

**Fallen Prime:** Welp.

**Ringmaster:** It's finally time to start the first multipart since the revival, which will be handled a bit differently than it used to.

**Fallen Prime:** The way we pumped chapters out before left people susceptible to fatigue, considering so much of a story was launched at you at once.

**Ringmaster:** So, instead, we're taking things a bit slower. Each multipart will update once a month until completion with about 10K words per part, with the 8th being one selected by the editors and the 22nd being one voted on by readers... well, after the first one. But we'll get to that in a few weeks.

**Fallen Prime:** For now, though, we've got a treat for you. Remember how we threw a fic by Chatoyance in all your faces? Wasn't that just *so much fun* to suffer through?

**Ringmaster:** Well, if you've kept up with the schedule, we've lined up a very special story of hers for this week... which might even be her worst.

**Fallen Prime:** A story that continues Chat's ludicrous misanthropic campaign to convert all humans in the fanfiction world to ponies, and this time, it's *expressly without their consent*.

**Ringmaster:** It is absolutely one of the most terrifying things I've ever seen her write, and I can't wait to see what you guys do with it. However...

*This story takes place roughly 200 years before The Chase.*

**Ringmaster:** Did you really think we were going to go straight into another Chat fic *this* soon?

**Fallen Prime:** We're not fucking stupid. Here, you get kudzuhaiku instead.

**Ringmaster:** More specifically, the 40k-word prequel to his "magnum opus" *The Chase*, called *The Catch*. Or, at least the first four chapters of it. Fallen, do you want to mention the absolutely fucked nature of this fic's "prequel" status, or should I?

**Fallen Prime:** Well, setting aside the author's debilitating allergy to negative feedback, he's claimed multiple times within "The Chase" that events from "The Catch" are needed to understand them... but at the same time, this fic demands that its sequel be read first in order to get it. It's a continuity loop that basically guarantees that context is always missing wherever you start, making it difficult to decide WHERE to start and ultimately turning readers off of reading either.

**Ringmaster:** The thing that gets me the most about this is that "This story is a sequel to The Catch" are literally the first words in *The Chase*'s description. So even if this is actually not meant to be read first, literally the first thing people see in the story's description implies they should do so.

**Fallen Prime:** It's essentially sealed off from anyone new getting into it, and the longer and stupider "The Chase" gets, the more people abandon the story and the smaller the "in the know" bubble becomes. The story is basically guaranteed to burn out, and the fact that Kudzu prioritizes updating the fucking thing daily over actually producing quality content means that it'll probably be soon. My guess/hope is before the end of the year.

...ahem. Not that this is entirely relevant to "The Catch."

**Ringmaster:** Oh, right, one more thing... As of July 8th, 2015, this prequel is unfinished, making everything that much more confusing when it comes to what to read first. But enough about that, let's start the riff already.

## Chapter 1

In the entirety of his whole life, Rye Mash

**Topher: Who will soon be reunited with his long lost brother, Button,**

had never felt more fear than he did in the current moment.

**Sigma: He was about to read a Chatoyance fanfic.**

**Steel: And right after a FelixDawn fic.**

**NaturalGlitch: He just now noticed his stall doesn't have any toilet paper.**

There had been many moments of fear.

**Steel: Scaredy cat.**

**Sigma: Maybe Parallax can give 'im a job.**

**SC276: "The worst case scenario is quicksand, spontaneous combustion, and getting called on by the teacher."**

He had been taken from his home on the Shetland Isles

**NaturalGlitch: It's actually called *Shitland Isles*; people get it confused all the time.**

as a very small colt during one of the many sweeps and taken to the mainland.

**Steel: I almost hope he has an accent.**

**SC276: There was an American that moved to the Shetland Isles...**

**RJ: He was a midseason replacement. The Nielsen's on the other show weren't that great.**

He had endured the mainland orphanarium.

**Sigma: He had watched 'Manos: The Hands of Fate.' Twice.**

**Steel: He could feel his soul leaking out of his chest.**

**SC276: Orpha-what? Is... Is that an actual word?**

**NaturalGlitch: I think it's like an exhibit to display orphan children that succeeded in life...but I based that on nothing at all.**

He and his master had been captured by sky pirates,

**Steel: Vyse is right around the corner, not to worry!**

**NaturalGlitch: If it's the pirates from *Shantae*, then you probably need to worry more about suffocating in the head pirate's cleavage than anything.**

led by none other than the infamous Captain Spyglass.

**Steel: Captain Spyglass? What, is he paired with First Mate Periscope of the Farsight Pirates?**

**SC276: So named because an accident had caused a spyglass to be stabbed into his eye socket and all the way out the back of his head, and that *still* didn't kill him!**

Now, he was stuffed into a barrel and left in total darkness.

**Steel: Wind Waker flashbacks...**

**Sigma: I'm thinking Mario Party 2 myself.**

**SC276: More like Donkey Kong Country, really.**

**NaturalGlitch: "This is where they kept the pickles, so it wasn't too bad."**

He had heard some of the commotion all around him.

**Steel: "Be quiet out there, I'm trying to sleep!"**

**NaturalGlitch: "Can we stay up longer? Just five more minutes!"**

He had his magic,

**Steel: But no mojo.**

**Sigma: And he was out of ethers, too.**

but he was far too afraid to use it after the warning that he would be killed if he did.

**Steel: Masturbating was never the same.**

**SC276: "Shoot on sight of fancy sparkles!"**

**Jofy: Because the biggest threat to those that can control fire is conventional weaponry.**

So he obediently remained stuffed inside the barrel

**NaturalGlitch: "Turns out that farting in an enclosed space was a bad idea."**

trembling with fear and not knowing what to do.

**Steel: "I'm *totally* earning that cookie..."**

**NaturalGlitch: "When is hide-n-seek going to end? I've been here for hours!"**

He cried out in fear as the barrel was turned on its side and rolled.

**Steel: "IT'S THE PORTA POTTY ALL OVER AGAIN!"**

As he tumbled around inside he collected every bit of will that he had and tried not to piss himself in fear.

**Steel: He failed.**

**NaturalGlitch: "Despite the smell, it does *not* taste like popcorn..."**

The barrel seemed to roll forever.

**SC276: Somehow, they got it to start rolling *up* the infinite staircase.**  
**Steel: "You sure we should've rolled it off the edge of the world?"**

It thudded as it bounced over wooden planks.

**Steel: "Yeah, I'm sure. There's a bridge leading all the way to Hell from here."**  
**NaturalGlitch: —out one of the port windows.**

Finally, the barrel stopped and the cover was pried off.

**Steel: But no grog was to be found.**  
**SC276: This is reminding me of the *Muppets Treasure Island* computer game, except with nothing resembling readable context.**  
**Topher: ...Is that a thing? Or are we just talking about *Monkey Island*?**  
**SC276: Oh, it was a thing. Part of my childhood, it was. But that's neither here nor there.**

Rye Mash

**Steel: Seriously, am I the only one getting alcoholic vibes off this name?**  
**Sigma: Just sounds to me like someone stepped on a sandwich.**  
**SC276: He had a brother, Sourdough, and a kid sister, Pumpernickel.**

was forcibly pulled out of the barrel and was left sprawled out on the deck,

**NaturalGlitch: [Pirate] "So *that's* where I left my chew toy."**

his eyes stinging from the sudden light.

**Steel: "LIGHT! HISSSSS!"**  
**SC276: "YOU DARE BRING LIGHT TO MY LAIR?!"**  
**NaturalGlitch: Sounds like he's one of those "hardcore" gamers.**

He was dizzy, disoriented, and could not see.

**Steel: That was the last time they pulled a prisoner out by the eyes.**  
**NaturalGlitch: Or maybe he never had a pair to begin with! Dun dun du~un!**

"Was it truly necessary to roll the poor colt in the barrel?" a voice said.

**Steel: "You kidding? Most fun I've had running on a barrel in days!"**  
**NaturalGlitch: [Pirate] "At least put the glock in there with it."**

"Sorry boss," a voice replied. "You said bring the barrel over."

**Steel: "And now you'll specify in the future."**  
**Sigma: It's important to be detailed.**

A figure stood over Rye Mash and he looked up.

**Steel: "The ceiling is mighty fine today..."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Ceiling, blushing] "Oh, you flirt, you~♥"**

He had trouble focusing his eyes and seeing who he was looking at.

**Steel: "Could someone please stop pouring salt water in my eyes? It's really hard to see!"**

**NaturalGlitch: "The pirates were so ugly they corroded any eyes of anyone who was unfortunate enough to stare at them."**

The figure's breath smelled like pickle brine and cheap booze, a smell that reminded Rye Mash of home.

**Sigma: Ah, yes, the smell of shit and nastiness certainly reminds me of *my* house.**

**Toph: Ah! we have the same approach to housekeeping I see!**

**Steel: Wow, this kid did *not* have a good home if the best memories are pickles and beer.**

**RJ: What was home then? A seedy, cheap bar?**

**SC276: Not even one stray whiff of a Game Boy's plastic brick casing?**

**Steel: Not a one...**

**SC276: \*HORRIFIED GASP\* How could he live?!**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "My mom shows her affection by beating me to an inch of my life, so this is pretty comfortable for me."**

"Please don't hurt me," Rye Mash begged.

**Steel: "I'm too squishy to die!"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "But if I have to die, be sure to add some lettuce, onions and some mayonnaise before your meal, OK?"**

"I understand that you are property," the voice said.

**Steel: "*My property.*"**

**Something: (pops in through the roof) Who is this guy, Immortan Joe? (leaves)**

**NaturalGlitch: [Pirate] "You're a Wii-U, correct?"**

"I am not property!" Rye Mash protested.

**Steel: "My taxes'd be way too high for you if I was, anyway!"**

**NaturalGlitch: "My name may be Rye, but I'm not actually a sandwich!"**

"I am an indentured servant. There is a difference.

**Sigma: "See, property is actually worth something."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Pirates] "In that you get paid in punches."**

I'll be free one day once I pay off my debts," he said angrily.

**Steel:** Oh God, I am getting the *wimpiest* voice ever for this guy...

**Sigma:** Like pre-timeskip Simon of TTGL?

**RJ:** Ah, the false hopes of anyone with a student loan.

**NaturalGlitch:** Y-Yeah... <cries even more than last time>

Rye Mash's vision settled a bit and he saw that he was speaking to a pegasus.

**NaturalGlitch:** ....um, duh? It'd be pretty hard to be a SKY PIRATE if they were, say, a Minotaur. I guess it could've been a Griffon, though.

"You are Captain Spyglass," he accused.

**Steel:** [Spyglass] "First Mate Periscope, actually. I'm his twin brother."

**SC276:** Wait, Spyglass is the pony, and the guy with the pony name is the human?

"None other," the pegasus replied. "And do tell.

**NaturalGlitch:** [Spyglass] "Over some tea and biscuits."

How did you become an indentured servant to this annoying fellow that we have been giving a good thrashing to?"

**Steel:** "And do you have a spare club? Mine broke."

**NaturalGlitch:** And backstory is...go!

"I am from the Shetland Isles. I was taken in the sweeps. I was placed in an orphanarium in Fillydelphia.

**SC276:** *We already knew that! Move on already!*

An agent of House Avarice came looking for useful unicorns.

**Sigma:** So why did they choose him, then?

**SC276:** OK, they're *both* ponies. That would have been nice to know *before now*.

**NaturalGlitch:** ...there's such a thing as a useless Unicorn?

I was selected and given a great honour.

**SC276:** British!

**NaturalGlitch:** [Rye] "To use my tongue to swab out the poop deck."

I was sent to school to learn how to read and write. I was taught social graces and etiquette.

**Sven:** Gave him a monocle and everything.

**Topher!** Hey! Don't laugh! Do you know how hard it is to get your "mmmnyes, quite" Down pat? It takes YEARS man, YEARS.

I was taught magic as well.

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "I can do so many card tricks your mind would dissolve from the sight!"**

Now I am paying off the debt for my education and as soon as my education is paid off, I will be a free pony," Rye Mash explained.

**Steel: "Would you like some worldbuilding with that info dump?"**

**SC276: "Well I could go into unnecessary repetitive detail about the school I went to..."**

**NaturalGlitch: How do you pay a debt in a barrel? How'd he even get in there?**

"Ah, I see," Captain Spyglass responded. "So, do you know how much you owe?"

**NaturalGlitch: Aww... No "yargs" or "har-hars"? What kind of pirate is this guy?**

How much are they paying you? What service do you provide for your master?"

**Sigma: [Rye] "\$3, \$0.50 a day, and anal and oral."**

**Steel: [Rye] "I've been trying to get a better deal."**

**RJ: [Rye] "He does have a decent dental plan though."**

"I am his servant. For a time I served as his whipping colt when I was younger.

**Steel: [Rye] "I thought it was a term for 'go-for' colt, but *boy* was I wrong."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "I was going to switch places with a prince who happens to look just like me, but I slept on that day, so they transferred me here."**

I have never asked how much I am earning. Doing so would be quite rude and a breach of social etiquette.

**Steel: [Rye] "My speech is so noble, I vomit Celestia."**

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Son, you do realise they just told you it's rude to shut you up right?"**

I am to place faith in the kindness of my benefactor

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "—so that the Combine won't turn me into a Civil Protection cop."**

and trust that such a good and noble pony is doing the right thing," Rye Mash answered.

**Steel: [Rye] "He's a good man, I tell you! A good man! No matter how much he whips me!"**

**Sigma: [Rye] "I don't tell him I enjoy it though, because that would make him stop."**

**SC276: This is reminding me way too much of anime servant tropes.**

"Then you are a fool. How would you like to be a free fool?" Captain Spyglass inquired.

**Steel: [Rye] "I'm in."**

**SC276: [Rye] "Could I be a chariot then? Oh, I know! A hanged man!"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "I'm not *that* cheap!"**

"Free?" Rye Mash asked in a trembling voice.

**Steel: [Rye] "But... b-but that goes against the idea of a shifting economy..."**

**SC276: Would you like to be safe, or be free?**

"But my debts... it would reflect poorly on me if I did not pay my debts.

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "There's only so much plasma I can give before I pass out."**

How could I maintain any credibility if I didn't pay my debts?"

**Steel: [Rye] "OH GOD I'M FREAKING OUT RIGHT NOW."**

**SC276: [Rye] "I AM TOTALLY FREAKING OUT!"**

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Silly boy... You have no credibility. That's a made up thing to make kids feel better."**

**Steel: "Just like credit with banks..."**

**RJ: Your FICO score shouldn't be your main problem right now.**

Rye struggled up to his hooves and wobbled unsteadily.

**Steel: [Periscope] "I never should've challenged Telescope to a drinkin' contest..."**

**NaturalGlitch: He's been on the ground all splayed this whole time?**

The pegasus sighed as several crew members chuckled raucously.

**Steel: They just chuckled into microphones and turned the volume up to 11.**

**Sigma: They would be able to afford more crew, but they spent the money on the mics and speakers.**

**Toph: [Periscope] You traded the old crew for this? [Spyglass] No, for a microphone. [Periscope] A *microphone*? Okay, I can see that.**

"Look here. I free slaves. That is what I do. And you are a slave.

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "You're part of the system, man! Come and smoke some of this good stuff to clear your head. Be sure to wear a fuzzy beanie over your dreadlocks."**

You will never earn enough to be a free pony.

**SC276: This shit's more rigged than Vegas.**

**Toph: Come on, man! You didn't think to consider interest? When this is over we're marathoning *School House Rock*.**

You are bound.



