just my opinions, not absolute truths. Please keep going. Your writing is overall very good, even if some things put me off here and there. I read the version on fimfiction, which is more buggy.

#### SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

I'm heavily biased towards Red Eye and the Steel Rangers. Red Eye's plan for ending the wasteland was sound and IMO had a better chance of working than Littlepip's NCR. Him dying in FoE was among the worst possible things that could happen. Still, others picked up the pieces of Red Eye's empire and put them to good use, so the effort of the greatest pony of his time wasn't entirely wasted on DJ PON3's and Littlepip's worshippers.

Just consider the situation: Everything was gradually falling to rust and mindless savagery. The stables were failing one by one. Even if the SPP towers have broken, the sky returned to Equestria and GoE was somehow activated before decaying, there would still be mutated monsters and other dangers, so ponies still needed advanced weapons and organised military to fight them. What I'm saying is that ponies could not return to being peaceful and rural, even under the best of circumstances. Red Eye restarted the factories and built schools to train future doctors, engineers and officers. His army was gradually clearing up some of the monsters and other mess. The slavery was necessary to do this quickly and would be gradually dropped after 20 to 50 years. Yet slavery is all that he is ever associated with, what an injustice! Still, I guess to an average scavenger or villager being captured for the slave pits was an immediate danger and Red Eye's promise of bright future not very appealing, so avoiding the slavers was simply practical and DJ PON3's warnings were justified.

Steel Rangers are a rather tragic faction as their quest for maintaining isolation and technological superiority is ultimately futile. They do get the credit for keeping the more dangerous weapons away from Raiders and maintaining pre-apocalypse knowledge by training Scribes as well as for hunting down some monsters and gangs sometime. Other than that, well, without restarting the industry, they simply cannot preserve their way of life forever. Even with raiding stables and other places to replace some of their broken technology, their equipment is bound to eventually turn to rust by entropy alone. While I view Applejack Rangers as too idealistic, trading and watching over a nation rebuilding industry is the course of action most beneficial for the Rangers in the long run. Otherwise a Red Eye or an NCR or some empire from Zebrica or whatever other Power is bound to emerge to threaten them. Failing that, an eventual clash with the Enclave for equipment was inevitable for the Steel Rangers.

Basically Fallout: Tactics shows what I mean by all this. There the Brotherhood got initiates, food, scavenged techs, intelligence and access to some pre-apocalypse places by striking deals with nearby villagers. Even selling water from water talismans in some heavily defended trading posts would be beneficial to the Rangers. Besides, there are always some tedious jobs in any organisation that unskilled workers can do. Maybe I just don't quite get what the Elders were

thinking.

A plan from Project Horizons as explained by Lighthooves could also work. Enclave waits over the worst of it, then comes back as saviours of ponykind with all their advantages and builds an empire. If this happened, there would of course still be much resentment towards them in the beginning, but joining them would be the most reasonable course of action and it would work.

The NCR in FoE was only viable for these reasons: It was build on the foundations of Red Eye's empire, factories, schools, supply lines, Everfree Farms and all. Also, Steel Rangers came out of their bunkers to help rebuilt and the Enclave was out of the picture. Before these factors, Red Eye's plan was the best hope for Equestria. A peaceful, slowly growing nation, like an earlier version of NCR, would likely face the problem of getting enough food and energy and attract Enclave's attention before they were ready to stand up to them and promptly be destroyed in a display of strength. That is, once they started appealing to the Enclave and fiddling with SPP towers. A network of settlements with some law enforcement, like Littlepip tried to build, would make things better, but it wouldn't be enough to end the wasteland.

I like Red Eye's tumblr. There is a wealth of very interesting stuff there.  
<http://askredeye.tumblr.com/>

END BACKGROUND

Chapter 1: "With a sigh, I let my head hit the metal plating once more with a sigh of relief"  
Repetition, delete "With a sigh, " to fix.

I've seen several times things like "flooring", "roofing" and "carpeting" instead of "floor", "roof", "carpet". These are correct, but I don't quite get what is their advantage over the simpler forms.

The whole operation in New Fillydelphia seems to be burning slaves out faster than strictly necessary. There are only so many ponies to capture after all. I can understand malnutrition issues though: food scarcity in the wasteland and logistic problems with such a large population are one of the main reasons behind The Everfree Clearing. Plus slaves, intern, work, prison and similar camps throughout history suffered from starvation, disease and high death rates. I've even read somewhere that under some circumstances it is cheaper to replace the stock of slaves every few years while driving them into exhaustion, then it is to feed them properly and keep them in conditions allowing for self-sustaining population.

There are three main classes of overseers:

Some are sadistic: They enjoy their position of authority and like causing suffering to others.

Most just work by the book: They follow the rules and worry about their quotas. "Hard but fair".

Scarce few are nice: They generally like to help people and want to make others lives less nightmarish.

It is good to see that there is a full spectrum in this story from Protege (who still needs to do the

job done) to Chainlink Shackles. Most are somewhere in the middle with complaining about long shifts and alcohol prices or seeking escapes from the hellish conditions around them, like Whiplash's alcoholism.

Thresher machines: Slaves die too easily there. It would be more prudent to devise a way to use ropes or install lights under the machines and have Unicorns telekinetically move rugs under them to clean the dirt. Come on, everything in Filly is in short supply, slaves too.

Red Eye's operations are supposed to be practical and efficient, even with slavers ruining them to a degree. Instead Fillydelphia is one clusterfuck of suffering and incompetence. What has gone wrong?

There was a way to damage Chainlink Shackles before the riot at the Mall: Have Glimmerlight produce memory orbs from abused slaves and overheard conversations and give them to Protege. This could go either way, though.

Protege's real name shouldn't be Protege. Protege just means he is in favour of somepony in power. Oh, and I'm not using those "funny e's".

I like how you show some different points of view in Fillydelphia. Slaves just know their life sucks, make implausible escape plans and (usually) don't care about or even understand the propaganda. Most slavers, like Wicked Slit, just want their quotas met and do their best to motivate their slaves, but have something of a softer side, if a pony knows how to rub them the right way.

I liked the first 3 chapters best, with the next 2.5 chapters not far behind. Then it got worse and by chapter 8 I was about ready to stop reading and give the story a negative. (I'm not re-reading it to see what ticked me off so much, but I probably complain about some of it below). After chapters 9 and 10 I liked it again, but didn't read it as fast. The breather at the beginning of chapter 10 was a nice incentive to keep going.

I think I understand what a cutie mark of open shackles means and where you are going with this story, but there are two other interesting (and preferable to me) directions as well: Murky being broken by the Master into absolute obedience and all resistance beaten out of him OR Murky slowly beginning to understand the ideas of Red Eye and Protege and becoming a convert, striving to eventually become a normal worker for Red Eye, rather than just a slave. EDIT: Yeah, you went with both of these ideas. When I was writing this, I expected his first escape attempt to somehow work. I liked it that it didn't, that plan was naive and the designers of the wall factored it in.

The fighting pits were a way to freedom. The survivors were offered a position as guards or a chance to leave. So why is Brimstone still in Filly and why wasn't he shot after killing so many slavers? He seems like too much trouble to keep around, even as a trophy. (Heh, a trophy -

atrophy. Interesting play of words, if not applicable to Brimstone at all.)

Glimmer would not need to be on stable recovery team. Unless they suspected she would deliberately spy or sabotage them, Red Eye always needed skilled workers. R&D and repair teams allowed for slaves to slowly work their way up. Well, Red Eye's tumblr says so, but even from FoE it is obvious that not all the workers outside the army were slaves. Besides, specialists in any work camps throughout our history were given better living conditions, so with Red Eye it should be the same.

Having a (wet) rug over the mouth helps with the dust, though admittedly I almost never think of it until I start spitting out black saliva. Even simple dust masks from fabric without proper gas mask filters help a lot and are cheap. I find it hard to believe that Red Eye would pay good caps for slaves and fail to outfit them with cheap gear that prolongs their usefulness. He is the living embodiment of generosity after all. Also, while Murky was there for only a few months, which could be too short to notice, the living conditions for slaves should very slowly improve and the streets be slowly cleared of rubble, buildings repaired over time and so on. Murky should also be able to overhear rumours about housing districts being fixed, foals being taken to really nice places compared to the pits and so on. I'm sure at least some slaves were getting these nice assignments and the rumours would be spreading.

Then again Red Eye had limited resources, was under a time pressure and had other priorities at the time.

Stable recovery is darn inefficient. I would expect them to use specialists, similar to Barb's team, equipped with weapons, tools, flash lights and slave collars with microphones, cameras and tracking devices to probe the stable and disable or circumvent any defences. After that the recovery team should move in, watched by the guards who pocket best loot, and methodically dismantle and carry away everything useful, including mechanisms from doors, pipes, wires and so on. Basically everything save the walls, with priority being on high-tech stuff, such as terminals and talismans. There should also be thorough revisions after each shift, including checking the mouths, anal cavities and under the wings. Slaves shouldn't be able to just pocket stuff and smuggle it to Filly. (Well, maybe crayons and crap, but nothing valuable.) Instead we have a bunch of bucking idiots running amok, breaking things and sometimes even deliberately sabotaging them out of spite. If this group of raiders found a water talisman, they would pry it off the socket and break it while fighting over it. Honestly, they are more trouble than they are worth. If you want to conquer a stable after the residents refused the offer to surrender and join Red Eye as civilian personnel, you send in the army or just gas the whole thing. Raiders are only good for the fighting pits or especially hard or dangerous labour, like the parasprite hunting, Everfree Clearing and so on.

Then again with Steel Rangers in the area it may actually be prudent to just rush in and plunder what they can, rather than do this properly, but even with that in mind they should be ordered specifically to go to the lower levels and bring back all maneframe parts and papers they can find. Grindstone had some info on this stable after all, wanted things from there and risking it being taken by the Rangers just wasn't prudent. Well, unless Grindstone only learned about it

later. The plan to get the data after the place was retaken from Steel Rangers and burned sucked.

Apart from "specialists explore and make the place safe, then normal slaves dismantle and loot it" approach, something similar to the scene from "Indiana Jones and the Holy Grail" where they sent slave after slave to see why their heads are severed, would work too. Expendable slaves are sent in first to discover traps, then soldiers and specialists to secure the area, then throngs of slaves to strip the place bare. That's how it should be done.

If Brimstone consistently broke guns, Mosin should just give him a piece of metal rod with a handle or some other melee weapon and not waste good rifles on him. Come to think of it, if ponies had their own kits, Brimstone should get his old stuff, but he probably decided not to touch it ever again and just went with whatever Mosin gave him instead.

Highly recommended reading: "Gulag Archipelago".