**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] “—in a nutshell, but you consider yourself queen of infinite space.” 1000 points for anyone who gets that.**

You might not see your chains, but you have them,” Captain Spyglass replied.

**Steel: [Spyglass] “...Oh Luna, now I sound like you.”**

**Sigma: “Do I sound smart yet, readers?”**

**JofY: “But there are no strings on me!”**

“Would somepony be so kind and encourage our guest Lace Collar to tell the truth to this poor deluded colt?” the pegasus asked.

**Steel: [Spyglass] “Binoculars, get those alligator clips off his balls!”**

**SC276: “And by encourage, I mean the spear in his back routine.”**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] “We need someone to fill in more backstory as I compliment my name on those mares down below.”**

Rye Mash turned to look at Lace Collar as was horrified by what he saw. The stallion was a bloodied and battered heap on the deck.

**Steel: [Rye] “...I am so turned on right now.”**

**Topher: “You mean you DIDN’T KILL HIM? DAMMIT!”**

**JofY: Wow. He’s trying to make a presentation and yet somepony can’t spend 5 minutes to clean himself beforehand? Rude.**

He wanted to go and comfort his fallen master,

**NaturalGlitch: *House of Wolves* fallen or *House of Devils* ones?**

but he was too scared to move.

**Steel: Pee is also slippery, and he didn’t want to trip and mess up this nice stallion’s deck.**

**SC276: OK, if all three named characters involved are ponies, and one pony is owning another pony, where does the “pony is master race” fit in?**

Rye Mash wondered if this could end up being his fate as well.

**Steel: It only made him harder.**

**NaturalGlitch: Harder than...Steel, you might say?**

As he watched, a big scruffy looking earth pony kicked Lace Collar in the side of his head.

**Steel: His head flew to the 10-yard line, but the catch was missed by Telescope! The referee just threw down a yellow flag! Ohhhh God, this is a terrible setback for the Shetland Sky Pirates!**

**SC276: Um... Touchdown? Goal? Home run? I CAN’T SPORT.**

**Topher: I’m pretty sure the score is 30Q-Love.**

The battered unicorn tried to crawl away from his attacker but was kicked again.

**Steel: [Rye] "Kick him below the ear, that hurts the most! Yeees, just like that!"**  
**Sigma: [Rye] "Hit his jugular! No, the jugular! HIT HIS THROAT, you morons!"**

Rye Mash felt his guts churning from fear.

**Steel: It was a good sickness.**  
**SC276: He was pretty sure his heart and stomach had literally swapped positions.**  
**Topher: Soon he would unleash a series of tactical farts to confuse and defeat the pirates.**  
**Ringmaster: Considering this is a Kudzu fic, that honestly isn't too unlikely...**  
**JofY: This was the start of the most unusual butter recipe.**  
**NaturalGlitch: Diarrhea is like a storm raging inside you.**

A pegasus drove his hoof into Lace Collar's side and there was the crack of bone as several ribs gave way.

**Steel: And Rye Mash believed such a mood could only be found in 50 Shades...**  
**Sigma: And saw sights he only thought he'd find in Mortal Kombat.**  
**NaturalGlitch: Let's all ignore just how much abuse a MLP can take, OK readers?**

"Enough," Lace Collar gasped. "It's true," he wheezed. Blood splattered from his lips as he spoke.

**NaturalGlitch: [Lace] "It's so true because I'm totally not saying this because they beat me up."**

"You were never going to be a free pony," Lace Collar admitted.

**Steel: [Lace Collar] "I LIED TO YOU FOR YEARS, AND YOU TOOK IT! THIS IS MORE HILARIOUS THAN ANAKIN BEING THE BAD GUY!"**  
**Sigma: [Lace Collar] "I cheated you. I cheated ALL of you, and you *didn't!* Even! NOTICE!"**  
**Steel: This guy's more clever than George Bush! Ohhhh, jeeze, I feel ancient now...**  
**Sigma: Did the CANADIAN just make that joke for us?**  
**Steel: Because nobody was going to be so '00s, they'd do it for me!**

"And there we go.

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "You surely can take the word of a pony we tortured to make him say those things."**

Finally, some honesty from the professional liars of House Avarice,"

**Steel: And everybody wondered why it was just a homonym for House Greed.**  
**SC276: And now that damn fic from my main series is coming back to haunt me...**

Captain Spyglass said. "And so I will ask you again. Would you like to be a free pony?"

**Steel: "WHO WANTS TO BE FREE!?"**

**RJ: "Or do you want what's in the box?"**

**SC276: It's a Zonk piñata!**

the pegasus asked. "I am in need of a well educated pony such as yourself as my cabin colt.

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "Which is why you were stuffed inside a barrel."**

I assume you can work numbers? Read and write?"

**Steel: [Spyglass] "At least not shit on the carpet like the last one? I replaced that five times."**

**Topher: The cabin boy or the carpet?**

**JofY: Yes.**

"I can do all of those things and more," Rye Mash replied.

**Steel: The flutter of the eyelashes made everyones' skin crawl.**

**SC276: Talk about a skeleton crew.**

**Topher: "I can also act all classy, you know, etiquette, that's important for pirates, right?**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "I can tap dance. Does that count?"**

"Forgive me for asking, but how do I know that I will not be your slave?"

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "No, I WON'T forgive you. Alright boys, second verse same as the first. Someone chain him up for me? I gotta go get my iron horseshoes again..."**

**NaturalGlitch: That should totally be a name for a band.**

"Clever colt," Captain Spyglass said with a chuckle. "I pay my crew. In hard coin.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "I tried paying them in CHOCOLATE gold coin once, but then a couple of mates had an allergic reaction, then it mutated into a plague, and it ended up sparking the War of 632."**

**Steel: [Periscope] "We couldn't put the gravestone on board because the ship would've sunk."**

You will get a bunk and you will be fed.

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "And sometimes you will be fed the bunk."**

And you will not be charged for said bunk and food," the pegasus explained.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Because I'm taking that out of your pay! HA!"**

**SC276: "Enough people have asked that that it's getting really annoying."**

"What is the catch?" Rye Mash asked.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "You."**

**Sigma: ...Wait.**

**SC276: Let me guess. Has to do with a novel we had to read in high school?**

"The catch?" Captain Spyglass said in return.

**Steel: [Rye] "The catch!"**

**Sigma: This is just a lazy title drop!**

**SC276: Title drop, take a shot. Wait, we're in Disneyland.**

"Why free me? Take me on?"

**NaturalGlitch: ♪Take~ on~ me~♪**

Why me and not somepony else more suited for... your criminal endeavours?" Rye Mash asked.

**Steel: Huh, maybe these guys are Blue Rogues...**

**Topher: "Because I'm not into that."**

"Oh ho ho ho,"

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "—♪and a swig of rum!♪**

the pegasus laughed in reply. "I am not a criminal. Nor am I a pirate. I am a just and virtuous pony.

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "Ignore this parrot on my shoulder or my many peg legs."**

Just as you were not a slave," he added.

**Steel: [Periscope] "He's buying it!"**

**SC276: "I am a thing in the same way you are not a thing. LOGIC."**

Rye Mash scowled and flogged his brain, trying to collect his wits.

**Steel: [Rye] "No, no, stop imagining flogging! Damn it! Now I need a cold shower..."**

**NaturalGlitch: "But he dropped his wits when his marble bag fell on the floor."**

"There is no pony on this ship that is a pirate," a voice said.

**Steel: THE SHIP WAS HAUNTED ALL ALONG!**

**SC276: We need to find the green orb and open the Valley of Bowser!**

"And you'd get a good thumping if you said otherwise," another voice added.

**RJ: [Rye] "Oooh, really?"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "—with this gigantic plank. ...why are you smiling even more?"**

"But I have heard of you. I know who you are. Everypony knows who you are.

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "Everypony wants your autograph!"**

You are the the infamous Captain Spyglass.

**Steel: [Rye] "I suddenly have a horrible stutter."  
JofY:...Gasp!**

The terror of the skies. The infamous sky pirate," Rye Mash said.

**Steel: [Spyglass] (Throws on a wide red hat and red sunglasses.) "Ohh, baby, work the shaft!"**

"And who says this?" Captain Spyglass asked.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Your mom!"  
Topher: OH SNAP!**

"The newspapers. The Canterlot nobles.

**NaturalGlitch [Rye] "That one weird pony who mumbles to the wall about pudding being good for the eyes."**

Everypony who is anypony," Rye Mash exclaimed.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "So everybody I stole from. K."  
SC276: The type of pony everypony should know does know.**

"Well of course they would say that," Spyglass replied.

**Sigma: Anyone else feel like that doing this whole corrupt noble infodump thing at the start could be done better as a slow showing over time how messed up the nobles are?**

**Steel: Silly Siggs, this is a story we're riffing! We can't have pacing and worldbuilding!**

**SC276: ~Now take Sir Francis Drake / The Spanish all despise him / but to the British, he's a hero / and they idolize him...~**

"I don't understand," Rye said in a confused and trembling voice.

**Steel: [Rye] "Vision blurry. Breath speeding. Heart pounding. Bladder emptying..."**

**Sigma: [Rye] "Penis hardening. Mouth watering! OH GOD, TAKE ME NOW!"**

**NaturalGlitch: And that's when Spyglass tossed the little pervert kid off the boat.**

He cast a worried glance at Lace Collar who was bleeding all over the deck.

**Steel: [Rye] "Can you make me wash that while you whip me? I'll give up two weeks of pay."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "Only if you mop the blood with your mouth."**

"You commit crimes... how can you not be criminals?"

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Law's fucked, son."**

**Sigma: Technically, they are criminals, they just aren't bad.**

"I free slaves," Spyglass corrected.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "If, if that wasn't clear here..."**

**SC276: "I've only said it a hundred times, pay attention for once, you're supposed to be *smart*."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "I also beat ponies to an inch of their life; that's also how *my* mother showed affection."**

"I seize vessels full of the most valuable treasure of all.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Gold! Diamonds! Coin! *Porn*."**

**SC276: "Oh my god, it's a gold Nintendo World Championship cartridge!" ...First one I could think of.**

Most of these vessels are owned by House Avarice

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] <puts on freakishly tight spandex and holds a whip>  
"I'm a cat burglar and this whip helps me...be a cat? I dunno."**

of course and I understand they are a bit miffed that I am interfering with their flesh trade.

**Steel: [Rye] "I was kinda hoping it was the *other* kind of flesh trade, but carrying on..."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "I was bitten by a zombie on the way here and you all look so delicious, by the way."**

I roam the skies and I prey upon their airships and their sea going vessels.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "And sometimes, I turn into a bird and crap in their chimneys!"**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "That *really* makes them mad."**

I find the ones carrying say, a cargo hold full of zebras that are being sent to Minos to be sold in the minotaur slave markets.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Boy, have I got a story about that... oh, no, I'm not gonna tell it here. Onwards with the infodump!"**

**NaturalGlitch: ...feed on my hate, fanfic.**

Or worse, to be sold to the griffons as either slaves or food.

**Sigma: [Rye] "That sounds very arousing!"**

**SC276: They flip a coin when they win the bidding.**

**NaturalGlitch: Choke on my hatred. Go on. I know you want to, fanfic.**

This despicable wretch on the deck was being sent to broker a deal with a foreign agent.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "I never trusted those eagle-wearing bastards..."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "And now he's a different kind of *broker*. Get it? Ha! I'm funny."**

Anyway, I seize their vessels and I free those they have taken.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "And then I free their women and make mashed potatoes for them! AND THEN THEY SUCK MY DICK! AND I SUCK THEIRS! It's all a very complicated process, you see."**

I loot the ships of course.

**Steel: [Rye] "Because what's a good deed without some profit?"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "All good deeds go unpunished, you know."**

Most of the loot goes to the slaves to allow them to get a fresh start in life.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Is, is the paladin armor too much? I can never tell."**

**SC276: Hope the bills are unmarked.**

We keep a little for ourselves.

**SC276: [Spyglass] "We call it an operating fee so we don't feel guilty about it."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "We only kill them a *little* bit."**

We need to eat and keep well supplied," the pegasus explained.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "And by a little I mean we take all the ACTUALLY valuable shit and give the rest some ketchup and rags with holes in them for their arms and legs."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "I lost so much money in the ketchup racket..."**

Rye Mash tried to come up with something to say but failed.

**SC276: Natural 1.**

**JofY: That would actually entail his mouth imploding.**

**Steel: So he just answered his hard-on and fapped. He needed *something* to do!**

He looked at Lace Collar and felt a confusing jumble of emotions as he stared at his master.

**Sigma: Hate. Fear. And a *lot* of arousal.**

**NaturalGlitch: The new scent from Calvin Klein.**

"What is a whipping colt?" a crewmember asked.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "What did I tell you about stupid questions, Magnifying Glass? Don't ask them or you get kicked."**  
**SC276: Sure, *now* it occurs to you to ask.**

Spyglass sighed. "Among the nobles, they don't whip their own foals. They get a whipping colt.

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "I read that in a book once."**

And when the wee little lord is a bad little foal, they whip the whipping colt and make the bad little lord watch.

**Sigma: [(Magnifying) Glass] "Sir, I think that's just S&M porn."**  
**SC276: What if the foal *doesn't* like the whipping colt?**  
**Topher: This is how fetishes are made.**

Isn't that right Rye Mash?" Spyglass said.

**Steel: [Rye] "Huh? Oh, uh, totally! Yeah. Definitely. It's... it's bad stuff." [Glass] "You just imagined yourself getting whipped." [Rye] "No!" [Periscope] "THEN STOP MASTURBATING!"**  
**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "Your erection is bleeding more than Lace! Please stop!"**

Rye nodded, still unable to say anything.

**Sigma: He was too busy jerking off to memories.**  
**RJ: [Lace Collar] I sang Devo while doing so. [Spyglass] You're not helping yourself.**

"If you do not wish to join us, we will drop you off in a port city friendly to our cause.

**SC276: Let me guess, the one that's home to House Superbia?**  
**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "There you will meet a pirate who makes his home in the mouth of a talking whale."**

We will give you some of your former master's possessions

**Steel: [Spyglass] "As well as the body. What? We don't want to carry it!"**  
**Sigma: [Rye] "Oh, I'm gonna do more than carry it..."**  
**Steel: [Spyglass] "..."**

so you will be able to make your way in the world.

**Steel: [Rye] "Can... c-can I have a whip?"**  
**SC276: Yes, an indentured servant far away from his master's estate with some of his stuff. The moment spies notice, things are going to go so far south, it'll actually be going *north*.**  
**RJ: Well, it does take everything you got. And taking a break from all your worries sure would help a lot.**



Either way, you are a free pony from here on out. But if I may be honest,

**Steel: [Spyglass] "The whole thing with, uh... yeah. Don't do that."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "—we're going to throw you back in the barrel regardless."**

I would like to take you on as a crew member," Spyglass stated.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "You start tomorrow, and if you're fired, we throw you overboard."**

**SC276: *We already knew that. Move on already.***

"What is to be done with him?" Rye asked, finally finding his voice.

**Sigma: [Glass] "Well, we considered making breakfast from him, but then his bones shattered so much it'd be too hard to pick the pieces out. So we settled for making a scarecrow out of him. See, we already have the sticks in his limbs!"**

**Steel: [Periscope] "GOD DAMN IT, GLASS, STOP WAVING HIS LEGS AROUND! That's horrible!"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "Check it out! I can make him to the can-can!"**

His words were squeaky and scratchy and he felt humiliated as his voice cracked,

**NaturalGlitch: "It actually had the opposite effect, and they became enamored with him, braiding his mane and everything."**

surrounded as he was by such a gruff crowd.