In Gulags they used food to motivate people. If you failed your quota, you got 80% rations. If you did your quota, you got normal rations. If you exceeded your quota significantly (by 25% I think), you got extras. If you were sick, you got a small bowl of salad too. Worked like a charm, most people wanted to get more food and worked hard for it.

I imagine that there would be a lot of prostitution for food and favours. There is some hinted at in later chapters, but not much of it. Sure, there would be rapes too, but if one was too weak to do it or wants the mare to be "nice", giving her some food or something for sex would make perfect sense. For example I suspect that Wicked Slit got some food and things for her favourites. She simply disliked Murky for his general uselessness, but carried another to a hospital herself. I liked that scene, it showed more depth to her than just fury.

Every once in a while, perhaps once or twice per month, were days without work for prisoners to enjoy. Those too weak to do anything just lied down. Those who could and wanted, played instruments or whatever. It would be just like Red Eye to implement such a system.

There were hardened criminals in Gulags, called Urkas. These guys got better assignments, looked down on other prisoners and "ruled the night". One of their pastimes was playing cards over items owned by other prisoners. Whoever lost then went to retrieve the item, which was half the fun (the other was keeping owned items, regardless of cards). Standing up to an Urka resulted in severe beating and possible crippling and his pals would join the fight if necessary. When it comes to the fighting pits, some guards might be willing to "train" with slaves. The guard gets to fight an enemy who can kill him and the slave gets to the hospital if he survives.

Hospitals in Gulags were really nice places and even had increased food rations. At first I was surprised, that they wouldn't transfer Weathervane to a place where his skills could be utilised better, but I guess it makes sense after all to have the unpleasant old rot work on special prisoners. He is distrusted by at least some of the higher-ups to and argues with them. I'm also surprised that the hospital seemingly doesn't provide baths and food.

People who made it through Gulags more often than not remained on contracts as guards and other personnel. This works for Red Eye's empire too. They were kept silent by the fact that talking about Gulags was treason punishable by more Gulag, if not outright death.

Qualified prisoners, such as engineers, got lighter work, good clothes, better living conditions and more food. Same applies for the more useful slaves under Red Eye.

The prisoners were given extra food, cigarettes, alcohol and other small favours for snitching on any dissent. It worked to the point that everyone expected there to be at least one snitch in even a small group and no one held this against anyone. This was just the normal thing people did.

An example: Some old fellow showed a photo to another prisoner and said that his son is an officer in the army. A moment later someone went up from a bed and went to talk to the guards. Not long after that an investigator came into the room and took the photo, saying that the prisoners are not allowed to have photos of Red Army officers. No one moved or said anything to that.

The ghost in the Stable is never explained. How it came to be? Something to do with Sculpt fiddling with the memory research? Then again, some mysteries remain just that, mysteries.

There are always some better occupations in a work camp, but I guess Murky is not one to be given something like that. With his inability to do his quota, I guess he might be assigned some auxiliary and lighter work, though. Of course only after some beatings for not keeping up with "other" Earth Ponies. This is similar to what "The Mare" told him about what she usually does. That said, there is of course the issue of job availability, even under the best of circumstances. For example in a work camp that does forest clearing, there is administration, cooking, repairing clothes and some odd jobs, but the bulk of the slaves work on cutting down trees. So yeah, I can see, how nopony in Fillydelphia would care too much about individual and unskilled slaves, so long as the work gets done.

What is it with Murky barely being given any food? It makes little sense, unless he manages to skip most meals or they are taken from him. My guess is that slaves should be given one or two meals a day and work 16 hours maximum, not a few days in a row.

Original FoE says Steel Ranger armour does not have removable eye protectors: They are welded in. There is even one Paladin commenting that "It would be a structural weakness and the design committee would never approve it" or something along these lines. Only Enclave Armour has removable goggles. To close a Steel Ranger's eyes, Glimmerlight would have to take off the whole helmet.

Murky's salvation from parasprites by a fan in the ventilation system in Mol is too *deus ex machina* for me.

As in many other fics, I find the team unsympathetic. Note that this in and of itself is your minor success as I hate Blackjack from PH, for example (I like Lacunae, though. Might be that I have a thing for big horns. (That was a joke.))

\* The most pathetic loser ever (to the point of first three chapters being comical, if one can block empathy), not worth the Rad Away needed to keep him alive. (Since Rad Away is, like everything else, in short supply, Murky getting it means somepony else not getting hers. He also

needs more of it than others, therefore keeping him alive only costs more lives in the end.) All his story misses is some pony complaining about how his day has been nice so far, but was ruined by looking at the runt and promptly punishing him for the offence of just being there. Or maybe just a memory of some past master looking at him for a long moment, only to tell him that he is ugly. I've read "Bravemule", which was a series of journals from a Dwarf Fortress game and one of the entries that made me laugh was just "Saw a Dreg. Day ruined."

\* A reforming raider who still easily rages, kills ponies who get in his way and is scary. While I consider him unredeemable, it is still better for others to let him try and protect them.

\* Well, Glimmerlight is the most sympathetic, but her er... way of being makes me somewhat uneasy and she did withhold crucial research from the best pony of her time.

Sigh, but then when I come up with characters, they have Mary Sue levels of OP combined with not really caring about anything anymore, temporary companions notwithstanding.

EDIT: After reading 15 chapters, I find the group more sympathetic. Protege is my favourite pony (and the one I most wish to have a somewhat good ending), then "The Mare", Wicked Slit, Glimmerlight, Weathervane and Coral Eve.

Also, there are good reasons not to give Grindstone too much valuable research data, so I retract that part of my comment on Glimmer. I still dislike her general debauchery though.

Slave pegasus is about as screwed as a zebra, although an eccentric master might want to breed pegasai. They are quite rare and in PH it is mentioned that their Enclavist would be worth a lot of caps to slavers. A trained and obedient pegasus butler is something of a vanity item to those in power, like the society from PH. Of course one who cannot read and looks like Murky loses much of his appeal, but still there could be some possibilities... maybe.

In chapter 8 I dislike the almost word for word rip off of FNV introduction, but I dislike the time jumps even more. I'm all for chronological order in what I read, apart from maybe some old memories. But stuff that happens over the course of a few days? Chronological, please.

As to the FNV intro, it is too good to be true, with the free food, healing and all. I would find it much more plausible for Murky to be found by ponies who want a bottlecap reward for an escaped slave, then face Protege again, be dismissed as unreliable and transferred under The Master.

EDIT: Heh, I was close, but not quite.

In chapter 8 when the big door is about to close, I find it implausible that again they talk so much. Brimstone should just close them to the other's protests and go about escaping to the bank. I'm surprised this plan actually worked, but I imagine there is too much chaos and haste already for pursuers to check the building properly and find heavy doors smeared with blood by a wounded Raider next to some freshly moved rubble. I'm not sure how shelter door works, but it very well may be blockable from inside, so the slavers would either have to cut them or just barricade them with rubble and go away to starve them.

Whenever I imagine Glimmerlight meeting P21 from Project Horizons, I find it funny. Don't you? Especially if Glimmer was "in the mood" and P21 the only "valid target" around and this was



their first meeting. Oh, and she definitely should be confused about his reaction and make a joke about his "cutie mark" and the related "special talent".

The slavers were not idiots, the slaves were to be exploited, not die in stupid accidents and damage the industrial output, like those stopping the machines in the thresher mill or flamer fuel refinery. As for the refinery, carrying finished product in the same buckets as ingredients and the general layout seem foolish. Loot some pipes and fix them to the tanks already, damnit. Much more efficient that way and slaves can be used for something else. Some of those factories have WH40k levels of grotesque inefficiency. And catwalks without railings. (That was a joke.)

When the environment gets too unhealthy, I would imagine slavers and guards being reluctant to stay there, even with gas masks and bitch about their working conditions and pay. Then take it out on slaves, if they are so inclined.

The crater was first and foremost mined for the green sludge used to power the reactors, not some irradiated scrap items of use. But then Murky doesn't know the whole story and there might be some good stuff in there too, even worth checking over before all those buildings filled with old furniture and luggage outside the crater. That megaspell was aimed at something important after all.

While you are at Pony races hating Pegasai, why not have some Unicorn comment on "Those idiotic earth ponies, whose only skill is populating the world with useless idiots everyday". But then nopony in Red Eye's domain would say that, so maybe not the best idea.

Incidentally, Red Eye's tumblr has a lot to say about Cutie Marks, among other things that they compel ponies to at least occasionally use their gift and to be good at it. Even if that gift is inflicting pain on others.

Those ponies have some serious stamina. If I worked for hours, then run, I'd just want to sleep, but they talk, look around and so on inside the underground shelter, outside Fillydelphia.

In chapter 8 Murky is partially cleaned by dirty water and dirty towel and discovers his coat and mane colours for the first time. I find that unbelievable. Yes, he is dirty most of the time, but surely he was allowed to clean once in a while, there was rain, bath by The Master, Protege would want him clean and so on. I find this implausible. If anything, he would know his real colours, but seeing them again in the mirror again might make him realise something for the first time.

"Shaking my head, I then nodded, then shook it again." I think something is not quite right with this sentence in chapter 8.

I rather like the idea of a dairy with pictures in it and Murk's artistic talent. Though I'm a bit surprised, he managed to hide his sketchbook for so long.

I wonder what would happen if Murky didn't fail Barb completely and actually made it out of the crater with some loot. A spark battery or a mine or even a bottle of flamer fuel from the factory wouldn't earn him any respect, but could make Barb not want to hurt Murk and maybe even give him a few tips. Most likely Murk would involve himself in a series of jobs for Barb just to stay alive, get very little for his efforts and be considered very expendable. On the other hoof, this would possibly give Murk some degree of protection from the Raiders, other than their former leader. One skill Murk needs to learn and Barb surely knows is lockpicking.

EDIT: Judging from what happened later, Murk was screwed either way. Barb would just exploit him. Lockpicking skill might be obtainable, but at great cost, like antagonising Brimstone or something. Getting Barb explosives would also make Murky feel more guilty about the riot later.

In chapter 7 that Paladin at the Vault entrance missed from a few meters, didn't even use SATS (If it made it into civilian pipbucks, it for sure is a part of Steel Ranger armour) (Addition in those blasphemous FPS Fallouts, but canon in FoE) and lost to a Warlord. If anything, I expected the Paladin to be tossed somewhere and crash through rusted floor and the group making a run for it, but I guess The Warlord is just that good. (And HtH is a plausible option in Fallout, with stronger attacks unlocked up to 130% in Unarmed, ability to ignore some of the armour as your character's punches get stronger, etc. Except you still need some good armour to live through counter-attacks and Brimstone doesn't even have his Metal Armour MK2).