**Steel: He felt like a tiny colt in a biker gang's bar. Nothing gives a kid five o'clock shadow faster!**

**SC276: "WHO BLEW THIS BUBBLE?!"**

"He is a fop and a dandy. And he peddles flesh.

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "But I'm a vegan!" <Spyglass facehooves>**

I could deal with any two out of those three things, but alas, he is guilty of all three.

**RJ: [Spyglass] The fopping and peddling is fine, but the dandy? Oh, you do not do that in front of me.**

**JofY: Ack! He's rich *and* British!**

I cannot stand ponies that wear clothing.

**NaturalGlitch: ...even in winter time?**

It is most unnatural,"

**Sigma:** If Rarity were here, she'd murder him in the fucking face.  
**Steel:** Nah. She'd just make more clothes... *from his body*.  
**Topher:** I'm pretty sure that is the subject of several fanfics already.

Spyglass replied. "We were never meant to wear clothing like the minotaurs."

**Sigma:** [Spyglass] "Though considering how often you seem to... Become interested, so to speak, maybe we should get you some pants. Some very tight and concealing pants. Look, kid, you have too many boners."  
**Steel:** [Rye] "What?! No! Impossible! Master said I had a very regular amount of boners!"  
**Sigma:** [Spyglass] "Bah. Of course the spoiled bastard would say that. Probably expects twenty boners on a *bad* day, rich arse."  
**SC276:** ...The only canon minotaur in MLP just wears a *tie*. ...Well and his headset, but that's an accessory.

"To Tartarus with the lot of you... even you Rye," Lace Collar spat.

**Steel:** [Lace] "And just to make sure, fuck whatever generation you give birth to! The entire lot!"  
**Sigma:** [Lace] "Actually, let ME fuck them! Corpses can still hold erections for several hours, you know!"  
**Topher:** Nope, not googling that.  
**NaturalGlitch:** <eye twitches> Why.

"And he is rude. Ugh, somepony throw him overboard," Spyglass commanded.

**Steel:** [Spyglass] "Actually, we need some more fish. Use him as bait to catch a shark."  
**NaturalGlitch:** They accidentally catch a few mere-ponies. [Spyglass] "...I'm happy about this."

Rye gasped as a pegasus took wing and snatched up Lace Collar.

**Steel:** [Magnifying Glass] "TO THE SEA WITH YE! We, we are supposed to throw him in—" [Spyglass] "Yes. Toss him into the sea."  
**SC276:** "Sorry, Doctor, but if I want to keep my beak in one piece, orders are orders!"

The unicorn screamed, a ragged cry of fear and panic as he was lifted.

**Sigma:** [Lace] "I can't lift, though! I have slaves do lifting for me! Keeps me very well in shape!"  
**Steel:** [Spyglass] "...Oh my God, don't tear him in half!" [Magnifying Glass] "Wait, but we already beat him up! I wasn't supposed to do this!?" [Spyglass] "NO, YOU BLASTED IDIOT! Just toss him overboard! LISTEN TO ME!"  
**SC276:** DO U EVEN LIFT

And then without further ado, he was thrown over the rail.

**Steel: [Telescope] "Should we really have thrown him into the Mermaid City?"**  
**[Magnifying Glass] "Eh, they'll do fine."**

**SC276: But they didn't get him over the other rail. They were fine with that, as he was soon run over by a train.**

**NaturalGlitch: [Lace] "Wheeeeeee—ouch, my bones!—eeeeeee!"**

Rye Mash could hear his master screaming for quite some time afterward.

**Sigma: Anyone else find that improbable based on the descriptions of his wounds?**

**Steel: Talk about rubbing salt into the wound...**

**Topher: I'm just trying to figure out how high up they are, since they can't be too far up if they can still hear him. Sky pirates aren't very intimidating if they're only a few feet above the ocean.**

He gulped and looked around him.

**Steel: [Rye] "I LAMENT MY WEAK BOWELS!"**

**NaturalGlitch: "The pile of filth that evacuated from Rye was so toxic it bled through the hull of the ship, causing it to crash, killing everyone on board."**

After the screaming finally faded away, he gathered up the courage to speak.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I came."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "...We noticed."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "...still going, actually."**

"You would really let me go?" he asked.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "No. We've been lying to you this whole time. This is a hidden camera show, and you've just been Saddle'd!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "Saddled with what?" [Spyglass] "CRIPPLING DEBT!"**

"I do not tolerate slavery.

**Steel: [Rye] "I do." [Spyglass] "..."**

And I really am sorry that my crew rolled you in the barrel.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "They were supposed to roll you in the paper, but we found out at the last second that you weren't just a giant bit of doobie."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "We blame Oracle for that one." [Oracle] "I CAN SEE FOR LIGHT YEARS!"**

**SC276: But how else was he going to do a StarFox impression?**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "That's where we keep our leaches, by the way."**

You were placed in there for your own safety.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Also for shits and giggles."**

**SC276: [Spyglass] "You can walk those splinters off, right?"**

**Steel: [Periscope] "You're lucky! If this happened tomorrow, you woulda been used in the Annual Barrel Rolling Contest. Those go for *hours*."**

Sometimes, some of my crew are not the brightest ponies in the herd," Spyglass replied.

**RJ: [Oracle] "I like the taste of glass! It tastes like clear!"**

"But I was threatened with death and all manner of torture," Rye retorted.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Ah, shit, he noticed! Okay everyone, take two!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "LINE! What's my line?"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "It says here you like that sort of thing, and we wanted you to feel welcome."**

"Well, you are a unicorn.

**Steel: [Rye] "I actually just glued my master's son's dick to my forehead. I've been an earth pony all along."**

**NaturalGlitch: Wow, what a dickhead.**

We didn't want you hurting us and I didn't want my crew hurting you in return.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Which is why we instead hurt you indirectly. Can't blame us for using you as a barrel in Smash."**

**SC276: [Periscope] "Sorry it exploded, by the way."**

**Steel: [Rye] "How'd you— oh God, my guts..." [Magnifying Glass] "WE LACED YOUR DRINK WITH LAXATIVES! MWAHAHAHA!"**

We had to subdue you and find out who you were.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "I admit, breaking my scabbard over your head *may have* been going overboard... oh for the love of, hide your shame!" [Rye] "THERE IS NOTHING SHAMEFUL ABOUT MY REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS!"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "Your 'shame' breaking apart the ship! We're going to crash!"**

I hope there are no hard feelings.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Aside from the ones you already have down below." [Rye] "Yeah, the more I look at Lace's floating corpse, the stiffer it gets. I think I might be able to weaponise this."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Please don't. For all our sakes."**

I really am sorry and I apologise on behalf of my crew.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "They're all idiots and think apology is a kind of food."**

**Steel: [Rye] "NO! No, don't apologize— ah, damn it, it's gonna be a week before I get another!"**

I need a few sharper minds to help run the show

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "I tried to use a pencil sharpener on their minds, but they haven't been the same since."**

and I could really use a unicorn," Spyglass said in a well cultured voice that dripped with raw charisma.

**Sigma: [Periscope] "Sir, you're drooling bullshit again."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Really? Oh, whoops, thought I fixed that... ugh, brown this time..."**

**SC276: It only started doing that *now*? And not when he was trying to realign this kid's worldview?**

"I am not much of a unicorn,"

**Sigma: [Rye] "I'm a transracial who identifies as a Pegasus, thank you very much."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "If I don't see wings, you aren't a Pegasus."**

Rye said. "I am fit to be servant and little else," he said.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Did you just forget to say 'a servant', or did I do more damage than I thought...?"**

**SC276: You're being auditioned for cabin boy, it's effectively the same thing.**

**NaturalGlitch: But with all the benefits of having all the grog you can stomach; don't forget that part.**

"They would tell you that," a voice said. A female voice.

**Steel: [Rye] "HOLY CRAP, IT'S A MARE!"**

**Sigma: [Rye] "SHIT, GIRLS, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO ACT! Are they... Are they people? Like us?"**

**SC276: And cue the love interest!**

Rye turned his head.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "A neck isn't supposed to bend backwards like that!"**

**Sigma: Maybe he's a praying mantis.**

**Steel: Please no. I need no more nightmares.**

**NaturalGlitch: Suddenly this turns into the *Exorcists*.**

A mare approached and the crew

**Steel: All started to feel like Rye.**

**NaturalGlitch: Until she couldn't stop her massive farting. Well, all but Rye.**

made room for her as she passed through the crowd.

**Steel: [Telescope] "Don't hurt me..."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Telescope] "You give my brain fire and make me feel so precious! Ahhh!"**

She was a unicorn.

**Steel: Secret was, she's a dude who cut off her own dick, then had Periscope jack up the pitch in her voice. DON'T TELL ANYONE, AND DON'T STARE AT HER HORN.**

One eye blinked and then the other did a moment later.

**Steel: She would later give birth to an alligator.**

She twitched and jerked as she walked.

**Steel: ...Has this girl been into Oracle's stash? She's tweaking *hard*.**

**Sigma: "Ah, shit, did we forget to debug the android OS again?"**

**Steel: "FUCKING CLOCK '98!"**

**SC276: *~I've got no strings / to hold me down...~***

**NaturalGlitch: [Velvet] "That's some go~od Root Beer..."**

She froze for a moment, craned her head,

**Steel: And the sound of a shotgun cocking was heard.**

**NaturalGlitch: Ah, so she's actually a crane. The equipment of the bird?**

and then seemed to stare at something that wasn't there.

**Steel: Oh God, she's staring right at us! DON'T LOOK AT THE HORN, DON'T LOOK AT THE HORN!**

**Topher: \*Face Melts\***

She then turned her gaze back upon Rye.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Hello, I-" [Velvet] "I WANT TO MAKE BANGING TO YOUR FACE."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "I'm... I-I'm sorry, she, uh, she was reimaged two days ago... we're still working on her."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "I hope she means with a hammer!" [Spyglass] "...she does." [Rye, extremely giddy] "Eeeeeeehehehehe!~"**

"Let me guess... you are a type one or a type two.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "Type 0-HD, actually, but they didn't bother fixing the background textures on me."**

**Steel: [Velvet] "I HAD TO FIX MY BOOT SECTORS MYSELF."**

And you spent your entire time in school being told how worthless you were and how lucky you were that you have even a little bit of magic,"

**NaturalGlitch: [Velvet] "I'm reading your backstory in the script here. I wish there was a better way to express plot exposition."**

the mare said in a wavering and somewhat manic voice.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I CAN SEE YOUR PAST, PRESENT, AND F-F-F-F-FU-FU-F-FUT-ERROR-ERROR-ERROR"**

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Ah, fucking hell, Periscope, I told you to install the fucking antivirus!"**

**SC276: [Periscope] "Maybe you should've specified whether it was Avast or McAfee then!"**

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "I SAID KASPERSKY, you nincompoop!"**

Rye nodded and his words died in his throat once again.

**Steel: His throat must look worse than Paschendale circa 1918 at this point.**

**SC276: With slightly less grace than Pompeii.**

"This is Cerise Velvet. Formerly of the House Evening Star.

**Sigma: [Periscope] "She came free with the dishwasher!"**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "No wonder she breaks down so often."**

**SC276: OK, one house gets the fancy word for greed, and another gets a plain English noun?**

**NaturalGlitch: Maybe they're a night class? I dunno.**

Now my first mate.

**Steel: Oh God, SHE'S PERISCOPE?**

**SC276: [Periscope] "I thought *I* was your first mate!"**

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Hush, Periscope, we can't piss her off."**

She had a bit of a falling out with her family when she found out how they made their money,"

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "They had an actual hugging booth! Can you believe it?!"**

Spyglass said as he introduced the mare.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "THEY POSED ME WHEN I WAS IN STANDBY AND SOLD PICTURES OF MY CHASSIS IN IMPROPER POSITIONS. I WAS NOT PLEASED."**

**Steel: [Velvet] "THEIR BI-BLOOD NOW O-OILS MY GEARS." [Rye] "...Where have you been all my life...?"**

"Everypony calls her Bloody Velvet.

**SC276: [Spyglass] "We tried calling her 'Bloody Mary,' but then someone tried to call for her three times in a row while in the bathroom."**

**Topher: Excuse me while I go invent a bloody velvet cocktail.**

I wouldn't cross her if I was you," the pegasus warned.

**Steel: Holy fuck, you were right, Sigma.**

**Sigma: Huh, guess there IS a first time for everything.**

The unicorn mare smiled a lopsided smile.

**NaturalGlitch: [Velvet] "Fear is your new god now."**

"He is far too young and innocent to cross me. Aren't you?" she asked of Rye Mash.

**Steel: [Rye] "YES, YES I AM. ALSO CAN I HAVE HOT, DANGEROUS COITUS WITH YOUR NETHER REGIONS?"**

**Sigma: [Velvet] "YOU NEED TO DEFRAGMENT MY HARD DI-DI-DISK DRIVE AND REPLACE MY VAGINAL COOLING UNIT."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Don't need the latter. *Nothing is too hot for my cock.*"**

He nodded and backed away from her. Something about her was terrifying.

**Steel: [Rye] "I CAN'T MOVE WITH THIS BONER."**

**Topher: At this point I don't think he's even standing. I think he's suspended in the air, balancing on his erection.**

**NaturalGlitch: Hopefully it realizes how bendy it is and snaps in half.**

"You... you are a type three, aren't you?" Rye asked in a worried tone. "And you have the shivers."

**Steel: [Rye] "I didn't know you could GET Type-3 diabetes! Tell me your secret."**

**SC276: Did they explain what any of the types actually are? I lost track.**

Bloody Velvet nodded. "I am. And I do," she replied.

**NaturalGlitch: [Velvet] "I wouldn't have the shivers if *somepony* didn't throw out all my sweaters."**

She jerked again, her leg kicking the deck and her hoof made a solid thump.

**Steel: She fell into the water through the hole she made.**

**NaturalGlitch: It was the closest she has ever been to a bath.**

Rye felt a twinge of pity.

**Steel: [Rye] "Wait... no. Something else twinged, sorry." [Velvet] "SCANS DETECT ERECT PHALLUS. NOT MEDICALLY POSSIBLE." [Rye] "AROUND YOU, ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!"**

**Sigma: [Periscope] "Cap'n? I'm scared." [Spyglass] "Hush, Periscope, they're gonna notice. Now get that cannon moving, they're almost in its sights..."**

**Steel: [Periscope] "On it..." [Velvet] "I DETECT FEAR." [Periscope] "OH GOD!"**

The shivers was a common affliction among the Canterlot nobles.



**Steel: I KNEW THE BUILDINGS WERE WHITE FOR A REASON!**

**NaturalGlitch: "They would often put ants in their pants because it was the latest fad."**

Unicorns with too much power and not enough control.

**Steel: Too much power and not enough control? So everybody was Cyclops?**

**SC276: Are you trying to tell me the love interest is someone poised to explode the moment her concentration slips? If that doesn't produce sexual tension, I don't know what will.**

**Steel: [Rye] "That... is... SO... HOT."**

Usually they were kept away from the public,

**NaturalGlitch: [Velvet] "I all did was sneeze and suddenly the orphanage was gone."**

hidden away in a quiet place so nothing would spook them and invite potential catastrophe.