I like how low level this fiction is. At least the chapters before the Mall anyway. In most fics fighting a group of raiders is barely worth a mention. In here a single healing potion, rad away and even food is a difference between life and death, a feral ghoul is about as absolutely terrifying as a dragon and an SMG as deadly as a mini-gun. This is how it should be for a newbie. Even his perks are weak.

I like Murk's high perception stat more than the usual explanation of EFS for knowing where enemies are. As far as I know, the range of "bars" in those blasphemous FPS Fallouts is tied to Perception, which means they represent what the character would normally detect by his senses, not by a device. The exception to this is EDE, which has sensors and some way to present the player the information from them.

In chapter 6 they were taken to a stable. It was quite close and the trip took only a few hours. Then in chapter 8 they run away with the Steel Rangers and ended up less than 1 km from main gate of Red Eye's compound. Just... what? Does this mean, that the Rangers actually escaped TOWARDS the gate, where it is more dangerous for them? Not only can reinforcements arrive more easily and quickly so close, but undoubtedly area close to the gate has some traps, mines, covered pits, snipers with AMRs (Range up to about 1.5 km for some models, although much less in Fillydelphia's smoky air, I imagine) and other dangers.

Glimmer could be used for interrogations with her special talent, except for her less than questionable loyalty. I'm sure special interrogations of some ponies could turn up very valuable

information. Well, there are probably other Unicorns for the job, though memory scanning is a rare spell after the apocalypse. It is evidenced by scarcity of pornographic and similar orbs with entertainment value. She could also be a teacher, but... yeah, I can see why Red Eye wouldn't want her to demoralise the foals.

Come to think of it, why doesn't Glimmerlight sell pornographic memory orbs to Unicorns?

I liked the moment when Murky was higher than the Enclave (That was a joke.) on Med-X and said "your eyes are so sparkly", though it begs the question why his previous use of the drug didn't have such strong effect. It may have something to do with exhaustion, dosage and the quality of the drug itself - Sooty Molas could have had freshly made stuff, while that old syringe in the underground shelter was old enough to change it's composition. Maybe it wasn't even pure Med-X, but "spiked" with something to make the trip more entertaining.

Chapter 8: In view of the gate there is a train station with a functioning robot and some old luggage. It is strange that this place hasn't been picked clean, being so close and all. But then even many of the buildings inside the gates weren't yet looted, so this is a lower priority target. Well, unless those train tracks are a part of some supply route.

Chapter 8: "Glimmerlight watched the shifting clouds that blocked the sun for a few seconds" -> "For a few seconds Glimmerlight watched the shifting clouds that blocked the sun". Current version suggest that they actually saw the sun.

Chapter 8: Ah, so the Griffins captured Glimmerlight. Good, means this research on memories goes to Red Eye after all :)

EDIT: Heh, Protege got the spell orbs, but not the papers, apparently. Though it wasn't fully explained later.

Well, concerning Minstrel and Sunny, I would rather expect there to be some kind of underground railway from Fillydelphia. Besides, some folks might pay good caps to get their relatives out of that place. That said, given the setting, there is a higher probability of there being a network of informants and hunters around Filly and almost all escapees being recaptured. If escaped slaves make it into Steel Ranger territory, they might have a chance, but they can be treated as spies instead. Also, if the slaves have some kind of recognizable marks, they are likely to be recaptured even far away from the city.

Ah, just as I suspected, the entire thing was too good to be true and anypony this close would have to pay tribute and obey. Besides, healing supplies are costly and the doctor did say that he wants to earn caps, not give things away for free. He tricked Murky. Smart buck and a true wastelander. The one thing I don't quite get is why Sunny wasn't in on the deal. Guess she's young and hasn't yet learned. Facepalm at her stupidity for attacking the slavers. She even got her dog killed and blames The Master for it?! That's just what you get when you attack a clearly superior enemy, you silly filly. I'm actually surprised, she wasn't shot on the spot, Master's bodyguards should be quite competent and The Master killed a Ganger for just talking with no

effort. A dog should be 1 hit kill for him. I wouldn't be surprised, if Sunny is enslaved herself after this. Yeah, she got what she asked for, although The Master should have Murky put the shackles on Sunny. It would be more demeaning and an additional punishment for Murky to enslave a pony he cared about. Huh? Murky tries to escape? Why aren't there any Griffins around and the slavers are this incompetent? Ah, Protege to the rescue... out of the blue. Well, he could simply lift the runt with telekinesis and say "I will help you, weather you want it or not", but a gun works too, I guess.

EDIT: Ah OK, Protege appearing is explained in the next chapter and makes sense. Also, one reasonable thing to do for doctor Minstrel was to just drug the slave with sleeping pills to keep things calm until Shackles arrives.

Come to think of it, it is a bit surprising that none of the slavers wounded in the battle with Rangers tried to get to Doctor Minstrel, but then he said something about his place being out of the way and hard to access, especially for wounded ponies. The slavers probably just met reinforcements and their own medics.

The Master is a freaking psychological genius. He might as well be an inner party member working for the ministry of love in "Year 1984".

I would imagine that the Protege would be tired of Murk's disobedience and let Shackles keep him. He even subtly hinted that this would happen, before sending his teams to the stable.

EDIT: Well, I was wrong on this one.

Chapter 8: "The Master had killed Sunny and Cayenne." Huh? He killed the dog, but just captured Sunny. "Her blood was leaking from a dozen holes...nothing fatal, but utterly crippling from pain and injury." Then they put her in shackles and took her away. Nothing about her dying. To make things more confusing, Mistrel says something about killing Sunny Days, then Protege says, she died because of the old doctor. Huh?! Then he kills him for some horseradish reason? What the hay? The old doctor had a deal with the slavers, did the right thing and earned his bucking caps. Plus he was on Red Eye's payroll and living so close to the city, didn't really have much choice anyway. OK, now I finally believe Murky that Protege is not quite right in the head.

EDIT: Ah OK, this Sunny "dying" during her capture is explained in the next chapter. Though she should have been somewhere in view of Murk when he was transported to Fillydelphia. I was also wrong about Protege.

After thinking about it, I think I understand. Protege really wishes Murky well, but his hooves are tied. He has to play by the rules set by his mentor and there is only so much Protege can do for his worker(s). To Murky being given help and kind word as well as dangerous work by the same pony is utterly confusing. Mistrel died because Protege wanted Murky to be "free", wander around, get into trouble and come back with his tail between his legs and it didn't quite turned that way. At least this is my current theory.

EDIT: I was right about the first part, but not the last one.

Chapter 8: What now? They took the slave to a wagon and on his road to Fillydelphia, when suddenly Weathervane is there and not in his hospital. Then Minstrel is there too for some reason. Just... what? This is utterly confusing, I thought Minstrel stayed home.

In chapter 8 I really didn't like all the confusion and characters appearing out of nowhere or going where they shouldn't be at all, like Steel Rangers near Red Eye's gates after running away from a Stable.

The beginning of chapter 9 is promising. The runt is finally realising, he is a burden to those who try to help him. Then he gets delusional again. Oh well, must be the compulsion from Cutie Mark that Red Eye spoke of on his tumblr.

Come to think of it, The Master didn't even mention "The mare" to Murk. He couldn't have forgotten and while technically their deal still stands, I imagined he would still taunt his little slave by talking about her.

EDIT: Taken care of in later chapters.

I think in FoE almost no pony survived the crater (that's why Red Eye shortened the time limit for it), but some made it through the pits or stable recovery. Those were offered positions as contractors, but were free to leave. It is simply implausible that no pony made it out ever, a few released slaves would be too good an example. To prevent them from spilling too much beans outside Filly, they could be offered to stay and do lighter works and threatened about talking too much. Some prisons even use the prisoners themselves as the lower echelon of guards. The possibility of making it through and having a few ponies around that succeeded, gives others hope and makes them try harder. There were experiments with mice swimming in jars of water till drowning. Some had an inaccessible ladder, some nothing. Those with the ladder swam longer, while those without any hope just gave up and died quicker. Something nebulous, like "slaves will be released after 10 years of service" would also be somewhat motivating. There could even be a rare possibility for skilled slaves to work as assistants for specialists and slowly climb their way up into workers.

Sigh, I don't really get Protege's fascination with Murk. Surely he could get himself a more loyal pet.

EDIT: Explained later, that Protege sees himself in Murk.

Ah, I think I finally get it. Red Eye needs a Pegasus to become an Alicorn. Autumn Leaf was chosen in the end, but it made Murky somewhat important anyway. That is why Murky gets so much attention from his greater.

EDIT: Probably not true.

Chapter 9: "My mouth opened, then closed...then gaped and finally shuddered shut again. He had expertly weaved me into a logical trap." I don't see the connection or a logical trap here. Why am I more stupid than Murk on debuffs?

I like it that Murk sometimes says things like "the thing that bullets are in", but dislike it that he also occasionally uses more advanced language than he should. Though this is lampshaded a few times by his comments "yay, I can use fancy words too, if I want". You also explained this on the tumblr as Murky learning some words along the way, especially during his brief period as librarian assistant, so whatever.

Chapter 9: "Make a move, we'll slot the lot of you." -> "Make a move, we'll shoot the lot of you."

I'm rather surprised that in chapter 9 Murky didn't get any hints for parasprite survival. I expected Protege would arrange for it. Hm, "Import, chop up, move, burn." seems to me it would be easier to just burn them on the spot, unless there is a risk of a fire spreading below Fillydelphia. Auto-axe seems an overkill for the job, unless those nests are made of something harder than wood, a normal axe or a machete would do just as fine and would be much safer to the slavers around. Safety first, right? (That was a joke.) Those nests must also be really disgusting if nopony considered them as a snack. But then that snack could come with flesh-eating parasprite larvae.

I like the concept of Sooty Molas. Not the character, just the concept. There are prisoners like that and a very good example is "The King of Rats" film and book.

I don't quite understand the system, where sometimes the slaves walk on their own and sometimes are transported via wagons pulled by other ponies. Wagons should be for things, slaves have legs to walk and guards to watch them.

Wow, the Parasprite pit is intense.

Chapter 9 has a longish description of the tartarus. I like it.

Chapter 9: Huh? I thought Sooty Molas had a stand at the airport, not near the parasprite pits. And then Murky wanders off with Rad Away just after seeing one taken from another slave. I guess he could at least drink it close to Sooty and ask him to watch over, as otherwise he won't get anything more from a dead pegasus.

There are some references to hands, as handiwork, right hand side and similar. I think those should be globally edited to hooves instead. Ponies being obsessed with hooves is a running joke of MLP. For example they have "Hears and Hooves" day, which to us would translate as "Hearts and Hands", which just sounds weird. There are more examples of this, but I can't remember any at the moment.