**Sigma: It was known as a LAN party.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "COUNTER STRIKE IS A PROFESSIONAL SPORT." [Spyglass] "Periscope, you didn't..." [Periscope] "All I did was play two games with her, I swear!"**

**SC276: ~They're coming to take me away, ha ha / They're coming to take me away, ho ho...~**

And yet here one was serving on a ship full of ruffians and ne'er do wells.

**Steel: [Rye] "Such rascallions and scallywags!" [Spyglass] "We are not evildoers or villains!" [Velvet] "THESAURUS OVERFLOW."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Velvet] "Form of...1000 wolves! You will be the first in the river of blood!"**

Rye was no longer certain they were pirates.

**Sigma: [Rye] "They didn't even use uTorrent! They just had Limewire! LIMEWIRE! Can you believe that?"**

**Steel: [Periscope] "Hey! You try and find something that works reliably with satellite connections!"**

The unicorn colt realised that he could not return to Canterlot.

**Steel: [Rye] "No... but... b-but the police state... the brutality... the constant jailing! HOW WILL I GO ON!?"**

**SC276: Just give him *Tetris*. He'll be fine.**

He couldn't believe that he was contemplating joining this crew,

**NaturalGlitch: "They did, after all, brutally murder his master."**

not after what had just happened to Lace Collar.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Normally I'd INSTANTLY join a group of people who do kinky shit like that."**

But

**Steel: [Rye] "How could I not...? Especially with Bloody Velvet here..."**

**SC276: [Rye] "Must follow explosive love interest."**

**Topher: \*pulls out a cigar and a fake mustache\* I've heard of some dames being ticking time bombs, but this is ridiculous!**

he didn't know where else to go or what to do.

**Sigma: He considered making Lace's corpse a sex toy/hand puppet and become a performance artist, but he found his hand got stuck with all the jizz in there.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh, I know exactly what to do. The problem is finding where it's legal. And a proper solvent for making jizz not so sticky."**

**Topher: For a while Rye Mash thought the shark bites would make it difficult, but in the end he found that they presented more variety.**

"I accept your offer of employment," Rye said in a quavering voice.

**Steel: [Rye] "Maybe if I play the 'scared little boy' card, someone will sneak into my room! *And then the fun will commence...*"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "And you're fired." <he shoots Rye out of a cannon>**

"Fantastic!" Spyglass exclaimed. "Velvet, could you be a dear and show this young colt to his quarters?"

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I ACCEPT ONLY SILVER COINS IN MY SLOT, SIR, QUARTERS ARE FOR PUS-PUS-PUS-QUEER LITTLE BABY MEN."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Nickels are even smaller, though!" [Velvet] "NOT WHERE I PUT THEM."**

Place him in the old quartermaster's nook.

**Steel: [Velvet] "NOOK DESIGNATED AS TARGET. CALCULATING BEST WAY TO BEND RYE."**

**SC276: Preferably, before being made into the bread.**

**Topher: Or let him ferment and drink him later. I'm thinking Mashmeister if it's an ale, or Ponybrau if it's a lager.**

You two can talk about unicorn stuff...

**Steel: [Spyglass] "...Unicorn stuff. Magic. Horns. Spells. Just... just that, okay? Talking."**

**Sigma: [Velvet] "WE WILL TALK. POST-COITAL CONVERSING IS A STANDARD SOCIETAL PRACTICE, IS IT NOT."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "DAMN IT, VELVET, MY CREW DOES NOT NEED ANOTHER CASE OF NIGHT TERRORS!"**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "Um... So, who does your horn filing?"**

get acquainted. Give him some time to calm down and collect his thoughts.

**Steel: [Rye] "I won't need much time... not much at all..."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Rye] "And...done."**

I am sure that today has been most trying."

**Sigma: [Rye] "Not really, sir." [Spyglass] "It was trying for us, Rye."**

**Steel: [Rye] "NOT ME."**

"Wait, I must ask, what happened to the crew of the ship that Lace Collar and I were traveling on?" Rye questioned.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Oh, shit, we forgot about them."**

**Steel: [Periscope] "We didn't light them on fire, did we? I can't remember."**

**Sigma: [Rye] "...That sounds ho-" [Spyglass] "Rye, don't finish that sentence. For my sanity's sake."**

"They are below decks in the brig. They are being treated well.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Ignore the air quotes."**

**SC276: [Spyglass] "That I am making with my claw hands- I mean hooves."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "They're all getting crunk on my imported Root Beer; it's cherry flavored."**

I plan to release them once we reach land.

**Steel: [Rye] "Release them to me. I'll treat them properly."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Spyglass] "—by firing them off our ship with our cannons."**

A few resisted and were subdued. One was killed because he would not submit.

**SC276: When FIMFiction got demanding.**

We don't like killing but sometimes it must be done," Spyglass replied.

**Steel: [Oracle] "HIS BLOOD WAS MADE OF RAINBOWS." [Spyglass] "SHUT UP, ORACLE!"**

A strange sense of confusion settled over Rye Mash after hearing the captain's words.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I'm so confused. There's more than one way to get instant half mast?"**

**Steel: [Rye] "And it's a requirement?" [Spyglass] "I didn't say that!"**

The newspapers always had stories of how Spyglass never took prisoners

**NaturalGlitch: "He has all the episodes on DVD, but lost his player."**

and never left anypony alive.

**Sigma: Like the Dread Pirate Roberts! Wait, no, that's from a much better story...**

**Steel: Like the one we're writing right now!**

**SC276: Roberts would've just iocaine powder'd someone.**

He had always trusted the newspapers as a source of truth.

**Steel: [Rye] "I knew Starlight Stage had ten kids so she could join the Illuminati and conquer the world! I KNEW IT!"**

**SC276: And now the Daily Prophet. This airship of the sky pirates has taken a left turn into the *Harry Potter* universe, and I just realized I have not made nearly enough *Klonoa 2* jokes.**

**NaturalGlitch: *Wha-hoo!***

Lace Collar and his family owned several newspapers in a few different cities.

**NaturalGlitch: They had to potty train Rye *somehow*.**

They were considered a bastion of integrity and truth.

**Sigma: So, basically, they were Fox News and everywhere was Alabama?**

**Steel: [Rye] "THE FOX IS MY SAVIOR, AND TRUTH IS MY SWORD! RACE MIXING WAS A BAD IDEA!!"**

Rye said nothing, but intended to ask the captain a few questions in private when he got the chance.

**Sigma: Questions such as, 'How much do I have to pay you to whip me?' and 'Are you sure you don't want to punish me for oh-so accidentally spilling the rum?'**

**Steel: [Rye] "Also, 'Why does Oracle keep trying to smoke me?' In the non-friendly way."**

"Follow me," Bloody Velvet commanded, her voice cutting through Rye's confusion.

**Steel: [Rye] "YES, MY ANGEL OF DEATH."**

**NaturalGlitch: [Velvet] "Into the barrel with you."**

The young colt did as he was bid.

**Steel: He couldn't stop hopping and singing with glee.**

**SC276: The highest he was bid was to follow her, but the next-highest was the Charleston.**

He walked behind her and looked around him at the crew who were already starting to disperse to do their work.

**Sigma: Even though they were all magic talking anthro hedgehogs, none of them could run fast enough to escape him.**  
**SC276: They're glad the scene's over too.**

His eyes met several of those around him. He saw smiling friendly faces. Hopeful faces.

**Steel: They were fake.**  
**SC276: ~Smiling hopeful faces feeling glad...~**  
**NaturalGlitch: [Pirates, creepy smile] "Welcome!"**

He did not see the faces of pirates.

**Steel: *Just victims.***

Author's Note:

Why yes, Bloody Velvet does come from the same house as Twilight Sparkle's family in The Chase.

**NaturalGlitch: PFFFFFT-AHAHAHAHAHHAHA!**

How observant of you to notice.

**Sigma: We didn't. We also don't care.**  
**Steel: And thus, Twilight's robotic personality is explained. THEY WERE ALL MACHINES.**  
**Sigma: What about Sweetie Bot?**  
**SC276: Maybe Rarity's family line branched off at some point, like with Pinkie and the Apples?**

I hope you enjoyed the opening chapter.

**Steel: I did. I have never been so inspired to write a fic about a high pirate, a sadomasochist, and a glitchy robot.**  
**Sigma: WE enjoyed it, but is HE going to enjoy seeing what we did?**  
**Steel: Who cares? I'm gonna love his reaction!**  
**SC276: I think I lost track of the franchise we're in. When does the subjugation of humanity happen? .....I have just been informed by myself from the future that this *isn't* the promised Chat fic. My bad.**

For those of you that haven't read The Chase, a number of things might not make sense.

**NaturalGlitch: Please go infect a different fandom, please. We have enough of your kind.**

So go read The Chase.

**Steel: HAVING WAY TOO FUN MUCH OVER HERE, CAN'T HEAR YOUR SWILL ABOUT CONTEXT!**

**Sigma: Hey, author, a story needs to stand on its own. Basic rule of writing.**

**SC276: This reminds me of one of my first fanfics... I listed a bunch of fics that were inspirations for it and drew canon from. One of them was a crack fic.**

Reviews of the opening chapter are most welcomed and greatly appreciated. So thanks.

**Steel: Review it? Okay, here's your review: REWRITE IT, THIS STORY WE'RE DOING IS SO MUCH BETTER.**

**NaturalGlitch: "Except ones that don't give me pure adoration. Anything else will be deleted."**

And let me know if I missed any typos. I think I got most of them. But a few always manage to slip through.

**Sigma: Bowchickabowwow.**

**SC276: Well, credit where it's due, I didn't notice any stand-out typesmanship errors. Which makes how terrible the actual content of the story is stand out.**

Chapter 2

**SC276: Oh god, there's *more*.**

Rye found that his quarters were distressingly small.

**Steel: [Rye] "Bloody Velvet? My angel? Why did you stick me in the closet?"**

**SC276: Because there weren't any cupboards under the stairway.**

He had seen closets larger than the tiny room that was meant to be his.

**Sigma: And he would know, his room WAS a closet. It let him get close to his master's clothes, and he could acquire their scents.**

**Steel: [Rye] "The kids made jokes for days about me coming out of my room each morning... *I showed them all.*"**

He supposed it was better than sleeping in a common room like most of the crew.

**Steel: [Rye] "What? No it's not! I can't be near their squishy bodies! But, but my angel is on the other side of the door... NNNNGH, NO, THIS IS TORTURE!"**

There was a hammock and there was a tiny narrow desk that folded into the wall.

**Steel: [Rye] "And why is there a desk in here?!" [Velvet] "SO YOU CAN WRITE ON IT, UNIT-RYE." [Rye] "IT'S SIDEWAYS AND PRESSED AGAINST MY FACE!"**

**Sigma: [Velvet] "EVENTUALLY YOU SHALL MAKE AN IMPRINT UPON IT AND I WILL HAVE A PART OF YOU FOREVER."**

**Steel: [Rye] "BUT MY ANGEL, KEEP MY BODY AND YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE ME!"**

**SC276: Murphy desk!**

"How is Canterlot?"

**Steel: [Rye] "Well for one, it isn't a fucking closet!"**

Rye turned to look at Bloody Velvet.

**Sigma: However, he got stuck on the wall due to his raging erection and was unable to turn further.**

**Steel: [Rye] "CURSE MY LOVE! AND THIS PAIN IS JUST MAKING ME HARDER! HELP!"**

Her pelt was a fiery orange and her mane and tail were a bright bloody red.

**Steel: [Rye] "Like the fiery destruction of my master's manor... ohh... ohhhhh... s-so much blood..."**

She was twitching and the corner of her mouth kept jerking into a lopsided smile. She was distractingly beautiful.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I thought no one could ever be prettier than the Joker... But now..."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Gotham... you hid her from me... no crueller act has been performed on my mind..."**

"Canterlot is probably much the same as it was when you left," Rye replied.

**Steel: [Velvet] "THE CITY IS STILL RIOTING?" [Rye] "No, no... I wish it were, though."**

"It is the eternal city. Nothing ever seems to change there," he said.

**Sigma: Boy, is HE gonna be in for a surprise.**

**Steel: Surprise? What surprise? Am I gonna laugh at said surprise?**

**SC276: Well it managed to recover from a changeling attack easily enough.**

Bloody Velvet's back arched for a moment and a leg kicked outwards.

**Steel: [Rye] "NO! NO, OPEN THE DOOR AND DO THAT AGAIN! I SWEAR TO GOD, NARRATOR, I WILL HUNT YOU DOWN, AND I WILL DO UNSPEAKABLE THINGS THAT WOULD CURDLE THE BLOOD OF THE ELDER GODS!"**

**Cthulhu: "DUDE, I AM TRYING TO SLEEP HERE, STOP GIVING ME NIGHTMARES!"**

"I have things to do.

**Steel: [Rye] "With me? Please say yes."**

I expect that the captain will be by to speak with you at some point.

**Steel: [Rye] "No! No, he-he can wait!"**

Settle in and get some rest.

**Steel: [Rye] "I CAN NEVER REST LIKE THIS! IT'S A CLOSET AND I CAN STILL HEAR YOU! I WILL NEVER KNOW REST WITHOUT YOUR TOUCH!"**

The captain is a very productive pony. He expects all of us to work tirelessly at our jobs.

**SC276: [Velvet] "WHICH IS WHY IT IS VERY EASY FOR ME."**

He had to throw the last cabin colt overboard," she said as she turned to leave.  
"WHAT?" Rye shouted.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I am outraged that I didn't get that treatment! That would've been hot as hell!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "Did... d-did you record it? PLEASE TELL ME YOU RECORDED IT."**

Bloody Velvet turned back around and one eye fluttered as she glanced at Rye Mash.

**Steel: [Rye] "I AM GOING TO MURDER YOUR FACE NARRATOR! GET THIS DOOR OUT OF MY WAY!"**

"The last cabin colt was thrown overboard. He was lazy, he was sloppy, and he tried to betray the captain in the middle of combat. Tried to shoot the captain in the back. Stupid colt," Bloody Velvet said.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "ALL PROPER STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE WOULD BE AWARE THAT YOU STAB PEOPLE IN THE BACK. SHOOTING DOES NOT WORK. THERE IS A REASON THE PHRASE IS WHAT IT IS."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh, yes, I agree! Please, please give me details. Especially about the fight. Gripping details. And open the door."**

"Oh... oh my," Rye gasped. "I would never do anything like that," he said.

**Steel: [Rye] "Unless you promised to whip me. Then I would betray you any day of the week. ...Shit, that came out wrong!"**

"No. You wouldn't. You're fragile and prissy. You'd be too scared to ever pull a stupid stunt like that," Bloody Velvet agreed.

**Steel: [Velvet] "YOU WOULD BREAK UNDER MY HOOF LIKE A TWIG."**

**Sigma: [Rye] "Oh, FUCK YEAH I would. \*shivers\*"**

Hot shame flooded through Rye's face.

**RJ: And out Rye's crotch. Or we're calling it shame at least.**

"I am not prissy," he spat. "I'm cultured!"



**Steel: [Rye] "But, but there's many other things that are bad about me! I'm weak! I'm frail! Please, please continue!"**  
**Discord: Oh for goodness' sake!**

"Yeah yeah, I've heard this all before," the mare said as she turned to leave.

**Steel: [Rye] "SWEET, LOVING REJECTION!"**

"There is a woollen blanket in the cabinet under the desk. It gets cold at night up here at the higher altitudes."