Chapter 9: After an encounter with Sooty Molas and having to sell his feathers, Murky still has his saddlebag? Weird. I thought it was a gift from Shiny to carry ammo or something, but that's still his old saddlebag, he stole from Artery. It is also strange that the printing house is empty. It

should be undergoing renovations, adjustments and printing something after becoming cleared from parasprites. Well, maybe it was evacuated, as the slavers wouldn't want parasprites to multiply, but still the emptiness is weird.

Chapter 9: Heh, he looted some porn magazines for sale. He's learning.

Chapter 9: He is in a printing house, has access to paper, quills and crayons. Seems like good stuff to keep for drawing.

An alternate way of making Murky flightless to hammer and anvil would be to just pluck the feathers sometimes. This is what people do with geese. But I guess his master didn't care, preferred a more permanent solution and didn't want to risk an infection from just cutting them off.

I liked that nightmare at the beginning of chapter 10. OK, this sounded weird. I meant, I liked the writing and how this ties to Murky's feelings or something like that, not that I enjoy nightmares.

Chapter 10: "Even if I knew why...it still confused me why I did not feel anything but pain and hate for him like I did The Master." This sentence confuses me. To my understanding, Murky either wanders why he feels only hate for his master or wanders why he feels other things too. I can't figure out which. I think he hates Protege for shooting, but is also confused.

EDIT: I got that right and am not sure if there is any mistake here, apart from lack of space after the three dots.

Chapter 10: Murky carries a book from the stable around, instead of storing it in his room to lessen his burden. I find his inventory management technique questionable. Besides, he already had opportunities to give the book, figurine and whatever else to Protege.

Chapter 10: There is a mention of some trains on the monorail. Either there were none on the way to ministry of arcane science, or they were already looted, with nothing interesting and no skeletons. I guess that from them not being mentioned again on his way to MASC. Or maybe they were just lying on the ground, below the track.

Chapter 10: Hm, he goes on a mission with barely a plan to get into the compound around the ministry, but no plan to get out. Not smart. Hah, getting stored in a box that's not on the top... a rather predictable risk, but not something avoidable with this method. Also, he didn't study the floor plans in advance, but doing that inside worked too and took less time. Stable recovery missions are bad enough, but this infiltration is insane.

Chapter 10: Heh, he should have visited the doctor before. While most FoE groups are always somewhat low on resources and reckless, Murky is constantly very hungry, very thirsty, very irradiated, very tired and below max hp. Maybe you overdo the looming sense of danger on all sides, but firstly a slave should be very low on resources and second, it seems to be working in

favour of the story. I expect things to turn out well for Murky (well, relatively), but most troubles he gets into are emotionally intense and (grappling?).

Chapter 10: Lol @ "Come out, we can make it into a threesome or something." It is even more funny to imagine what each of the group would do. Murky hid and run. Brimstone would likely just charge, kill them and hide the bodies. With Glimmerlight they would actually get what they wanted and maybe even gave her some tips about the building afterwards as a reward for good performance. "The mare" would make some speech checks about there being more to life than alcohol and sex, then ask about her lost buck, who she loves with all her heart, but whose name escapes her at the moment. (That was a joke.) Not sure about others.

Chapter 10: I think Murky forgot to grab the device that sanitizes food. He had it, then dropped it, then talked to the robot, was attacked by a guard, then escaped. No mention of picking up his mission objective again. He gets his saddlebag before leaving, but there is no mention of the device, which means it stayed in that room. :trollface:

Chapter 10: Eh, Securitron. The design of those things never made sense to me. Mono-wheels just aren't stable and need to move a bit constantly just to stand. Oh well, it's not like the design of warbots in true Fallouts made much sense either. Still, you've read Project Horizons (there are some references) and they had better robots. There were also brain-bots in FoE. Securitrons? Meh, just another blasphemy of FPS Fallouts. I was going to complain that his AI was too smart, but Skynet with cybernetic brain was pretty smart too.

Chapter 10: Murky is describing a battle as if he were watching it, while he is hiding inside a box and covering his ears. Something like "There was almost a minute of explosions and gunfire, it stopped and I was lifted from the box by the damaged robot" would be more accurate, but lacks all the dynamism and dramatism of a fighting scene. Ah, so he was looking the whole time, never mind then.

Chapter 10: "Orbs floated out around her invading head before she eventually emerged with a mass of papers in her mouth." I don't recall Murky looting as many orbs as he could, but maybe I missed it. I guess floating the orbs without drowning in them is part of Glimmer's special talent. Normal Unicorns play the orbs just by touching them with telekinesis or any other kind of their magic. That is how Littlepip distracted some Unity Alicorns.

Chapter 10: "Caduceus, the unicorn buck and nurse that Glimmerlight had spent time with" then "The earth pony sighed, seeing that he didn't have enough resources to help every part of me." So, is he an Earth or Unicorn race? In chapter 12 he is an EP, so I think Unicorn was a mistake here.

EDIT: The tumblr makes it clear that he was designed as a Unicorn, but ended up as an Earth Pony. While you are fixing this mistake, you were supposed to add glasses somewhere to his description as well.



Chapter 11: OK, now I have some more sympathy for Murky, but like Glimmerlight less. She plays around with ponies too much. I really disliked her comment on "Stupid bucks who don't understand, it was a one-night thing."

Chapter 11: Come to think of it, why hasn't Brimstone pacified Coral after her little display? Ah, right. He went to work, I think.

Chapter 11: Glimmer is an interesting character for doing memory therapy on herself. I really like what Coral said to Glimmer and everypony who wanted to listen. This is the truth about Glimmerlight, not her happy-go-lucky facade. Yay for her getting what she deserved and her past catching up with her, although I would prefer orb after orb after orb forcibly restored into her memory with some snappy comments tossed in between. Caduceus deserves better than her. Still, there are much worse vices in the wasteland than Glimmer's mixed blessings.

EDIT: Well, her past is beginning to catch up with her in later chapters. I also see much bile in what I wrote here. Oh well, I just don't like this type of girl for inevitably getting hurt by her in the end.

Chapter 11: Hm, it took some time for the guards to finally start shooting the rioters. They were incompetent.

Chapter 11: Glimmer should just copy the dairy and some random files on that pipbuck, log out and run, not sit and read aloud in Protege's office.

Chapter 11: Lol, "smelly bucket" as a helmet is a running joke in RPGs.

Chapter 11: I think Shackleses password is "They are mine".

Chapter 11: "What's wrong, mare? Thought you loved getting the stallions? Shoulda' listened to your old friend back in the plaza...being a little whore only gets you fucked." Yeah, I agree. Her attitude confuses the hay out of me. I mean, she thinks seducing and flirting with ponies is OK, but after having her way with them says things like "Oh, but it was just one night thing, so go away". Well, if they were on the same page here it could work, but most people assume that the kind of things Glimmer does are a promise of a relationship and feel betrayed when she breaks it, or "cheats on them" with others. In this particular situation she is about to get some serious action. It is clear that she likes sex, so what's her problem anyway?

EDIT: After reading "An hour in hell" I can see her problem.

Chapter 11: Brim is too OP. His gang supposedly consisted of the toughest, meanest raiders out there, but none come even close to him. I find that utterly unbelievable. A couple of them should be able to overpower or severely wound him. Maybe the armour gives him advantage, but still... it is like Brutus or Big Daddy from PH taking on ten or so Reapers at the same time in PH. As for Brimstone facing Red Eye's army and Steel Rangers earlier... Well, all it would really take is SATS + AMR or some other powerful weapon to the head and chunky salsa rule.

Chapter 11: "NO-PONY who does what they do deserves mercy from it! They caused pain amongst all the wasteland! They don't deserve a second chance or sympathy! No escape!" Well, that applies to you too, Brimstone. Come to think of it, all this noise is bound to attract attention.

Chapter 11: OK, the Raiders are definitely much more trouble than they are worth to keep. Besides, they should be separated upon arrival, keeping them together was asking for an uprising.

EDIT: Ah, so Protege wanted to separate them, but had difficulties with it. Hm, I remember Shackles being told to "not put Murky with the raiders", which would suggest there were at least two compounds for slaves under Protege: one with raiders and one without them. Later it is stated that they all live in the same place. Either they don't and Murky could have been transferred after bumping into them or they do and not putting him in with them was not an option in the first place. This is inconsistent.

Chapter 12: "but the weight of the decision weighed heavy on me still." Repetition -> "but the decision still weighed heavy on me."

Chapter 12: With all the fighting there are most likely some wounded guards at Protege's temporary camp near the armoury, so Caduceus should be told to see to them.

Raiders and other potentially dangerous element should get explosive collars, like those from Project Horizons. But then Barb would most likely have a way to disarm them and use the explosives for something !fun!, so maybe this isn't the best idea.

Chapter 12: 60 minutes till the Griffins arrive is rather long, so I guess they are busy elsewhere. Still, there should be a fast response company in Fillydelphia, in case of similar riots. EDIT: Ah, they could respond much faster, but Protege asked them to delay. I get it now.

Chapter 12: "Barb isn't stupid...he knows his raiders can't take a direct assault from a heavily armed and organised group in a meatgrinder assault." Repetition, I suggest changing first "assault" to "hit".

If Murky really was Red Eye's backup plan to Autumn Leaf, he would be moved to The Cathedral, kept safe, fed and taught about things. So I guess he was something of an asset, but not even remotely important.

Chapter 12: I thought Mosin was bad, but Blunderbuck is insane, bordering on not worth keeping around. M7:"I want a small, quiet gun with low recoil" BB:"Here, have a grenade launcher". On the other hoof, he customised a battle saddle in minutes. That's very fast. I guess he knows his stuff after all.

Lolz at the comment about "Find a gun" song in Fluttershy's voice and the picture.

That armoury has a surprisingly high number and selection of guns. This must be a combination of equipment for guards, kits for stable recovery and Protege's private collection plus whatever he had for trade and bribes.

Chapter 12: What? He chose to equip his battle saddle with Rarity's Grace with three shots and no easy way to reload, when he could ask for dual needler pistols? Buhaha. But I guess, he is not going as a damage dealer, so whatever. Still, I expected him to go with silent, paralysing needles. It would be easier on his conscience to use non-lethal weaponry, then let others finish the Raiders off.

Chapter 12: "I saw Brimstone charge right past us heedlessly, directly into the lane of fire." I think you meant "line of fire."

Chapter 12: Even barring cameras, Protege would still have EFS or other movement detector and not be so easily ambushed. That is, he would know the number of nearby raiders much sooner and know the fake assault did little to pull their main forces away. Still, he relied on that second assault team and expected them to relieve his group after one final push.

Chapter 12: So, Chainlink Shackleses and Barb's plan worked and Protege went down. That's depressing. The games afterwards are worse than depressing and very unnerving. During the six-shooter surprise one option might be to try to quickly point the gun at one of the raiders, but I guess that wouldn't even work and end in torture afterwards.

EDIT: Heh, it kinda worked. Just like in film "The deer hunter" about a soldier, who killed his captors with this game, but later kept playing it.

Chapter 12: Well, the first half of chapter 10 had something of a quiet before the storm about it, so the horror is now the deepest yet for them.

Chapter 12: The twists Barb added to the six-shooter surprise to make it more interesting were ingenious. He is a great entertainer.

Chapter 12: Ironically, Coral was right; Caduceus would be better off by staying away from Glimmerlight.

Chapter 12: "Barb dove to the side, the bullet slapped into his shoulder and hurling the chieftain back into the guard who had watched me. Dropping his rifle, Protégé's magic swept it up," Here "Dropping his rifle" suggests that the rifle was Protege's, but it was the raider's. Well, maybe I just don't understand something about the English language.

Chapter 12: These raiders are tough and determined. They wouldn't waste any time in killing Protege, even if it means death of a few of their own. They were charging into gunfire just fine when the riot broke, but now he keeps them at bay with a single machine-gun? Strange.

Chapter 12: Oh come on, I know from the hints throughout this that you've read Project Horizons. When fighting Unicorns, you always go for the horn and the raiders would be sadistic enough to cut them off from their victims, especially ones like Coral Eve. Why Protege and Glimmerlight haven't undergone that? Maybe they were supposed to, but there wasn't enough time for the raiders or they were delaying it. Also, good thinking on part of everypony who stalled the raiders by whining, talking and otherwise distracting them or prolonging their fun.

Chapter 12: Protege has a pipbuck, which gives him EFS and SATS. The eyepiece is probably just for a fancier interface, a "portable terminal" of sorts. I mean that's how I think about it, but in the dark room you write that Protege needed the eyepiece for EFS, while it was stated before that he has a pipbuck... wasn't it?

Chapter 12: "No...all you can do is lie there and cry while I do all the things I never could to anypony else!" - Technically not true, Barb could easily overpower little fillies and such back in his raiding days, but I guess this works as scare tactics. Still, this seems an exposed position and there are Griffin snipers around, likely with EFS of their own, so !fun! is not worth the risk.

Chapter 12: Murky risked a lot by telling Barn about the grenades. Their dialogue that followed took long enough for Barb to find them and throw them away. He could sense a bullet before and grenades are bigger. If anything, Murky should just wait and then spit out the pins, smile and say something after Barb dies. However for dramatic effect and having Barb actually step away from Murk this works OK.

Chapter 13: The dialogue at the beginning is weird, so I guess that works as intended.

Chapter 13: I agree with Coral's opinion on Glimmer. It is also much more balanced now, with less anger.

I would expect the raiders to try and make it through the fighting pit, then either leave or join the slavers or the army, not go to the Stable teams. But then they would be forced to fight one another and the fighting pits would kill most of them.

Chapter 13: >> "Then do it! I don't need to know what you're doing, only results!" Even I could point out a thousand flaws with that logic.<< Once again, I'm outsmarted by Murky. What is the problem here? That Griffin can't micromanage everything and "bring her to a cell and check if she is the one they're looking for" is hard to screw up.

Chapter 13: I'm a bit surprised the intelligence report even mentions Dizzy, with Fillydelphia having Griffins for messengers and its own supply lines, but then again Derpy has the near-supernatural skill at getting absolutely everything. Her contacts would be useful.

Chapter 13: I expected that Murky would make a mistake right after a comment on how good he was getting at sneaking. Lol at that "cold medicine" with letters on it.

Chapter 13: "Grindstone called the griffins and charged the doorway, horns lowered." Huh? Grindstone is a donkey. Donkey's don't have horns. He has a cyber Minotaur guard, but he wasn't mentioned being in the hospital with his master.

Many of the conversations in this fanfic are two pages long, but supposedly spanning only a few seconds. Talking under enemy fire is a free action :P (That was a joke.) It reminds me of this Mass Effect 2 film at 3 minutes. "Lets hang out here and talk, hiding behind glass railing while being shot at".

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgO7Ca4JCDY&feature=bf\\_next&list=PL3D99C79C77955FA5](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgO7Ca4JCDY&feature=bf_next&list=PL3D99C79C77955FA5)

Chapter 13: I hope Protege will survive. He is my favourite character.

Chapter 13: Their luck just gets crazier and crazier. Even though they made it to another building, there were at least two Griffins around, but maybe those stayed to guard the hospital. The factory floor below Pinkie's head had some machines, so those would stop it from rolling around, unless the land is a slope there, which would also explain the head speeding up. Staying on top of something rolling is almost impossible for longer than a few seconds. Especially if it bumps around. Some entertainment parks even have big human hamster wheels rolling at constant velocities and most people have trouble not falling down in them.

Chapter 13: It is kinda hinted at that Grindstone did something to Unity's memory, but unclear. Oh well, maybe some future chapter will explain, why she couldn't even remember her buck's name.

Chapter 13: Sending Unity to... well, Unity is a waste. Red Eye would do better to keep her in a cage with those other Unicorns in The Cathedral. Unity is a weird name for a pony too and it is strange that she wasn't noticed and either elevated or mocked for it in Fillydelphia. Also, after going through the fighting pits, her buck would be freed (it says so in FoE) and even if he wasn't, the papers would say to send him to his old master, not his wife. Still, as a um... "plot device" what you did works and the rules and Red Eye's pact with Alicorns says that if a Unicorn volunteers to join Unity, she does.

Chapter 14: Again, it begins with a dialogue at the beginning. It sounds like Murky telling his story to somepony else, long after all this happened.

Chapter 14: Ow, he can't even draw now. That's bad, it was one of the few escapes he had. At this point it looks as if the chapter is going to end with a quest perk that gives -2 luck.

EDIT: Murky's desperation grows throughout this chapter. Well played.

Chapter 14: Wow, that's some really good grappling hook launcher that Murky has. Spy-grade, rather than industrial grade. There are some winches with ropes, but they usually need to be operated manually and don't have a built-in launcher. This one can remotely detach the hook

too, suggesting wires inside the rope and servos inside the hook. Pretty darn neat.

Chapter 14: "Pulling my legs up, the cleaver whizzed below me, narrowly skiffing the hairs of my tail" Are you sure, this is correct? This is the second time I see this language construct in here. Normally I would use it like this "Bouncing off the fence, pulling my legs up and away from them" with both parts of the sentence having the same subject. Otherwise it sounds as if the cleaver pulled its legs up, which is obviously not what you mean here. If you are answering my feedback, please clarify this. English is my second language.

Chapter 14: Oh, hello Lemon and Noose gang. Heh, guess a reward is more valuable than revenge to them now.

On Glimmer and memory therapy: She does similar things to what Ministry of Peace did to ease emotional trauma. It works, but is not without its own problems. In one of the fanfics, maybe even in the original FoE, there was some dairy about a foal forgetting her own birthday, because daddy wasn't there and similar consequences to curing depression.

Chapter 14: I could never understand how those double walls with empty space in the middle work. I know some buildings have them, but what's the point anyway? Keeping pipes out of sight? Single-walls occupy less space and do their job just fine.

Chapter 14: "I saw something the size of somepony's hoof skitter off under the sofa again." Hm, ponies can eat insects and arachnids and beggars can't be choosers, right?

Chapter 14: "It made sense why he was kept around, if this was the sort of brutal short term efficiency and result he could drive from ponies that Fillydelphia couldn't properly feed anyway." Well, I guess. Shackles is smart enough to stay mostly within limits of what he can get away with, made some powerful allies and the lower-ranking slavers fear him enough to obey him and be quiet. He can also work with raiders and other unruly lot just fine, torturing them into obedience as well as squeeze the last bits of performance from slaves who seem no longer fit to work.

Chapter 14: Murky, stay stealthy and stay away from Sunny, she must be broken by now and there is no way that you can help her. Heck, she may even betray you to The Master, in hope of not being his favourite toy anymore. Facehoof. Yeah, predictable. Come to think of it, the slave columns would be easier to manage, if told to march in organized rows. Trivial to spot ponies slipping in or out that way. I must say, The Master knows his stuff. He could just call for guards, but commanding other slaves to catch his son is much more demoralising. Um, the Unicorns around didn't just grab Murky and Sunny wasn't broken yet. Wow, that was just too close.

Chapter 14: Oh, a scene similar to escaping Manticores via sewers in Project Horizons. I'm surprised Murk can even hold his breath that long. I mean I can swim (well, kinda; I float above water, but move slowly) and I get a scare when I'm underwater in a lake or a swimming pool for

more than a few seconds. Maybe that saddlebag of his can be used to float if it's water tight? Ah, there's my answer "My saddlebag dragged me down". As a side note, all his papers are screwed now.

Chapter 14: Wow, that's one tough journal to survive the water and now the tantrum. That notebook has a lot of pages too. Normally there are around a 100, but this has his old memories, dozens of pictures from the last few days, some pages torn out, etc. It also seems water-resistant. Murky has been a lot through water and mud lately and his fleece is soaked. Even small amount of water is very bad for a notebook, even if charcoal doesn't smudge as much as ink. Even assuming all the papers were in water-tight container until now, drawing in moist dungeons and putting papers into wet fleece couldn't be good for them. I have seen what keeping books and papers in a slightly wet tent did to them. Submerging a sketchbook in sewer water would ruin it beyond usability, even after letting it dry. Plus you have to let the pages dry almost individually and use something heavy to straighten the whole thing.

Chapter 14: Nothing to calm the nerves like listening to DJ PON3 and he could try drawing something else, something easy. Too bad Murky didn't.

Chapter 14: "There's a bit of a giant Minotaur in the room here, Murky. You...you heard the radio?" Huh? I guess it is some kind of metaphor, but I don't quite follow.

Chapter 14: If Glimmer has some purified water, there should be some ponies around, begging for it... unless Brimstone keeps them at bay, but he isn't around.

Chapter 14: "Mhm...yeah, I'd like him on top, so I can get something inside me too." There is a lot of sexual innuendo in conversations with Glimmerlight, but this tops everything so far. Lolz. Keep the "Flirty Number Seven" up, it helps counteract some of the depressing parts of this story, or as you put it: "Personally, I like to think (hope, anyway!) that the humour helps the darker segments feel much darker by offering a contrast." However this is going to be hard now that The Master got Murky. Also, Leafshine is the same type of girl as Glimmerlust. (That was a pun.) No wonder they get along so well.

The jokes about Murky being "feminine" and comments about "meh, it stinks in here, must be them radroaches" just don't get old.

As someone already said, the hoof wrestling scene may have had too many stages in it. By the end I was beginning to wonder how many "OK, now I stop fooling around" levels are going to be there. However, to me each new one was a surprise and I thought The Master was going to win, so you got me there.

Chapter 14: Murky is getting real good at sneaking, if he could infiltrate The Master's compound and leave, just like that.