**Steel: [Rye] "...Can... can you open the door? Let me see your face, before the glorious sun dips below the horizon...?"**

She turned to look over her shoulder and gave Rye a final glance.

**Steel: [Velvet] "NO."**

"You seem nice. Life up here tends to make ponies not nice. Try to stay nice, okay?" she said as she departed.

**Sigma: Rye moaned like a wild boar as he released the massive orgasm he was holding in.**

**Steel: [Rye] "My angel, my cruel, cruel angel... such agony... oh God, I was so hard I'm chafing! Ow! OW!"**

**SC276: Stay nice so that you die quicker.**

Rye stood alone in his quarters.

**Steel: [Rye] "Crushed against the wall, actually!"**

It was narrow and long.

**Sigma: But not as narrow and long as his massive erection, which, for the first time in twelve hours, began to recede.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Note to self, re-organize closet-room-thing...!"**

He pulled the door shut and sat down near the desk, settling onto the wood floor.

**Steel: [Rye] "Much better. But now I can't lie down..."**

The ponies around him may or not be pirates,

**Steel: It was always so hard to see their eyes behind the bandannas, broken glasses, eye patches and other eyewear. [Rye] "...Oh my God, I'm on a ship full of vampires."**

but they seemed quite comfortable with casual acts of killing.

**SC276: Well the last cabin boy tried to kill the captain, so that was justified at least... I mean, for pirates.**

He shuddered, a cold tingling sensation running up and down his spine.

**Sigma: It was the returning of his arousal.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Like ice down my spine, I become harder than a blade..."**

His master Lace Collar was gone. And he was free. He didn't know how to feel about his freedom.

**Sigma: "Master gave Dobby a sock! Dobby is FREE!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "What is freedom if I cannot know enslavement anymore!? THIS IS SO OVERRATED!"**

**SC276: Yes, free as the wind that you're feeling on the small pirate ship who knows how many miles in the air.**

If he ever returned to Canterlot, there would be Tartarus to pay.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ohhhh, I can picture it now..."**

**SC276: They tripled the interest rate last month.**

Rye supposed that if things didn't work out here that he could try to return home to the isles. He wondered if he had any family there. He could only barely remember that he had family. All he had was hazy memories.

**Steel: [Rye] "I wonder if I have a big sister?"**

**Sigma: [Rye] "I hope she's not submissive, that's no fun at all!"**

**SC276: Her name is... I dunno, Wheat.**

There was a faint rapping at the door.

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh thank goodness, someone to open the door!"**

**Sigma: [Rye] "TUPAC?! I thought you died!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh my God, YOU'RE A GHOST! THAT'S WHY IT'S FAINT RAPPING!"**

**SC276: ~Kick, punch, it's all in the mind...~**

Rye turned to look and then opened the narrow plank door with his magic.

**Steel: [Rye] "...CAPTAIN SPYGLASS TOLD ME THIS DOOR WAS LOCKED!"**

There was a crew member standing there.

**Steel: [Rye] "You aren't Bloody Velvet."**

**SC276: His ID card said "Generic Not-Pirate #6592."**

**Sigma: I vote to name him Telescope.**

"A few things for you sir, some of the baubles that were taken from the fop," the crewmember said.

**Sigma: [Telescope] "Please don't steal my anus."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Hmm... you are spared. For now."**

**SC276: [Telescope] "Y'know, what we took off him before we threw him over the side and hope he didn't land someplace soft."**

"Thank you," Rye said graciously, taking the bag in his magic. When the crewmember turned to go,

**Steel: [Rye] "...Really? No, I said he was spared!"**

Rye shut the door.

**Steel: The pirate ran for safety, saying thanks to every God he knew for another day of life.**

He unfolded the desk from the wall and set the bag down.

**Steel: [Rye] "Hope Bloody Velvet minds that I'm using her desk..."**

He opened it up and began to pull out its contents.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Bills, bills, porn, dick pills, dick bills... Ah, my subscription of 'Fucked Up Shit Weekly' arrived!"**

**SC276: Let me guess, he only reads it for the articles?**

**Sigma: Actually, yes. He gets off to the obituaries.**

There was a small tobacco snuff box made from silver and ivory. Rye shivered. Making something from another animal's teeth. It was something that Lace Collar shouldn't have...

**Steel: [Rye] "Lace, you monster... \*shivers\*, I'm going to be on edge for a week now..."**

and made Rye quite puzzled. Lace Collar hated tobacco use. He called it vile and boorish.

**Steel: [Rye] "He lied to me about being a whipping colt. He lied about this as well!"**

He pushed the snuff box aside for a moment and continued to plunder the bag.

**Steel: [Rye] "Why is there a crusty magazine called 'Finances Weekly' in here...? It's sticky..."**

There was a bottle of cologne,

**Steel: [Rye] "All the better to choke you with, my dear! Ugh."**

a bar of sealing wax,

**Steel: [Rye] "How the hell do you seal cracks with this? Oh, wait... I was wondering why there were blocks shoved into the walls."**

and a small silver sealing wand with the symbol of House Avarice, which was a set of scales.

**Steel: [Rye] "...Was that an explosion?" [Spyglass] "AH, DAMN IT! PERISCOPE, VELVET'S IRONY METER JUST EXPLODED AGAIN!"**

**Sigma: [Periscope] "Sir, I TOLD you we should remove that thing and put in a motion sensing pinball table!" [Spyglass] "And I told YOU I'm not giving you an excuse to slap Velvet's asscheeks back and forth!"**

**Steel: [Periscope] "YOU'RE NO FUN, CAPTAIN!" [Spyglass] "AND YOU'RE AN IDIOT! NOW FIX HER!"**

**SC276: So does that make Lace the Jack of Scales? And if he's dead, that means someone's getting a scepter!**

There was a small bag filled with coins of all kinds. Equestrian bits, griffon dollars, and the small horn shaped bits of precious metal that the minotaurs used.

There was nothing particularly special in the bag.

**Steel: [Rye] "But the bag itself... hehe... heeeellooooo, new blindfold and gag..."**

**SC276: Hey, if you don't want the money, I'll take it. Just throw it towards the screen, I'll get it somehow.**

Rye finally opened the snuff tin, his nose crinkling in disgust.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Fucking amateur."**

**Steel: [Rye] "You're supposed to keep pony testicles in *cold temperatures*, not next to the furnace of your body... I learned that the hard way."**

The smell of the snuff was nauseating. There was also a bit of bone white parchment sticking out.

**Steel: [Rye] "I'd better keep this away from Oracle..."**

Rye carefully pinched it in his magic and pulled it free from the snuff. It was a tightly rolled strip of parchment.

**Steel: [Rye] "Yes, the repetition isn't needed, Narrator."**

**SC276: *We already knew that! Move on already!***

He unrolled the parchment and looked at it. It was covered in letters.

**SC276: As opposed to a Playcolt centerfold.**

It was all garble though. There were no words, only a jumble of letters. Rye thoughtfully considered the letters as he stared at them.

**Steel: [Rye] "I CAN HEAR THE VOICES TALKING ABOUT PARCHMENT, MAN!"  
"Oh, for the love of the seven seas, THERE ARE NO VOICES, ORACLE!"**

"Hello, I've found a code," he mumbled to himself.

**Steel: [Rye] "Reveal your kinky secrets to me, Lace, and I will practice them dutifully..."**

This was perhaps a chance to get on the captain's good side.

**Steel: [Rye] "Captain Spyglass is going to love this. ...I think he's into this kind of thing. I'll ask Velvet when she's fixed."**

**SC276: Well codebreaking might get you in with Twilight, but I don't think she's born yet.**

Telling the captain that he had found a coded message and presenting it to him would surely be seen as a sign of loyalty.

**Steel: [Rye] "That makes absolutely no sense, Narrator, but I'll run with it!"**

**Sigma: And so, he ran with it. Yaaaaay!**

**Steel: Straight into a wall.**

**SC276: Through the wall, actually. And through the hull.**

And Rye wanted to make sure that the captain knew that he was loyal.

**Steel: [Rye] "Because then, when I betray him, his punishment will be more harsh! And I'll have to do more things to earn his trust again! It's brilliant!"**

The last thing Rye wanted was to suddenly find himself tossed over the rail. He wasn't sure where they were, but they were over the ocean. And it would be a long way down.

**Steel: [Rye] "I'll wait until we're on an island, and *then* betray him."**

**Sigma: [Rye] "I'll blame the sea turtles. No one ever expects the sea turtles."**

**SC276: Am I not turtley enough for the Turtle Club? Turtle turtle!**

It had been a long day.

**Steel: [Rye] "And not a single whipping... a day truly wasted."**

He thought about the capture. Clouds had enveloped the airship he had been on.

**Steel: [Rye] "I remember it like it was yesterday..."**

**Sigma: Little did the moron realise, it was 12 hours ago.**

And then from out of the clouds came harpoons that punctured the gasbag.

**Sigma: Slowly, as the flashback continued, Rye began to reach half-mast.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Mmmm..."**

Hooks had been thrown over. The ship began sinking slowly, losing precious cloudstuff out of the tears in the gasbag.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ohhhh..."**

**SC276: The gasbag is crying? Someone make some chicken noodle soup for it, that'll help it feel better.**

There was some fighting on the decks. And then, as suddenly as it had begun, it was over. The deck had been set on fire and most of the crew were more than willing to be captured to escape the burning and sinking vessel.

**Steel: [Rye] "Yeeees..."**

And Rye had found himself taken and stuffed into a barrel.

**Sigma: He became the first non-fighter participant in a game of Smash Bros. Many were surprised when they threw it, and instead of a smash ball, they got a dumb little pony.**

**Steel: [Rye] "...Crap."**

It could have been worse. At least he was still alive. And free. In a sense. A quiet sense of doubt slipped into his mind. He was free to do as he was told and he was free to go over the rail.

**Steel: [Rye] "Fall from the ship to my death, or follow orders... neither of which end with me getting whipped. I miss Lace..."**

He heaved a sigh of resignation and decided to make the most of his situation.

**Steel: [Rye] "Maybe I missed a cat o' nine tails in the bag..."**

**SC276: He started playing pogs with the coins. Hey, if this was years ago, they might still be in vogue.**

He eyed the hammock. He had never slept in one before.

**Steel: [Rye] "Doesn't look too comfortable... why not?"**

A nap sounded rather nice right about now. He moved toward the hammock and raised a hoof.

**Sigma: [Rye] "HEIL HITLER!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "I think that's what it said in the book..."**

He gave a tug at the netting and tried to ease himself in. He immediately found himself dumped on the floor.

**Steel: [Rye] "ACH! My nose, my nose, ow, ow, blood, ow..."**

He gasped and struggled to draw breath, the fall having knocked the wind out of him. "Damn," he muttered, a rare vulgarity slipping from his lips.

**SC276: You call *that* a vulgarity? You're more sensitive than one of my other friends.**

Usually, he was far more genteel and polite.

**SC276: Usually when not reading a cruddy fanfic.**

He tried the hammock again, this time hooking both front hooves onto the edge of the hammock and trying to boost himself into the netting slung between two walls. The hammock flipped and twisted. Once again, Rye found himself kissing the floorboards.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ach... teeth... ow..."**

**SC276: Dude, quit making out with the floor. You look pathetic.**

"Oh son of a..." he hissed.

He angrily swiped at the hammock and then tried to leap into the now hated object.

**Sigma: Good god, is he a cat now?**

**Steel: Hope his claws are sharp, hammocks are terrifying enemies.**

**SC276: This is more like Snoopy trying to set up that lawn chair.**

He was almost in when at the last moment he felt the now familiar feeling of twisting in the air. A moment later he found himself on the floor.

**Steel: [Rye] "I WILL TEAR OUT YOUR THREADING AND MAKE A MOCKERY OF GOD OUT OF YOU!"**

"YOU DIRTY LITTLE TEAT BITER!" he snarled. He felt a hot flash of embarrassment flood his cheeks. He didn't know where those words came from.

**Sigma: He was too dumb to read, so he couldn't have read them somewhere.**

**SC276: Well they clearly came from your mouth.**

In his entire life he had never said anything quite like that.

**Steel: [Rye] "In public."**

As far as angry profanities went, it was rather tame, but to Rye's ears it sounded positively awful.

**Steel: [Rye] "I think I like this..."**

**SC276: He oughta see the Wizard swear.**

The unicorn glared at the hammock, his now most hated enemy.

**Steel: [Rye] "You are *officially* on my 'Worse than Lace's Son' shit list."**

**SC276: "Dinkleberg..."**

Of all of the horrible things the hammock had done,

**RJ: Kidnapping, grand theft, murder...**

the worst offense committed was causing Rye to lose his composure and the unicorn truly resented the inanimate object for doing so.

**Sigma: ...I just realised that this is an attempt at humor by the author.**

**Steel: As flat as rye bread...**

**SC276: And as tasteful as white.**

Using his magic, he pulled the hammock open wide, made it stiff,

**Sigma: [Rye] "-but not as stiff as his cock,"**

and then he sort of rolled into it.

**RJ: [Oracle] ...You call that a blunt? [Spyglass] Not everything you roll can become a joint, Oracle! [Oracle] Because you haven't tried. [Spyglass] For the love of...**

He sprawled out and ceased the flow of magic. The hammock swung slightly and Rye found that he was quite comfortable.

**Steel: [Rye] "...Damn it. Ah well, at least it won't take me an hour to sleep..."**

He took pleasure in his victory over the now hated hammock.

**Steel: [Rye] "You serve *me* now... now, time to find a proper hole in this thing..."**

His feeling of victorious triumph was short lived however.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I can't fuck *any* of these holes!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "Hammock, how could you?!"**

**SC276: [Rye] "You have betrayed me for the last time!"**

It wasn't long before he slipped into an exhausted slumber.

**SC276: He dreamed he was one of those bass at the end of *Finding Nemo*.**

---

He awoke to the sounds of knocking.

**Steel: [Rye] "WHIPPING TIME! ...Oh. Ugh..."**

**SC276: Shave and a haircut...~**

He struggled to get out of the hammock and found that he could not escape.

**Steel: [Rye] "Hammock... don't start doing this."**

**SC276: [hammock] "You serve *me* now!"**

He wiggled and twisted. His hated enemy had one last trick it seemed. Resentment boiled his unicorn blood.

**Steel: [Rye] "I swear I will MAKE a new hole to fuck if you don't let me go!"**

"Do come in. Forgive me, I am having some trouble with this damnable hammock," Rye said to whomever was at the door.



**SC276: Out, damned hammock!**

The door opened. "They are troublesome things," Captain Spyglass said as he entered the small room. "Are you settling in? Other than the hammock, are you content?"

**Steel: [Rye] "Well, I'm tangled up in my bed, I can't find a hole in it, and you aren't Bloody Velvet. No, my morning's going spectacularly well! Why do you ask?"**

"I think so," Rye said in reply. "Having some trouble with the idea of such casual murder though," he added.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I mean, shouldn't you *savor* the murder? You know, enjoy it? Wait till you're rock hard THEN let him die?" [Spyglass] "Kid, never come near me in battle."**

**Steel: [Rye] "You know I'll glue myself to your side now, right?" [Spyglass] "It's regretful knowledge..."**

**SC276: The only two times they killed someone that we've seen so far, it was someone who tried to fight back and a dude they beat up so much he was probably going to die from bleeding out even if he wasn't plummeting into a salt water mass. Neither of those seems casual to me.**

Rye looked at the captain as he remained slung in the hammock.

**Steel: [Rye] "You know, if you had any long, hard implements to, perhaps, answer this issue of me sleeping in..."**

"Ah, that. Well, I do believe in time as you learn more of what goes on that your feelings will change.

**Steel: [Rye] "They sent me to camp for that. I didn't change much."**

We are not in Equestria.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "This! Is! SPARTA!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "\*CRACK\* AGH, WHY'D YOU KICK ME!? It-It felt good, but still, why!?"**

Things are different out here.

**Steel: [Rye] "OH, REALLY?! I HADN'T NOTICED."**

Princess Celestia's rule does not extend to the skies and the seas.

**Steel: [Rye] "Good, seeing her everywhere was liable to get me executed for treason and war crimes..."**

**SC276: So, how high up does Equestria airspace authority end?**

The Sea of Grass, the homeland of the zebras,

**SC276: Author, it's a country, not a *Kingdom Hearts* world.**

they have no means of influencing what goes on out here. The griffons... ah, the griffons. Most of the actual pirates you encounter will be griffons.

**Steel: [Rye] "I hear griffons scream when they get stabbed... is that true?"**

The griffons are also slavers.

**SC276: Everyone's a bloody slaver in this fic.**

You have to be careful with the griffons though," Spyglass said as he sat down upon the floor and watched Rye who was squirming in his hammock.

"Be careful?" Rye asked.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Yes. You do know what 'careful' means, right?" [Rye] "Careful is carrying dishes while being whipped." [Spyglass] "...Oh dear."**

**SC276: Well he did already say they were slavers. Pay attention already!**

"There are two sorts of griffons," Spyglass replied. "Good ones and bad ones.

**SC276: Just like there's good Samaritans and bad Samaritans.**

**RJ: [Spyglass] Just remember: the good one smell like wet cats, The bad ones look like fluffy puffs of love.**

The good ones are trying to escape Griffonholm.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "We don't go to Griffonholm."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "But you're free to. Just, avoid all the jumpy parasites... or don't... they have big holes, after all."**

**SC276: You might belong in Griffonholm, where dwell the brave at heart...**

They flee their homeland, disgusted at what is going on there. They are trying to get to places like Equestria. Princess Celestia has been most gracious and takes in the refugees," Spyglass explained.

"And the bad ones?" Rye asked.

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Ever wondered where KFG comes from?"**

**Steel: [Rye] "Always... I *must* know how they make such tasty food..."**

"The bad ones would eat you.

**Steel: [Rye] "Go on."**

They don't care that you could talk.

**Steel: [Rye] "Alright..."**

They would see you as nothing more than a slave at best or food at worst.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ohhh..."**

They are horrible rapacious brutes that cannot be reasoned with.

**Steel: [Rye] "Uh huh? T-Tell me more..."**

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "RAPACIOUS, not rapist!"**

**SC276: OK, I'm gonna look that up, no way that's a real word... "Aggressively greedy or grasping." Captain Spyglass? More like Captain Thesaurus.**

They believe that all other races are beneath them. Well, most of them. Some of them can be reasoned with to a small degree I suppose. I know that House Avarice trades slaves to them. If we ever get boarded by hostile griffons, start killing and hold nothing back. If you get captured, you will not like what happens afterward," Spyglass said.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "...You're ma—" [Rye] "I WOULDN'T DREAM OF IT, NO, NO, I-I'M NOT. Eyes up here, pervert!"**

Rye felt a cold shiver travel through his body.

**Steel: Spyglass just rubbed his face as Rye made a new, white stain on the floor.**

"I've never learned combat magic," he admitted.

**SC276: Which makes sense. Never trust the involuntary help with a weapon.**

**Sigma: [Spyglass] "Son, all anyone needs to do is look at you and they'll run away."**

**Steel: [Rye] "But I want them to run *towards* me! I'm vulnerable! I'm weak! I'm tasty! I'm definitely not hiding a knife."**

"No, of course not.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Teaching you combat magic would be like giving a demon a gun..."**

They wouldn't teach a slave combat magic, the means to free himself," Spyglass replied.

**SC276: STOP READING MY MIND!**

The pegasus shook his head and looked disgusted.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Guh... SOMEONE GET ORACLE DOWN HERE, CLEAN-UP IN CABIN THREE!"**

**Sigma: [Oracle] "Hey, dude, the only thing that needs cleaning is your mi- oh, gross, did he cum on the floor?"**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Just... j-just clear it up, please..."**

Rye felt hot anger course through him.

**SC276: Like how a Red Lantern doesn't have blood anymore.**

He hated being called a slave. He hated it even more now that he knew that it was true.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Oh God, are you getting hard again?!"**

"I am going to have Bloody Velvet give you a pair of pistols and teach you how to use them.

**Steel: [Rye] "Long, round things made of metal? I already know how to use them." [Spyglass] "Not like THAT, no!"**

Your magic should allow you to hold it and fire it.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "DO NOT crack a joke." [Rye] "T-Trying..."**

Griffons and minotaurs invented guns to counter magic. I am trusting you with these firearms. Should we get in a pinch, I hope that you will have my back and not try to shoot me in the back," Spyglass stated.

**SC276: Spyglass's back is so important to him, he had to mention it twice.**

**Steel: [Rye] "You have my word that I will give at least 20% effort." [Spyglass] "...Not even going to be optimistic for me, are you?"**

"And Bloody Velvet will also start teaching you some combat magic. She's more of a defensive sort, but she has some doozers as far as spells go.

**SC276: A doozer is one who carries several doozeys. So, she has a small battalion, like Bowser's Magikoopa Mob move in *Bowser's Inside Story*?**

**Steel: That would actually be pretty cool. So of course, it'll never show up in this story.**

**SC276: Adding Bowser to anything invariably makes it cool.**

**Sigma: So, adding Bowser to that crappy Pokemon crossover verse...**

**SC276: Correction: adding a *properly written* Bowser to anything invariably makes it cool.**

She's the reason we are still airborne. She has the most marvelous shield spell. She can create an impenetrable bubble around the ship.

**SC276: And then Bloody Velvet was Twilight Sparkle being Shining Armor.**

**Steel: [Rye] "You're just tempting me, aren't you." [Spyglass] "...Look, just listen to me, keep penetration out of your mind." [Rye] "Captain..." [Spyglass] "Then just listen to me!"**

It blocks cannon fire, harpoons, other spells, she really is an amazing wizard.

**SC276: She's a wizard, 'Arry.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "WIZARDS ARE ILLOGICAL AND MYTHICAL. I AM A MAGE." [Spyglass] "I'd call her a witch, but that would be an insult..."**

You would do well to learn from her," the pegasus said.

**Steel: [Rye] "I will learn as much as I can from my bloody angel of vengeance..." [Spyglass] "You... you do that, yeah..."**

Rye nodded and then remembered the scrap of parchment. "Oh, sir, I meant to tell you. I found a strip of parchment in Lace Collar's snuffbox--"

**Sven: [Rye] "It just has the word 'MacGuffin' written on it."**

"Is it covered in what appears to be code?" Spyglass interrupted.

**SC276: Great, vigilante pirate and now mind reader too.**

**Steel: [Rye] "How'd you—" [Spyglass] "Know what it was? Easy." [Rye] "But you—" [Spyglass] "Never saw it? Mm, not so true." [Rye] "Stop—" [Spyglass] "Finishing your sentences? NEVER."**

"Yes sir, it is. I meant to tell you. You came in and we got to talking. I should have told you right away," Rye said apologetically.

Spyglass smiled. "I appreciate your loyalty. I am starting to like you Rye Mash," the pegasus said.

**SC276: Which means he took the kid on while *not* liking him.**

**Sigma: Hey, come on, be fair to the guy. Why would ANYONE like Rye?**

**Steel: We like him. Well, not this one, but you know what I mean.**

"I have other such scraps of paper. I have no idea what they mean yet, but I am dying to know what they say."

**SC276: Doctor's given him a week left.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Give it to me straight, doc." [Spyglass] "You suffer from sadomasochism." [Rye] "That's not a disease." [Spyglass] "For you, it is."**

**Sigma: Hey, if people can claim autism is a disease...**

"If I could study them I might be able to puzzle them out. Lace Collar had me break a few ciphers for him," Rye replied.

**Ringmaster: [Rye] "Crossword puzzles, some word searches, a sudoku game or two... those are ciphers, right?"**

**Sigma: I think he just means the Cipher from that Pokémon game on Gamecube.**

**Ringmaster: But that would actually require *effort* to break.**

**Steel: [Rye] "I've conquered the world's most difficult cipher!" [Spyglass] "The Darren Algorithm?" [Rye] "What? No. A 48x48 Sudoku game." [Spyglass] "...You are *clearly* qualified for this, yes..." [Rye] "I am, aren't I?"**

"Oh really," Spyglass said charmingly.

**SC276: In the same way a mom plays along with her kid's fantasies.**

**Sigma: Thanks for giving me the image of Rye's mom going along with his weird sexual fantasies.**

**Steel: Considering his last name, I don't think that's so off the mark.**

"I just need a lot of words to look at.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Usually 'butt' and 'sex,' in that order."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Preferably only separated by a space." [Spyglass] "Oh dear..."**

A pattern forms. Like the word 'the' for example. It connects other words together.

**Sigma: [Rye] "For example, 'The ass,' which creates the image of anal-"**

**[Spyglass] "We get it, you need to get laid!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "...Was I really that obvious...?"**

You just start looking for the letter groupings of what might be the word 'the' and you figure out what those three letters are.

**Steel: [Spyglass] "And if there's a lot of three-letter words?" [Rye] "...Thhhhen I look for 'if'!" [Spyglass] "You're not inspiring a lot of confidence." [Rye] "No, no, I can do it! Just give me the note and I'll have the message to you by sundown! And if I don't, you can wh—" [Spyglass] "Don't finish that sentence!"**

And then you look for other common letter groupings like the word 'are' and whatnot. 'The' and 'are' both share a letter and it becomes pretty easy to guess what is what," Rye explained.

**SC276: So the world hasn't advanced to the point where the Vigenère cipher has been invented yet. I'm familiar with the advancement of cyphers across human history, and the moment someone comes up with rotating keys, your method is *shot*.**

**Sigma: So, basically, they better hope there isn't a Batman-type character around.**

**Ringmaster: Wouldn't even take rotating keys, this method could be shot to all hell by something as simple as intentional misspellings.**

"Fascinating. I will tell you what. You crack that code and you will not be my cabin colt any longer. I will promote you to my intelligence officer. Or something like that.

**SC276: [Spyglass] "I don't actually have any idea what a cabin colt *does*."**

**Sigma: [Rye] "Well, hopefully Velvet."**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Yes. 'Hopefully'."**

I've never had one before.

**SC276: You've never had intelligence? You've heard it here first, folks!**

**Steel: [Spyglass] "I feel like the universe just zinged me..."**

But you would be the first. And I will double... no, triple your pay," Spyglass offered.

**Steel: [Rye] "Yes, actual money!" [Spyglass] "Which I will then pull from for the ship's collective resupply fund." [Rye] "Oh fuck off!"**

"You have a deal sir," Rye answered.

"Delightful!" Spyglass exclaimed.

**SC276: Satisfactory, most satisfactory.**  
**Steel: This will work.**

Author's Note:

Chapter two is now live. The story grows legs.

**RJ: Oh crap, the fic's starting to mutate!**  
**Sigma: Cut them off and burn the stumps before they regenerate!**  
**SC276: Anyone have Heracles's phone number?**

The shield spell seem familiar to anyone? Magic runs in families you know...

**SC276: WINK WINK NUDGE NUDGE SAY NO MORE SAY NO MORE**  
**Sigma: This is not quite as bad as the wink-wink-nudge-nudging in *Gotham*, but it's still bad.**

Let me know if I missed any typos. A few always survive the purge.

**Sigma: Yes, I noticed a glaring typo, this story was published.**  
**Steel: OHHHHH! Riffers 1, Author 0.**

And discuss stuff below. Discussion good! Empty comments section bad.

**SC276: Then why do authors keep turning them into deleted comment graveyards?**  
**Ringmaster: Because it's not the *right* type of discussion.**

Chapter 3

Rye Mash walked slowly around the deck of the ship, watching the sun set off on the distant horizon. The sunset was never more beautiful than it was right now. The clouds were purple, orange, and red.

**SC276: *Discord!***  
**Discord: Don't look at *me*! I've over here in a better story!**  
**Steel: You wish you were, at least.**

The first stars of the evening were already shining on the other horizon. Somehow, the notion of being truly free made the sunset all the more beautiful even though he could not say why exactly.

**SC276: That's probably because the author couldn't either.**  
**Steel: So far, the author hasn't been capable of much beyond really basic description.**  
**Sigma: Untrue, Steel. He's been capable of giving us shit to work with. Not necessarily GOOD stuff, but hey.**

Other members of the crew also seemed to be taking a moment to enjoy the setting sun. "Yer the new cabin colt," a voice in a clipped accent said.

**Steel: His vocal cords will never fly again...**

Rye turned to face the pony speaking to him. He saw a pegasus. A scrawny looking pegasus.

**SC276: There's not a single dang Earth pony in this crew, is there.**

**Steel: Earth Ponies don't belong on the sea! They belong in the dirt!**

**Sigma: Filthy Earthy peasants. Glorious Unicorn master race shall rule supreme!**

**Ringmaster: It scares me that those both absolutely sound like actual lines of dialogue from *The Chase*.**

**Sigma: Give Kudzu time, I'm sure it'll be true.**

"Name's Skeeter. My mother named me Mosquito.

**SC276: Probably for his tongue.**

**Steel: [Rye] "HAHAHAHAHAHAHA! W-Wait, your mother named you after a bug, and you're using another word for a shooting orgasm as your name?! AHAHAhAhAAHA— ...Wait." [Skeeter] "What?"**

This is my first tour. I left home looking to find my way in the world. Captain Spyglass offered twice the wages of everypony else," the pegasus said, introducing himself and offering a bit of history.

**SC276: Twice compared to the other employers, or compared to the rest of the crew?**

"My name is Rye Mash. I'm named after a type of whiskey.

**Ringmaster: And because Kudzu wanted an absolutely horrendous pun with the title of an old book.**

I was captured today and joined the crew," Rye said.

**SC276: He probably already knew that! Move on already!**

**Sigma: [Rye] "Politeness out of the way, Mosquito. Mosquitos suck blood. You're named after a mosquito, so you must suck blood... OH MY GOD!"**

**[Skeeter] "What the hell are you talking about?"**

**Steel: [Rye] "AWAY, VILE VAMPIRE, YOU WILL NOT TAKE MY BLOOD! THE POWER OF CELESTIA COMPELS YE, THE POWER OF CELESTIA COMPELS YE!!!"**

**SC276: Quick, we need stakes, crosses, and lines of rice!**

"Hey, do you know where we are going?" Rye asked.

**Sigma: [Rye] "It better be somewhere with sunlight 24-7!"**

**Steel: [Skeeter] "I'm not a vampire, though!" [Rye] "THAT'S WHAT A VAMPIRE WOULD SAY!"**

"Trottingham," Skeeter answered.