EDIT: Heh, another "I just had to say it" failure later on.

Friendship letters to Red Eye, especially the "Today I've learned something about the feelings of our slaves." actually make less sense in the context of Protege being an ex-slave and understanding Murky's feelings very well. There doesn't seem to be much more new things about slavery to learn for Protege. I don't quite know what to think of Protege mimicking Twilight Sparkle in love for books and friendship letters to his mentor. On one hoof it is funny, on another, it feels weird, wrong and out of place. Almost a mockery too.

Chapter 14: "End of day recording limit reached." Huh? Those recorders are really crappy and inconvenient. Even tape recorders are better: you get a box with tape with 1h capacity on each side, they are removable and have no stupid daily limits, beeping sounds and other annoyances. Littlepip found better audio diaries. My theory is that different companies made them and their products were popular in different areas. Fillydelphia must have been supplied by Solaris Inc.

More of the higher ranking slavers and army should have pipbucks and EFS. Red Eye looted a few stables and would put those to good use. Chainlink Shackles might have one too, especially after his promotion.

I've been thinking about it and the memory manipulation technology in theory allows the creation of perfect slaves. First remove memories and personality, then indoctrinate them and train them to be obedient. Toss in some memories of a pony who was scared witless of The Master. Finally add memories that relate to the labour the slave is about to perform. It would work, but the problem is doing this efficiently for a large number of slaves. It might work for soldiers too, but mental problems there are much more risky.

Chapter 14: Ponies with medical training, even ghouls, were generally in demand and using them for mining is a waste. Then again Shackles likely wouldn't care and could get away with using them in the tunnels.

Chapter 14: Once again, Glimmerlight is carrying a memory orb with telekinesis. She may be able to do it as part of her special talent, but normally the moment a unicorn's magic touches an orb, it activates. Littlepip even tossed a memory orb at a Unity Alicorn to incapacitate her at least once, like I said already.

Glimmerlight is wasted on grunt work. Grindstone would want her working on some weapons or memories or other project. Still, she won a temporary relief from Shackles and before that Protege protected her and used her expertise for some things.

Chapter 14: Glimmer kept around her orbs with bad memories, but didn't label them. This is going to be interesting!. Huh? Why and how do they even enter her memories together? I guess she first uses the orb on him, then on herself to discuss it afterwards. Poor Murky. His participation is unnecessary and some of this stuff is rape and similar things. That bag is like a



minefield with neutral and very bad memories. Even the nice ones are about being a mare and kissing with bucks and um... stuff. Number Seven's life sucks already, he doesn't need this too.

Chapter 14: "I got your needs for gems and orbs anyway." Earlier Glimmerlight said, that the orb is created by the spell, but having empty memory orbs as objects makes more sense to me.

Chapter 14: That memory of meeting a caravanner and talking with coral Eve wasn't bad at all, so I don't see a point in removing it.

Chapter 14: Lolz at "Glimmerlight, the village ride, slapping flanks with a torturing and raping beast because he wanted to get her home out of her! I'm an idiot, Murky. Coral's got every reason to hate me for...for not hearing her warning. Oh...oh Murky, I'm sorry..." She's catching on. On second thought the delicate balance of hers and Brimstones sanity depends on her staying as she is, without dwelling on her past, so this has a potential to end badly.

Chapter 14: My guess is that Glimmerlight didn't sell the village out, but rather maintained too much contacts with outside world, chatted with some rough-looking ponies, then pleaded with them and it backfired badly.

Chapter 14: I enjoy all the cheering to celebrate the end of DJ PON3s ramblings about "The Lightbringer". I dislike Littlepip and her holier than thou attitude, shooting those who disagree with her version of ethics and for opposing Red Eye. Yay for "No more false 'hero' only making things worse!", although I must admit that the destruction of Unity was a good thing in the end. Even better than the Enclave putting an end to Dead Canterlot.

From psychological standpoint: When there is someone who tries to inspire others by trying to be better, they see their own flaws and it hurts. If they manage to drag that hero from the pedestal, their own lives seem to improve by comparison.

Chapter 14: Lolz, the stupid runt runs into a group of Shackleses slaves while there is a reward for him. This is going to end badly. Huh, how come they didn't recognize Murk and capture him for reward from their master? Some of these ponies are from the Mall and remember him. Others likely heard the rumours that "this fucking pegasus" is on the run and that there is a reward. How come slavers aren't even watching the crowd and allow this? This scene makes no sense. Oh well, at least they are throwing rocks for !fun!. He pulls out a pipbuck, plays a forbidden radio at maximum volume and slaves and slavers still neglected to capture and turn him in?! Is this even The Master's camp with such rampant incompetence?! It is scenes like this that put me off the most in this fanfic.

EDIT: Ah, this was happening with Shackleses knowledge and permission. Makes more sense now.

Chapter 14: "I wasn't sure what stung me more...that my friend believed this...or that in her anger she'd reverted to...to what others called me..." She called him Murk, nothing wrong with that. Besides, I side with Glimmerlight in this conversation. Those are best conclusions based

on available information. Murky is just desperate to believe in his idol despite everything, because he needs that faith to keep going.

Chapter 14: Lolz, so much for "Big Sister Best Friend Forever". There is just no such thing as forever, even more so with Glimmerlight. People change and drift apart. Although admittedly her romance with Caduceus wasn't as shallow as I thought.

EDIT: Ah, they apologised to each other later. That works too.

Chapter 14: So throughout all of this the slavers and slaves did nothing. Sneaking around Glimmer's tent is one thing, but going in the open and throwing a tantrum was sure going to attract attention and begin the hunt for Murky once more. So why the hay didn't it?

Ah, OK. The Master was just playing around. Things are under control now and it is game over for Murky. Or soon will be. He was risking too much and now he will pay the price. Come to think of it, Shackles was surprisingly stealthy with Murky's good hearing and all.

Chapter 14: Well, Murky was lost, desperate to keep his faith in the fallen hero and it drove him to making too many mistakes. It is somewhat tragic that his need for Littlepip as a shining beacon of goodness overrode even his survival instincts.

Chapter ends with losing a perk. I expected a normal perk and a quest perk with negative bonus, but this works too. He did complete an objective of scouting a metro station, so some XP was surely awarded, just not enough to gain a level.

>>I wanted her [Glimmerlight] to be an absolute force of good to offset the depression filled beginning.<<

"The Mare" pretty much filled that role already.

I think this joke applies to Murky 7 and Protege or some random guard:

<http://niban-destikim.deviantart.com/art/Eagle-eye-297756785> This one too:

<http://niban-destikim.deviantart.com/art/Eagle-eye-02-331116583>

I normally don't like cliffhangers, but the one at the end of chapter 14 didn't bother me.

I was just about to post this, but the story updated to Chapter 15: Like father, like son.

Chapter 15: Once again it begins with a discussion with somepony long after the fact. I wonder who that is. I also feel almost sorry for Murky.

I think you should always put a space after "...", but you usually don't. Checking... Wikipedia says I'm wrong. Oh well, guess I'll have to learn to space and punctuate dialogue someday.

Chapter 15: Well, now that Murky is The Master's pet, Sunny at least won't have to follow Shackles around and serve as an example. He punished her enough already.

Chapter 15: It really shouldn't, but Murky's forced "confession" reminds me of this comic:  
<http://niban-destikim.deviantart.com/art/My-best-pet-269886591>

Chapter 15: Technically The Master didn't allow Murky to eat, just gave him a bowl with food. Before he left, he turned off the light, which is going to make Murky's task difficult, unless he wasn't stripped of that pipbuck with a lamp. Ah, he still has it.  
EDIT: Yeah, another mind game.

Chapter 15: "That quaking thought of having to consider such drastic measures to merely get food let a lot of it really sink in." At first I thought there was some mistake in that sentence, but "it" refers to "The Master's teachings", not food. It took me reading it thrice to get it.

Chapter 15: Once Shackles rose in power, he is not even trying to hide that he doesn't play by the rules. Stable reclamation is separate from crater work and both need volunteering. This is such a stark contrast to what was here under Protege that their escape plans and defiance from before seem like a good dream. I have a feeling that any rules for slaves earning their freedom will stop applying to those under him. I also have a feeling that Shackles is becoming to prideful, boastful and "above the rules" and it will bite him hard in the end, especially once Red Eye notices it.

Come to think of it, if shackles was here for a very long time and Protege worked as an overseer for just 3 years, Shackles should be above him in the hierarchy. He certainly is smart and ruthless enough to be quickly promoted. Maybe Red Eye didn't want that to happen, but lately has his hooves so full that he doesn't bother micromanaging slavers anymore.

Chapter 15: I think on that piece of paper from Coral is a message to Weathervane: "Glimmerlight needs Radpurge".  
EDIT: Nope.

Chapter 15: Ah, so Sundial took the Zebra offer and was arrested by MoM. That's one reason he didn't make it into his stable. At least that's my current theory.

Chapter 15: This chapter is almost as intense as "An hour in hell".

Chapter 15: Looks like none of the pursuers had EFS to notice somepony hiding in a box, even the Minotaur. I would expect it to be equipped at least on the cybernetic bodyguard.

Chapter 15: I am amused by Murky's idea to use a cutter as a grappling hook, rather than just cut a hole in the fence.

Chapter 15: In previous descriptions the air duct was above The Master's room and Murky had to jump out of it to get his things. He has no problem getting back, though, unlike what I anticipated. Maybe I'm just bad at getting the layout of things from descriptions... actually I am;

explaining directions to me is very hard without a map. I also thought the air duct Murky used the first time to escape was inside Brimstone and Glimmer's place.

Chapter 15: It is a pattern now. Whenever Murky manages to escape, all they need to do is watch his friends closely. The pegasus will eventually visit one of them.

EDIT: The idea with irradiated collar is even better, unless there is a way for Murky to get rid of it.

Chapter 15: They are running for the opposite stairwell after 5 seconds of just standing there, when some guards were a few meters in front of them? Impossible, they are too worn down to run that fast. But lolz at using a grappling hook to escape. Another at Murky figuring out how to use the grappling hook launcher as a weapon. (Well, I guess since ponies are a cartoon, cartoon rules apply to it and a grappling hooks similar to "Girl Genius Comic" ones can exist. They have a freaking flying tortoise after all.)

Chapter 15: Barb's knife was likely taken for analysis of just what he smeared it with to stop wounds from healing. I wouldn't expect to find it where Barb left it.

Chapter 15: What is it with all the water and mud around. Is it raining? He can't draw in the rain. Ah, I think I get it. It is raining, but they are under an umbrella, so rain isn't falling directly on them.

Chapter 15: Ends with another lost perk. This is appropriate.

After reading all this I'm beginning to have doubts, if Red Eye's way is the right one. Looking at the big picture it kinda still is, but the small picture is just too full of misery.

In my primary school we used to have some bin/seats like that and I sat on one at least once when I was late for class and there wasn't enough chairs in that classroom. Murky should get one for birthday.

Maybe I shouldn't tell you this, but Chainlink kinda reminds me of a tuned-to-eleven version of my father. He worked as a political officer in the army and used similar methods in private life. He wanted control, love and was very quick to anger. His teaching methods consisted largely of asking the same question over and over again, without explaining anything, but with punishments for bad answers. Oh and by the way "I don't know" and "It hurts" were never good answers. I can understand that creating a strong emotional response is how memotechnics works, but he should have provided the solutions along with the beatings, otherwise this method just doesn't work.

So yeah, Shackles definitely wants to instill love through fear in his son.

Reading through more comments on FimFiction...

I agree with Tonto the Trotter that Sooty Molas rose in power a little too fast. A week ago he was selling stuff at the slave market and now he is invited into a secret meeting. If he has this kind of power, dealing with Artery on his own would have been easy. Otherwise he might make it into a lower-ranking slaver, but not a kind of guy Shackles and Grindstone would be inclined to invite to the table. Maybe "off-screen" Molas mined out some dirt on a few important slavers and paid enough bribes to not be dead for it, but that's a big stretch for such a short time. He might make it into the company at the table eventually, but a week or two is too soon. If Sooty is powerful enough for Grindstone to even notice him, he would have other ponies as traders and do higher-level things himself.

I dislike Wildcard. Not as a character in a story, but as a type of guy with dialogue tree always leading to a fight.

I dislike what you wrote about combining characters. On one hoof it works, on the other it gives the appearance of characters teleporting wherever Murky is for the sole purpose of scaring or hurting him. It feels as if the computer had scripted encounters and cheated with them by spawning NPCs... ugh, that's wrong on a few levels, but what I wanted to tell should be clear. "The Song of Fire and Ice" (or was it Ice and Fire?) had no problem with episodic characters, to the point of the full list of named cast taking up over ten pages. They got confusing by sheer number, but keeping track of those important and recurring ones wasn't that hard. The others just didn't matter much. Let me put it this way: I want to see more Wicked Slit, but I don't want every trading post in Fillydelphia have Sooty Molas in it. Just somepony who knows him, tires to make some caps too, but is not as good at it or perhaps works for him.

"Would love to see a scene with Red Eye making Chainlink Shackles squirm, Murky noting the barely concealed rage on The Master's face." Me too.

I expected Red Eye to give more support to Protege, but letting him to handle this himself kinda works too. That is, if Red Eye is the kind of guy who considers backstabbing a valid means of promotion. He well may be and in FoE was remarkably flexible in how he dealt with Littlepip and other menaces. Letting his underlings handle difficult trials on their own is part of the sink-or-swim style of mentorship.

I would rather not see Unity as one of the main characters. She talks about her lost buck most of the time anyway. (She has a good reason for it, as it is emotionally very important to her, but listening to it is mildly annoying.) If anything, it would be funnier to let her join the collective just before the "FLEE CHILDREN!" and finally keep looking for her buck among the remaining Alicorn mares or something. For an extra twist, they could even end up in the same body. I think there are more souls in Unity than bodies and some of those Alicorns trapped in Dead Canterrot (That was a pun.) were schizophrenic. But then with the kind of cutie mark she has, she is better off surviving the battle for Fillydelphia, then joining the NCR as some sort of diplomat or civil servant. Oh and for me Unity didn't quite live up to the hype of "The Saint Mare who helps ponies all she can and is genuinely nice". She is however less one-dimensional your way and

has her vulnerabilities, worries, cracks in her personality that begin to show, etc. Overall she is almost as vulnerable as Glimmerlight without her coping mechanism. Speaking of which, Glimmer didn't quite live to the hype of "The mare so holly that she made even Brimstone repent for his sins" either, but is nonetheless an interesting, if confusing character.

Now that Protege is out of the picture, for a while at least and Mosin is in some kind of position of power, he might as well use it to get rid of Blunderbuck and get himself a more suitable assistant. This could result in Murky seeing Blunderbuck somewhere doing "proper shifts". At this point it is clear that Shackles cares little about experts, with him using Glimmerlight for manual labour and ghouls for mining. Mosin hates that svolotch assistant with a passion.

Come to think of it "DUNE: The House Harkonnen" is a good source of ideology for Shackles. Baron Vladimir Harkonnen said, that it is their right, not, their duty, to exploit their planet for all its riches and make the inhabitants as miserable as possible.

I just realised there is almost no Red Eye propaganda in this fanfic. Surely there were loudspeakers all over Fillydelphia and their leader gave frequent speeches. Upon arrival Littlepip was even forced to listen to one of them. A possible explanation for this is Murky mentally blocking the propaganda or not retelling it in his story as not really important. He just mentioned that some slaves believed it and wanted to work on building the better Equestria, while others didn't.

"To me, raiders should be the threat everypony is scared of" I agree completely. Raiders and Gangers (with the borderline not being fully clear) are predators of the wastes, taking what they want from settlements and travellers. This particular band even more so, as they are to normal raiders what The Reapers from PH are to normal gangs. Yet most FoE fics go with middle to high level characters and work along the lines of "We killed a nest of Raiders without much trouble, lol".

Protege's cutie mark is kinda cheesy, but no big complaints here. "The current one is perhaps a little too detail than your average mark, but I endeavoured to give him a really grand and defined mark that suited his somewhat poetic and idealistic mentality." Yes.

I didn't like Hive forgetting to get the Mint-als from Murky. She was stated to be perceptive and intelligent when on her drug and she just got some from the runt. I would prefer an honest trade there or failing that, intimidation with her getting her stuff in the end.

Artery could be working in Hearts and Hooves hospital, but since he can only treat one patient per day and is sick himself, he is simply better off as a trader.

Cayenne is dead, end of story. Don't make her into a cyborg. It doesn't fit into the theme / mood / low-techness of Murky7 at all.

I've only seen maybe 20 episodes of Babylon 5, but it was great. Better than Star Trek and Battlestar Galactica (the old one, this blasphemous new one is not even worth the comparison).

"I'm pretty much doped up on painkillers right now for a throat infection" Lol, that's one mystery solved: the origin of Murky's breathing problems.

EDIT: Ah, you said on your tumblr that it was the other way around.

I found Barb speaking from the shadows to be funny. I didn't quite like him being powerful enough to listen and talk without actually being there, but it was funny. It would be even more funny to hear another voice from the shadows and complain about "This place is getting cramped" and Barb's surprised reaction as a way to introduce another character.

In Red Eye's tumblr Winter is more of a telepresence device than a real cyborg. Yes, the one meeting eye to... heh, chest between Murky and Red Eye could include Winter, but it already had many people inside a small room. Winter could still wait outside, while visible and terrify the runt.

The projector-orb with Twilight Sparkle telling that she was sorry was touching.

"The Dragon is dead!" must have been something from earlier conversations between Glimmerlight and Brimstone, from the times when she "tamed" him.

I rather like it how throughout all this story, Murky is fighting an inner battle with his second nature of an inner slave and it goes back and forth.

I wondered if Weathervane was going to use his prototype healing kilospell on Protege, but I guess not. That's definitely going to be used for something, though.

If Brimstone run into Calamity, I wouldn't expect the Dashite to give up the chase after two shots. He would rather empty all his ammo, killing and wounding enough of the Raiders to... well, they would actually be pissed by this, not scared. Lesser gangs might back off, but not Brimstone. To him that's a challenge. The only way I can see this working in Calamity's favour is that Brimstone didn't say anything about what happened to others in his group (wounded or killed) and was too busy fending off Wildcard to mount a proper raid, then they went back to their territory and had other things to do.

I wasn't as moved by a parasprite eating an eye as I perhaps should be. Maybe this has something to do with a scene in "Year 1984" where the protagonist has a cage with rats on his head and has to say what his torturer wants to hear, in order for the cage not to open. Come to think of it, I'm pretty sure there is a torture where they perform a quick surgery and crude sewing in order to trap a live and hungry rat into someone's belly.

Pike and Cosh are such idiots that it defies belief that they would get good assignments instead

of just grunt work. Especially after certain runt ruined their reputation twice.

This fanfiction could use more !SCIENCE!. Maybe have The Master take 7 to Grindstone's ministry and accidentally see something absolutely terrifying, like taint research victims recycled for memory research or some such. The various weapons projects are way above his little head and not !SCIENC!y enough.

Red Eye came off very good in that one scene where he talks. Maybe except for having so many guards so close on the runt, but it was shortly after Littlepip's escape, so partly justified.

I agree with what people say about: "I like the story because the protagonist just struggles to survive in the wasteland and is not some kind of Munchkin hero who can take on multiple wings of Unity Alicorns no problem". One of the factors here is that Fallout series are games and in computer games you usually fight against some great evil, while killing mooks left and right. Hence most stories came out this way too. It is of course unrealistic to expect a Vault Dweller to kill The Master (Not Chainlink Shackles, the Unity kind of Master) or for some tribal "chosen one" to take on The Enclave and win, but those games would be more boring and less memorable if you just wandered the wastes hunting geckos with no epic main quest. On the other hoof, I'd like to see a "Red Eye" type of game, where you start off as a lone wanderer, like in an RPG, but over time gain followers, form communities and before you know it, the focus of the game changes to resource management and running the bureaucracy of an empire.

When Murky was held by Shades in the stables, I expected the discussion to go:

"Hey, Barb said it's a filly, so it's a filly. Give her here, I haven't raped anything in a while".

"Oh, you've got to be kidding me, can't you see how ugly this thing is".

"Meh, they all look alike in the dark."

Then Glimmer turning on the light to see what's going on. Anyway, raiders discussing what to do to Murky with him listening was one of the more entertaining scenes.

Quality-wise your writing is easily on par with FoE and PH.

Protege's good ending might be picking up some pieces of Red Eye's empire and joining the NCR as some middle-grade civil servant, then advance in hierarchy. He would still be criticized and mistrusted for his (past) affiliation to Red Eye, though.

A way of screwing up with Murky, but not applicable after Shackles would be for a moderately strong Unicorn to take off his fleece, then repeatedly toss him in the air and catch him (or not) before he falls into a pile of trash and call that "Giving the fucking pegasus some flying lessons". Wildcard could do this.

Please do not be offended by me not rooting for Murky or even making some jokes about his suffering. Consider it to be a coping mechanism. Some people were pissed at me for writing what else raiders / gangers could do to Blackjack after getting her immobilised, but it's not like



I'm coming with these tear-inducing stories in the first place.

Reading tumblr for moar stuff...