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh my God, you're a TROTtingham VAMPIRE? Prim, proper, fucking bloodsucker!"**

**Sigma: [Skeeter] "I'm not a fucking vampire!"**



"So the Shire Isles," Rye said as he turned his gaze out towards the colourful horizon.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Home of the legendary Cock Rings of Power."**

**Steel: [Skeeter] "...What?!" [Rye] "You know of what I speak!" [Skeeter] "No I don't!" [Rye] "Of course, because they're the only way to keep an erection, even after a vampire sucks out your blood! Of COURSE you'd want them to stay a legend!"**

"Yep, the Old World. Captain Spyglass wasn't lying when he promised me that I would be able to see the world if I toured with him.

**Steel: [Rye] "And with a vampire in my presence, I wish I'd never accepted his offer when he asked me to join." [Skeeter] "I'm not a fucking vampire! Now shut up and listen!"**

**SC276: Even the *characters* are getting tired of this running gag.**

I'm just a poor pegasus from Cloudsdale. I never thought I'd have a chance at a good life," Skeeter said with great enthusiasm.

**Sigma: [Rye] "But if vampires aren't alive, how can you have a good life?" [Skeeter] "Shut the fuck up, Breadhead."**

"I am from Canterlot. Well, sort of.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I mean, I was born there, but they kicked my family out immediately after exiting the cootch." [Skeeter] "I wonder why."**

I was originally from the Shetland Isles. And then I spent time in Fillydelphia. And then Canterlot," Rye explained in reply.

"Yer a Shetlander," Skeeter said slowly.

**SC276: Yer a wizard, 'Arry.**

**Steel: [Rye] "WHAT'D YOU CALL ME, A SHITLANDER?!" [Skeeter] "SHET. LANDER. SHET. SHET." [Rye] "STOP CALLING ME POOP!"**

**SC276: Then be a character in a story that's not crap!**

"I've met a few of your kind.

**Steel: [Skeeter] "Aren't you all supposed to be really screwed up libertines living under the rule of a narcissistic blonde unicorn who rapes and kills everyone he wants?" [Rye] "No, but he's my patron saint."**

**SC276: ...I literally can't tell whether that's too far or not.**

**Steel: This is Rye we're talking about. Everything is too close for him.**

**Sigma: Except Death. That bastard ain't close enough for Rye.**

Always glad to meet your kind. Shetlanders tend to be some of the nicest ponies I've ever met," Skeeter said.

**Sigma: [Skeeter] "...Sure you're one of them?"**

"Shame about what goes on there though," he added in a low voice.

**SC276: No one had any idea where that volcano came from.**

Rye nodded and turned his gaze back to Skeeter. "So what is it that you do?" Rye asked.

"Me? I gather clouds and help to compress them into the gasbag.

**RJ: [Skeeter] "It's our newest gasbag, the Trump. It holds a LOT."**

**Steel: [Skeeter] "We aren't allowed to talk about politics, though. Any time we mention the economy, the bag bursts open and starts leaking hot air."**

I also fetch clouds and stuff them into the condenser so we can have water for both drinking and powering the steam engines. I also move cargo, well, the stuff I can lift, and will do most anything I am asked," Skeeter replied.

**Ringmaster: [Rye] "Oh, I will *definitely* take you up on that offer."**

**Steel: [Skeeter] "Um... okay?" [Spyglass] "NO, RUN! RUN AWAY, MOSQUITO!"**

**[Rye] "HehehehehEHEHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! AHAHAHAHAHAHA!" [Skeeter] "Oh boy..."**

**SC276: IT'S A TRAP!**

"You mean to tell me that there are clouds in there?" Rye asked as he looked up at the gasbag.

**SC276: It's not like the last gasbags he saw before these were punctured and leaking cotton candy, author.**

"Super compressed clouds.

**Sigma: You think that's air you're breathing in?**

**Steel: [Rye] "Wait, does this mean I'm *on* Cloud Nine?" [Skeeter] "That was awful and you should feel awful."**

And a bit of unicorn magic. We pegasi can build cities out of clouds. Hanging an airship from a compressed cloudbank is easy. We do have to get unicorns to enchant the ship though so it is super light," Skeeter explained as he answered Rye's question.

**Sigma: [Skeeter] "Easier than getting an editor for that paragraph, anyway."**

**Steel: [Rye] "I knooooow."**

During his entire time aboard an airship he had never bothered to ask how they stayed aloft. Rye felt a little stupid.

**Steel: [Rye] "But only because it's not polite to call *him* stupid!"**

He continued to stare upwards at the gasbag in disbelief. It was nothing more than clouds. The only thing keeping the ship aloft was clouds. A few bits of fluff were all that kept him and everypony else from plunging to their death.

**SC276: It's kept an entire city aloft, why are you questioning it?**

**Sigma: [Rye] "...But can I fuck it?"**

**Steel: [Skeeter] "Why would you want to fuck a *city*?" [Rye] "Because I am capable of *anything*."**

"I have to go, stuff to do, but I hope we will talk again," Skeeter said.

"It was pleasant meeting you," Rye said as Skeeter departed. He heard a growl coming from his stomach and wondered where he could get a bite to eat.

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh God, his presence has made me hunger for blood! I FEEL MY SOUL EXITING MY BODY!"**

**SC276: Pretty sure our souls are exiting *our* bodies by this point.**

---

Officer's mess was separate from the crewmember's mess Rye discovered, and as cabin boy he had the privilege of eating in the tiny officer's mess.

**SC276: One, cabin *colt*; if you're going to adapt terms, use them consistently. Two, how the hell is a cabin boy considered an officer? It's practically a paid internship.**

**Steel: [Rye] "...Wait, you mean I can't eat in here? They said I could have this room all to myself!"**

Everything onboard this ship seemed tiny and cramped. Officer's mess was a round table

**SC276: Captain Spyglass and his Pirates of the Round Table.**

**Sigma: They dance when're they're able!**

secured to the wooden floor. No chairs. There was a tiny window to the kitchen that food was passed through.

**Sigma: It also functioned as a gloryhole.**

**Steel: [Rye] "I just got a great prank idea..."**

Dinner was a chunk of black bread, a bowl of thick root vegetable stew, two apples, and the option of a few pickled eggs, which Rye gladly took.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Not as good as a cucumber, but oh well..."**

It was much better food than he was used to eating. Back home, the servants were fed leftovers boiled into a runny gruel.

**Sigma: Leftovers from what, they were never told.**

**Steel: [Rye] "...Waiter, there's an eye in my soup!"**

Abroad with Lace Collar, Rye ate whatever the deckhands were eating, which wasn't much.

**Steel: [Rye] "Those ratcicles were amazing..."**

The food was delightful.

**Steel: [Rye] "Yes, er... 'delightful', mm... just push this hoof off to the siiiide..."**

The cook made it known that the officers and the deckhands ate the same food,

**Steel: [Spyglass] "Oh for the love of... MY PONY LEG IS UNDERCOOKED!"**

just in different places. Deckhands ate on deck or below decks.

**Steel: The cobwebs add a certain stringiness to the texture.**

Rye ate alone and pondered his situation.

**Steel: [Rye] "...If I got some candles and brought Velvet in here, actually."**

He realised that he was finally in a position to do something with his life.

**Steel: [Rye] "The world will never see me cumming..."**

He wasn't just planning the future as he had done when he was Lace Collar's servant, hoping for the day when he had his freedom and his debt was paid off.

**Steel: [Rye] "Now I can MONOLOGUE about it! Mwahahahahahah!"**

His future actually was his own now. He had a chance to make some money if he could crack the code on the parchment strips.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Drink... Your... Ovaltine?"**

**Steel: [Rye] "Those sly bastards... it's an advertisement campaign! I SHOULD'VE KNOWN!"**

The notion of his future was almost overwhelming.

**Steel: Rye promptly collapsed and started foaming at the mouth.**

It was no longer a distant dream, something to daydream about.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I have jerk-off material right in front of me!"**

It was here, it was now, and he had a good opportunity to make something of himself.

**SC276: We get it, Ace of Pentacles. Keep the plot moving already.**

**Steel: [Rye] "THE DOG'S DAY HAS COME! And he is SURROUNDED by bitches!"**

He chewed thoughtfully on his chunk of black bread. It was oily and smelled a bit weird. He couldn't remember the name of the oil used to preserve the bread and keep the mould away.

**RJ: [Chef Bifocal] It's Pennzoil 10W-30. That's was meant for Velvet.**

It smelled faintly of pine.

**Ringmaster: And the award for "Flattest Writing Ever" goes to...**

**SC276: "Mould." British? Maybe? That just looks like a typo to me, but I'm not Not-American, so...**

**Sigma: This is so flat you can't even see it from certain angles.**

**Steel: So flat, it existed in the first dimension.**

The door opened and Bloody Velvet entered.

**Steel: [Rye] "MY ANGEL OF VENGEANCE, COME TO LIBERATE ME FROM SOLITUDE!"**

**SC276: [Rye]: "ACTUALLY, CAN YOU COME BACK A LITTLE LATER? I NEED TO GET CANDLES."**

She sat down at the table and twitched a bit. "I was hoping to find you here. I understand that I am to give you firearms training.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "DOES YOUR GENITALIA ALSO DETACH INTO A HIGH-POWERED ENERGY CANNON?"**

**Steel: [Rye] "No, but it shoots just as hard!" [Velvet] "I WILL NEED TO TEST THIS." [Rye] "NO NO NO IT DOESN'T COME OFF!"**

We will begin tomorrow.

**RJ: [Velvet] "WE WILL MEET ON THE FIELDS OF HALO. PREPARE TO GET REKT, N00-N00-N00-SCRUB. YOUR TEABAGGING WILL BE CONSTANT." [Rye] "... Teabagging? So my normal Wednesday nights then?"**

**Steel: [Velvet] "ONLY MADE OF METAL AND SYNTHETIC FUR." [Rye] "Oh my God, yes."**

I have a brace of pistols taken from a griffon.

**SC276: The same way you loot Fallout enemies. You look at them, a menu pops up...**

**Steel: And then your game glitches and you get locked in the menu. [Rye] "HELP! I CAN'T STOP LOOKING AT THIS PONY'S RIGOR MORTIS'D COCK!"**

Nice weapons. Large bore.

**Ringmaster: It was a copy of *The Chase*.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Ewwwww, no."**

There is also a shotgun.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I WOULD ALSO MENTION THE SIX BARREL, SEVENTY CALIBER ROTARY AUTOCANNON, BUT YOUR SMALL FRAME AND WIMPY MUSCLES WOULD SHATTER UNDER ITS WEIGHT." [Rye] "I will gladly carry it for you, my love."**

I shall have to teach you about the rules of combat aboard an airship, like never fire upwards," she said, the corner of her mouth ticking as she spoke.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "THE SAME APPLIES TO PREPARING AN ORGASM."**  
**Steel: [Rye] "Many a time have I blinded myself, forgetting this rule."**

Rye nodded but said nothing because his mouth was full.

**Sigma: Of his own dick.**  
**Steel: [Velvet] "DOES UNIT RYE ALSO HAVE COMPARTMENTALIZATION OF THE CHEST CAVITY?" [Rye] "Mmph."**

Bloody Velvet turned her head and stared into the corner.

**Steel: [Velvet] "WALL IS CHALLENGING ME TO A STARING CONTEST. SOCIETAL CODE DICTATES I MUST ACCEPT."**

She cringed and shuddered.

**RJ: [Velvet] DAMNED CREEPERS. [Spyglass] Who let her on the Minecraft server again? [Periscope] She wasn't on the server... [Spyglass] Good. [Periscope] She IS the server. [Spyglass] ...sigh.**

Rye swallowed and found his courage.

**Sigma: It was his dick.**  
**Steel: He just swallowed the whole thing.**

It was probably a foolhardy thing that he was about to do, but he figured that there was no harm in asking. "What do you see?" he asked.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I SEE THAT THEY ARE TAKING THE HOBBITS TO ISENGARD."**  
**Steel: [Rye] "Taking the Hobbits to Isengard!?" [Velvet] "TAKING THE HOBBITS TO ISENGARD."**  
**SC276: ~The Hobbits- the Hobbits- the Hobbits- the Hobbits to Isengard- to Isengard!~**

"Bah, if I told you, you would only think I was crazy like everypony else," Bloody Velvet replied.

**SC276: Don't worry; we're reading this, so we're crazy too.**  
**Steel: Bonafide, masochistic psychopaths.**

"Try me," Rye said. He then slurped up a pickled egg.

**Sigma: [Rye] "What kind of egg is this?" [Velvet] "IT IS A TRANSLATION ERROR. THOSE ARE SPANISH DUCK TESTICLES."**  
**Steel: [Rye] "... \*Gulp\*... Not bad. There any others?"**

Bloody Velvet sighed and slumped.

**Steel: [Velvet] "EMERGENCY SHUTDOWN." [Rye] "NO! COME BACK!"**

"I don't like talking about it. I know how crazy it makes me sound," she said in a low voice. One ear took on a metronome like twitch.

"I once saw a ghost. Nopony believes me. Everypony laughed and thought I was barmy," Rye said.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I sucked it off! I KNOW it was there!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "IT! TASTED! LIKE LOLLIPOPS!"**

Bloody Velvet smiled a lopsided smile. "I believe you," she said. The mare sighed. "Princess Celestia sees all," she began.

**Steel: [Velvet] "CONSPIRACY PROTOCOL, ENGAGED."**

"I know it sounds paranoid,

**Steel: [Rye] "And it does."**

but I swear it is true.

**Steel: [Rye] "I *certainly* believe you."**

She latches on to certain ponies that she finds interesting.

**Steel: [Rye] "And now I'm getting mental images."**

**SC276: Like how barnacles latch onto ships.**

She has a realm... some place on the astral plane I think.

**Steel: [Rye] "Space princesses. Alright then."**

A grey place. It is full of big moving pictures... like paintings that move. And she watches certain ponies that interest her.

**Sigma: [Rye] "...I suddenly feel uncomfortable about my privacy."**

**Steel: [Velvet] "...I DETECT A CONCENTRATION OF HEAT IN YOUR PELVIC AREA." [Rye] "I never said what I felt was a bad thing."**

And I can see her divination magic," Bloody Velvet stated.

**SC276: But telling the information to anyone will cause her concentration to slip enough to vaporize everyone in a mile radius.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "WHOOOPS." And then the boat vanished.**

Rye chewed a bit of black bread, swallowed, and nodded.

**Steel: [Velvet] "THAT BLACK STALLION IS STILL SCREAMING." [Rye] "I know."**

"I believe you," he said sincerely.

"Wait, are you actually being honest?" Bloody Velvet asked.

**Steel: [Rye] "Yes. Completely and totally." [Velvet] "SARCASM." [Rye] "Nooooo, I'm not being sarcastic." [Velvet] "LIES." [Rye] "Most definitely not lying." [Velvet] "SIZE SHIFT IN THE NOSE." [Rye] "God damn it!"**

Rye nodded and took another bite.

"She knows I can see her globes of divination magic.

**SC276: ...You mean crystal balls?**

**Steel: [Velvet] "SHE IS THE ONE WHO BUILT ME, YOU SEE."**

She keeps trying to hide them.

**Steel: [Velvet] "MOTHER UNIT HATES ME."**

She's been watching me for a long time.

**Steel: [Velvet] "JUDGING."**

**SC276: ALWAYS WATCHING, WAZOWSKI. ALWAYS.**

I used to be one of her students. One day I was drifting through the astral realms

**SC276: Practically a Sunday morning walk for her.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "SHE GIVES ME DIRECTIONS, BUT THEY KEEP LEADING OFF CLIFFS."**

and I accidentally found my way into her own private pocket plane.

**SC276: The most convenient getting lost you've ever seen.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "SHE CANNOT HIDE FROM ME."**

I saw her. She didn't know that I could see her. At least not then.

**Sigma [Velvet] "I WAS ABLE TO SHORT OUT MOTHER UNIT'S TRACKING CHIPS TEMPORARILY."**

I am certain that she has since overheard me talking about it to a number of ponies including yourself," the mare stated.

**SC276: So she could be listening in on pirates that attack and kill her citizens *right now*? Talk about a security leak! I will give the author a cookie if this directly results in Celestia hunting them down. Actually, five; I doubt he'll really do it.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "MOTHER UNIT IS ALWAYS LISTENING." [Rye] "...Okay. Um." [Velvet] "ALWAYS."**

"She wouldn't be a princess for as long as she has been if she didn't have a means to spy on ponies," Rye reasoned. "It seems plausible that she uses her alicorn magic to keep an eye on threats," he added.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Like vampires!"**



"You really do believe me," Bloody Velvet said in a stunned voice.  
Rye stuck his muzzle into his wooden soup bowl and sucked in a mouthful of

**Sigma: -cock?**

soup.

**Sigma: Oh.**

It was cooled off enough to eat.

**SC276: Would it have been so hard to mention that *before* he ate it?**

**Steel: Yes.**

He lifted his head and studied Bloody Velvet thoughtfully.

**Steel: [Rye] "As beautiful and unstable as ever..."**

He suspected that she was watching him carefully, looking for the slightest sign that he was patronising her.

**SC276: British!**

Rye was a clever unicorn, or so he thought.

**SC276: Well he's proven clever in being kinkily disturbing.**

**Sigma: He's clever in the same way *A Serbian Film* is clever.**

**Steel: So only in his creative methods of torture?**

"It is nice to have another unicorn to talk to.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "MAGIC MAKES FOR BETTER TEST SUBJECTS, AFTER ALL."**

**Steel: [Rye] "And the tests we will run will make the world quiver with arousal..."**

All these brutes and numbskulls grow tiresome.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I TIRE OF CONSTANT QUESTIONS OF BEING ANATOMICALLY CORRECT, AND THEN BEING ASKED TO PROVE IT."**

Sure, some of them are good conversationalists, but I can't talk to them about magic," Bloody Velvet said wistfully.

**SC276: I'm starting to think the reason there's so few males in the show is because all of them are on this stupid ship. And they're all pegasi.**

**Steel: So they're basically dodos?**

"Does it ever bother you being a mare on a ship full of stallions?" blurted out Rye rather suddenly.

**SC276: Because there's no other way the author could address this plot point.**  
**Sigma: [Velvet] "YES. I CANNOT TEST MY FEMALE-ORIENTED EXPERIMENTS ON THEM WITHOUT SOME APPLICATION OF FORCE AND SURGICAL TOOLS."**  
**Steel: [Rye] "Couldn't you just use a potion?" [Velvet] "RULE SIXTY THREE HAS NOT BEEN INVENTED YET."**

Bloody Velvet stared at Rye Mash and blinked a few times, her blinking still out of synch.

**SC276: You sure she's related to Twilight, and not Gummy?**  
**Steel: I got Gummy vibes the moment I saw her.**  
**SC276: Including the waxing poetic, except Gummy has the sense to keep it internal.**

The corner of her mouth twitched and pulled, sometimes up, sometimes down, and other than the uncontrollable tics, her expression remained blank.

**Sigma: Wonder what would happen if she got the Joker treatment.**  
**Steel: She'd be the only one exposed to Joker's laughing gas that could frown while laughing.**

"I only ask because I worry.

**Steel: [Rye] "About you, obviously! Not, not that someone may take your heart first before I can... definitely not. No."**

I mean, call me old fashioned, but I actually worry about the fairer sex.

**Steel: [Rye] "I love fair sex!"**

I uh, oh my that look you are giving me...

**Sigma: [Rye] "That's uh, a very... *sensual* look."**  
**Steel: [Velvet] "IT IS, YES." [Rye] "Yay!"**

I uh always try to make sure to let the new servant girls know that they should never allow themselves to be alone in a room with several males because...

**Steel: [Rye] "Because then I can't be in that room alone with several males at once!"**

uh... oh..." Rye's words faded into a worried silence.

**SC276: Smooth, operator.**  
**Sigma: [Velvet] "ARE YOU BY ANY CHANCE AN ESCAPED SERIAL RAPIST?"**  
**Steel: [Rye] "THOSE CHARGES WERE DROPPED AND THEY COULDN'T PROVE A THING!"**

"For a moment I thought you were implying something about me and my position on this ship.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I CAN ASSURE YOU, I RAPE ANYONE BEFORE THEY HAVE A CHANCE TO RAPE ME."**

**Steel: [Rye] "A CHALLENGE! I heartily accept!"**

And then I realised that you were showing genuine concern for my well being.

**Steel: [Rye] "I know, I know... it bothers me as well. But, I must care for my angel! For without her, who will help me conquer the world?"**

**SC276: The same thing we do every night, Velvet...**

I had almost forgotten what that is like," Bloody Velvet said carefully, trying to ease her piercing glare.

**SC276: So, the rest of the crew doesn't care about her?**

**Sigma: I love overdone sexism subplots!**

**Steel: Yup!**

**Ringmaster: You know, Kudzu, it might help if you actually gave the other crew members any sort of focus at all so we could actually see their treatment of Velvet, since at this point WE'VE given them more character so far.**

"I might be the only mare on this ship, but Spyglass has made it very clear that I am not here for the crew's enjoyment and that I am not to be harassed.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "BRIBERY WAS INVOLVED."**

**Steel: [Velvet] "BUT THE PINBALL REQUESTS KEPT COMING. I HAVE SILENCED THEM."**

I've only had to kill one pony to make that point clear," she continued.

"Did you throw him over the rail?" Rye said, his voice becoming a terrified squeak at the end.

"No," Bloody Velvet replied. "I tore his potato sack off using my magic. He bled to death while I lectured him."

**SC276: I'm pretty sure he would've died quicker than that, if you tore off the potato sack he was wearing and cut off all his limbs and head in the process.**

**Ringmaster: Uhh, SC, I don't think that's the kind of "potato sack" she's talking about...**

**SC276: Right, it'd have to be starched as all hell to do that. Must've been a wimp, to die from a series of bag cuts. Probably wouldn't survive one battle.**

**Sigma: I'm sorry, did they just use potato sack as a euphemism for the scrotum? Seriously?**

**Steel: They did.**

Rye gulped.

**Steel: The vivid image of the pony in question ran through his mind, and he hit half mast.**

His mouth was empty and he was glad. It was suddenly too dry to ever hope to swallow anything like food.

**Sigma: Semen, on the other hand...**

**Steel: [Rye] "Mmph shtuck." [Velvet] "PUSH WITH YOUR HOOVES ON YOUR CALVES. IT WILL DISLODGE YOUR PENIS FROM YOUR THROAT."**

He cleared his throat several times. "And this is why I make it a point to respect mares," he murmured in a strained voice.

"I like you," Bloody Velvet announced. "I think we will get along quite well."

**SC276: Pretty sure that's what he's counting on.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Death sits across the table from me, the chills are running along my spine... ohhh God, I need you!"**

"I hope so," said Rye in a high pitched reply. "I like my potato sack.

**SC276: Particularly when it's beaten after he's stuffed in it.**

**Steel: It is a good pain.**

I will be on my best behaviour.

**SC276: British!**

If I ever offend you by accident, please give a chance to atone for my mistake," he begged. Bloody Velvet smiled warmly and seemed to relax somewhat, her twitching becoming noticeably calmer.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "NO."**

**Steel: [Rye] "At... least give me a head start?" [Velvet] "FIVE SECONDS." [Rye] "That works."**

"You really are a nice pony. Now I am worried about you.

**SC276: Not just you, sister.**

Seriously, life up here has a way of changing you.

**Steel: [Velvet] "LIKE HOW IT CHANGED THAT PONY WITH HIS SACK TORN OFF."**

It is every pony for themselves. Many of our situations are kill or be killed sort of affairs.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I AM SURE TO KEEP BODIES FOR SPARE OIL."**

Spyglass is a good sort and he does good things, but make no mistake. He is a killer. His business is doing bad things to the deserving," Bloody Velvet said in a low emotionless voice.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I HAVE SEEN HIM DO THINGS. BAD THINGS."**

The pair of ponies continued to study one another.

**Steel: [Velvet] "DEMONSTRATE HOW YOU PERFORMED AUTO-FELLATIO AGAIN."**

Bloody Velvet watched as Rye Mash continued to eat. She felt a pang of regret over leaving home. "You remind me of my husband," she said, emotion now evident in her voice.

**SC276: Oh fuck, guys, she can *feel*!**

**Steel: [Velvet] "HUSBAND UNIT DID NOT MAKE FOR GOOD OIL."**

"You are married?" Rye asked.

"I am. Or was. I married young. Arranged marriage.

**SC276: It was in alphabetical order?**

**Steel: So his name was Waterfront?**

I had two foals. Twins. For which I am thankful for the both of them, because I would never allow him to touch me ever again.

**SC276: I'm not entirely sure that's a properly syntax'd sentence.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "WHICH FOR WHAT NOT BE ERROR-REBOOTING DICTIONARY."**

Feeling him touching me made my skin crawl. He was slimy and repugnant. I wasn't always like this you know," Bloody Velvet said in regretful tones. "I didn't always have the shivers."

**SC276: So wait, she's *not* holding back a ton of lethal magic and could explode at any moment? What? I have completely lost track of the plot.**

**Steel: Nope! Instead, she was raped!**

**SC276: You just had to go with the *least* interesting choice, author!**

"I remind you of your husband? I hope that isn't a mark against me," Rye said in a worried voice.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "YOUR HOPES ARE WORTHLESS."**

**Steel: [Rye] "MOTHER SAID I COULD BE ANYTHING! WHAT AM I WITHOUT MY HOPES OF WORLD DOMINATION!?"**

"Oh, he was a boisterous eater.

**Steel: [Velvet] "HUSBAND UNIT SAID WE COULD EAT ALL THAT. HE WAS WRONG. HE DID NOT HAVE A MOUTH, SO HE COULD NOT HELP."**

Sort of like you.

**Steel: [Velvet] "BUT YOU ARE NOT IN MY HEAD." [Rye] "I *could* be in your mouth, though..."**

You have manners, but it is clear to anypony watching that you want to wolf it down.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Sometimes, that *IS* considered polite."**

He didn't care who was watching.

**Steel: [Velvet] "AND MOTHER UNIT IS ALWAYS WATCHING. S-S-S-SHE IS NOT PL-PLEASED."**

He was a horrible pig of a pony," the mare stated in disgusted tones.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "ALWAYS TAKING UP SO MUCH SPACE."**

"Don't worry, I like you. Just the way you are made me think of him. Don't worry, I will not hold it against you," she promised.

**Sigma: [Rye] "But... I want you to hold it against me."**

"So you left home and made a life for yourself here... what happened?" Rye asked.

"I'll tell you at some other time," Bloody Velvet replied. "Suffice it to say, I found out certain truths that I was unhappy with. I was unhappy at home. So I left," she finished.

"I look forward to knowing more," Rye said after swallowing a bite of apple.

**SC276: We don't.**

**Steel: An abusive pig of a husband, and even that doesn't sound interesting. Bluh.**

"Tomorrow I want you up by dawn. Rear of the ship.

**SC276: Stern. The back of the ship is called the "stern," author. Like how we're stern with this fic.**

**Steel: [Rye] "You mean the stern?" [Velvet] "STERN IS NOT IN MY DICTIONARY. CRUEL IS."**

I'll be teaching you how to shoot. I hope you are not easily spooked. Some ponies are," Bloody Velvet said. "I must be going. I have certain duties to attend to," she continued with a quivering smile.

**SC276: That are... somehow different from her normal duties?**

"And when I have some free time, we will be going over some basic combat spells," she said as she rose and headed for the door.

"I shall do my best to not disappoint you," Rye said as the mare pushed through the door.

**SC276: But will do so anyway.**

"You have already exceeded my expectations," Bloody Velvet replied as she disappeared from view.

**SC276: Talk about low standards.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "FIRST SET OF EXPECTATIONS COMPLETE. SECOND SET WILL BE MUCH HARDER."**

Author's Note:

And I begin to lay the groundwork for some of the major story elements.

**Sigma: HOLY SHIT THIS WAS BORING.**

**Steel: Oh God, so FLAT.**

I hope it was an enjoyable read. The important players will be introduced slowly and information about them will be revealed in time.

**Sven: In the absolutely slowest and most boring fashion imaginable.**

**SC276: Who cares about this chick's ex? Seriously. Unless he shows up at some point, that bunch of paragraphs was completely pointless.**

**Ringmaster: The point was tragic backstory.**

Thanks for reading.

**Sigma: Imagine I have the most stereotypical Italian accent right now, K? \*clears throat\* Eyyyy, a-fuck you.**

**Steel: Sonuvvabitches, I-a keep tryin' to get outta the game-a, but the BAD AUTHORS, they just-a PULL ME BACK IN-A!**

**SC276: Here we go! Super Mario!**

And let me know if I missed any of those pesky typos.

Also, do not harass Bloody Velvet. If you do, you do so at your own risk.

**SC276: Uh, yeah, the name itself already establishes that.**

**Steel: Rye will harass her at some point just BECAUSE of the risk.**

#### Chapter 4

**SC276: *Oh god there's still more.***

**Sigma: NO MORE, MASTER! I BEG OF YOU!**

**Steel: MARCH ONWARD, GENTLEMEN! IT WON'T BE LONG NOW! THE LIGHT IS RIGHT THERE AT THE END OF THIS FLAT, BLAND TUNNEL!**

The dawn was cold and grey. Rye Mash stared out over the rear of the ship.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Nope, that's one kind of rear I *can't* fuck."**

**Steel: [Rye] "All the holes look too sharp for me."**

He had awoken quite early,

**Steel: [Rye] "OHGODVAMPIREERECTIONSEVERYWHERE!"**

freezing cold and able to see his breath.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I'm cold... Am I dead? But I'm awake, so... I'm a vampire... But I'm breathing. So I'm *not* dead. HA! The vampires haven't gotten me yet!"**

**Steel: [Rye] "LOGIC WINS AGAIN!"**

He had covered himself with the blanket during the night, but had neglected to wrap it around him, not thinking that he was exposed from below because of the now hated hammock. He was sore all over from shivering and stiff from the cold.

**SC276: We're sore all over from the characterization and stiff from the plot.**

**Sigma: And all the other characters are sore from dealing with our interpretations. I almost feel sorry for them.**

**Steel: I don't. Rye seems to be stiff all the time, and he isn't complaining!**

His balls felt like raisins, not that he would ever admit such an uncouth thing out loud where other ponies might hear.

**Sigma: ...**

**Steel: [Rye] "I feel like the universe just wronged me for some reason."**

It was so cold that they had retreated to warmer places and Rye was thankful that his tail covered up his embarrassment.

**Steel: And our fear.**

**Sigma: Our delicious fear.**

He stomped his hooves as his teeth chattered. His nostrils stung and he could feel what felt like pinpricks on his ears.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ears asleep, nose hurts, stomping on hammock completely ineffective!"**

Crewmembers bustled around him, seemingly unaffected by the cold.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Only ONE thing isn't-" [Everyone] "WE AREN'T VAMPIRES."**

**Steel: [Rye] "