<http://murkynumberseven.tumblr.com/post/20614742099/how-does-murkys-journal-actually-look-like-does-it> This description should be in the story. I thought of it as a 100 page A5 notebook with clear pages, that he found somewhere and miraculously kept through quite a few masters, but that is obviously not the case. Eventually he might be able to sell some pictures, especially "of mares".

Fillydelphia has the feel of an industrial city in Soviet Union under Stalin, combined with Gulag with an ongoing war and some nightmares tossed in for good measure. Incidentally, Stalin had a cult following during and after his life and some people who remembered his times, said he was the greatest leader they had. Also, there was a saying that is Stalin knew what was really going on and how people suffered, he would change it. This is both interesting and scary. I believe he was a strong inspiration for Red Eye.

This would make a fine comic:

Murky takes a look while hiding behind a crate. He sees Whiplash talking to Wicked Slit.

W: "So... wanna see my whip collection?"

S: "Wanna see the tip of my blade real close?"

W: Takes a step back. "How about we punish that runt then."

a)

S: "What did he do this time?"

W: "I don't know, but I'm sure he does."

They laugh, while Murky whimpers and dashes away, unseen.

b)

"He stole my googles!"

"And Betty, one of my whips!"

In gleeful unison: "Stop right there, runt! We're gonna take turns with you!"

For extra grimdark, maybe Whiplash wants a new whip from Murky's hide and Wicked Slit lives up to her name as an artist with a blade. (That was a joke.)

This was my reaction to seeing a picture of Whiplash and Wicked Slit on your tumblr.

It reminds me, Murky is still overdue 20 lashes for stealing that whip and 20 more for the googles.

"I do not torture, I only punish" and "Slavers command. Slaves obey. If they don't, they are punished". This is so elegant in its simplicity.

You said that you wanted to have an absolute monster, because too many villains are just dark shades of gray. I disagree, cartoon villains are too flat, I prefer more depth and reasons for what they do. The closest you have to absolute monsters are the raiders, especially Wildcard. The redeeming qualities of Chainlink Shackles are that he can handle difficult slaves and that he can

make his minions go that extra mile before they die, thus building Red Eye's empire faster. In short, his methods work to get the job done.

The kind of cells Shackles built into the mall should have been used for the raiders from the beginning. I think Protege asked for materials to improve the Mall and the answer was "not enough available", but they suddenly were in stock when Chainlink wanted them.

Is is better for the story that you went with a flightless Pegasus than just a small Earth Pony. More interesting that way: Many ponies have a reason to hate Murky, those in power have more of a reason to even take notice of him, then there is Weathervane and others. The "hammer and anvil" trauma too. Overall you made a very good decision here.

As for the idea to make Murky a female: Well, enough FoE stories have females as protagonists. Besides, if Murky was a female, he would be even more fucked as Shackles pet. (That was a bad joke.)

Murky's SPECIAL = {2, 6(8), 2, 3(4), 4, 5, 2(3)} Seeing as 5 is the average, I'd say some of these should be bumped by 1 or 2. S. and E. are quite low for a pony who can pull heavy carts all day, 3 or 4 might be more adequate. I expected P. to be 7 or 8, due to his sensitive hearing. He doesn't have much problems with his other senses, except some kind of eye infection. C. and I. seem about right. Well, maybe C is too high. He starts off meek and ugly, even though many people find him adorable for some reason. I'd give him 6 or 7 A, with being a tunnel rat and all. His size is really not an issue with agility. His L. is actually low enough to "attract" the Pariah Dog [http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/Pariah\\_Dog](http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/Pariah_Dog), but given that he was taken from his mother and passed from master to master until he ended up in Fillydelphia, that's rather adequate. It would actually be quite funny for a coward dog to follow around and jinx Murky, who is terrified of dogs. However, Murky did complete several insanely difficult missions and avoided some close calls, so I'd say his luck is higher. 33 points, where did you... ah,  $7*5 + 5 - 7 = 33$ , correct. Anyway, a character in Fallout is normally supposed to be more powerful than an average guy. Murky is less, so it is appropriate that he has less SPECIAL, but 24 total is a bit too far on the low end.

I just don't get people's obsession with those blasphemous FPS Fallouts. There were 2 good RPGs before that, linear and boring Fallout Tactics and a cancelled Fallout 3, but it seems that all people ever mention these days are Fallout 3 and FNV: FPSes with consolized interfaces that introduced many misconceptions, such as pipboy managing everything from inventory through noticing enemies to targeting them. Blasphemy, I say!

You talk about someone called Theracles, who posted some ripped music as his own for FoE. Well, if he claimed he made it himself, that's bad, but otherwise I don't see anything bad about mixing some fitting music with a slideshow of pictures and posting that on youtube. Maybe I just don't quite get it, there would be a lot of "fangirl squee" in having new music composed for one's story, I'm sure of it. Nevermind anyway.

"How do you ensure readers recognise it's a deliberate shout out that I want people to see instead of them thinking you just took it?" I don't see a problem with making references and mixing in ideas from other works of fiction. If it works, it's fine. If it doesn't or is a few paragraphs of almost word-for-word "steal(th) citation", then you might have a problem. Similar character concepts are fine. Heck, Somber even used Major Armstrong from Fullmetal Alchemist in PH and it worked. Meh, probably another thing I don't quite get. Lol, and I just complained about one chapter looking like FNV character creation, how inconsistent of me.

Lolz, some people hoped Murky was going to find a sandwich somewhere along the way and he did.

Murky in maid outfit: Loolz, it should become cannon, if only by Murky mentioning, that some rich pony with poor sight mistook him for a filly and made him join his maids. Or something. It would make for an interesting \*snort\* plot development. The pink dress would work too, but maids are servants, which is only fitting for Murky. Justification for the pink dress might be sewing something like that for a filly, while using himself as a model / equiquine. I really like the annoyed expression of Murky on that picture in maid outfit. It is not making him attractive, just humiliated.

Like one of your commentators, I noticed that rape is something that happens to mares and not bucks, while mares are the dominant gender, but you simply went with conceptions from our world and it doesn't bother me much. It all happens in the background anyway.

I have a question: You keep your chapters at similar length and often have unrelated events in the same chapter. Wouldn't it make more sense to have more shorter chapters, divided by scene / location / quest? Not that I want you to do that, what you have now is working, I'm just wondering.

Felicia Days would work great as Glimmerlight. Lol.

For Brimstone Optimus Prime or Megatron from Transformers would work. Actually scratch that, Marcus from Fallout would be good.

I have a crazy idea to have polite Servus Snape as Protege.

"Yes, you could say most of this is me reading into weird AI doing odd things through sheer coincidence. But I'm a storyteller, I like to rationalise and dramatise these things, it helps me immerse in a game and in the end made it so much more emotional." Lolz, you should try Dwarf Fortress then. <http://www.bay12forums.com/smf/index.php?topic=59026.0> Sure, the graphic is not so great and learning basic gameplay is an equivalent of a university course, but much of it is randomized each time and if you pay attention, there are some pretty great emergent stories. I even participated in a community game with MLP mod. Here it is. My character's name was Indigo. <http://www.bay12forums.com/smf/index.php?topic=96608.0>

I thought about Glimmer's inability to sew. With all her technical expertise, I imagine she would

be able to fix small tears herself, because it is very easy with barely any skill. It is just that her fixes would be ugly and visible, while Murky may actually be able to do this almost at a level of a renovation artist. She would probably also be able to cut some material and sew it together given the patterns for a simple dress, but it wouldn't look good. Murky can actually make one without any drawings or measuring tape. This is what I imagine as the gap in their skill with needle and thread. With things like sewing, cooking and drawing there is no clear "can" and "can't", but rather a lot of levels and someone who "can't" do something is actually just discouraged by his low level of skill, not unable to do anything at all with the ingredients. For example I "can't" draw, but my drawing of Steel Rain from PH got 750 views, some faves and downloads.

I find it refreshing that Murky often fails or rejects quests. In FoE all the quests were completed, which got boring eventually. Here you never know the outcome (unless somepony's life is at stake) and it adds extra tension / surprise / unexpectancy (?). When he succeeds at something, it also feels more rewarding, even though those are fetch quests and have very little impact on the big picture. In other words, Murky often trying and failing or abandoning a sidequest entirely is a good thing.

Thank you for the explanations on slave assignments here. It makes sense.

<http://murkynumberseven.tumblr.com/post/30247416857/reason-number-345-why-red-eyes-slave-management> The "small picture" of Red Eye's empire confused me at first, but you helped me realise that the price for his plan was indeed great.

I played a Gothic 1 mod with guards overlooking miners and it worked pretty much like this. One of the quests was to find an adequate cook, another to get a medicine from an alchemist for one of the prisoners and so on. The guards mostly cared about their quotas and beer.

If you have problem with google documents, try using a different browser. I have a very sucky experience (inability to copy / paste and crashes) with Opera (otherwise my favourite), but Firefox works okayish and Chrome likely works better, being the Google browser and all.

What you write about having to delete parts of your chapters to make the story better is what I've read somewhere before. It was called "sometimes you have to kill your darlings", so other writers have this problem too.

7 Deadly Sins: Pike and Cosh might work as sloth. Red Eye would make better Pride than Protege.

A simple, cumbersome and stupid solution to having both Windows 7 and Windows XP on one computer is to install each on a separate hard drive and use BIOS to select the boot device.

If you have problems copying stuff from Open Office to google documents, it may help to temporarily copy it to notepad or gedit or whatever simple text editor you have. That way you'll lose italics and stuff, but the spaces, commas and other things are preserved.

IIRC the fighting pit worked like this: A pony either volunteered or was sent there as punishment. She had to survive six fights, whether she participated or not. After that, she was pardoned, no longer a slave, received a mark saying so and was free to leave Fillydelphia or offered a position as a guard or slaver. That's why Xenith volunteered; she wanted a way out. In your story it works differently, there is training involved, some ponies stay there for long, others make it through, but are still slaves. Am I missing something or did you changed how it worked in FoE?

I think Chainlink will find a way to hurt Brimstone by hurting Glimmerlight and Murky.

Oh, and Fuzzy, you got editing permissions for this document. I also give you blanket permission to do things like take some of my questions here and post them on your tumblr or whatever. As long as you don't vandalise this document, I'm fine. You can also post a link on your tumblr, reddit or whatever. In fact, I'd like that.

I'm slightly sorry for the mistakes, but anything I ever write is a wall of text and I only re-read it and edit a few times before posting, not until it is fully fixed. This is a one-time feedback, not a story that many people will read, so lower quality is acceptable. Some of the language here is not even grammatically proper, but the meaning should be understandable nonetheless. I have a reputation for being quite good at editing, but apparently not of my own stuff.

You asked for more feedback on your tumblr post, so here it is. It took too long to write and it's good to finally be done. :trollface: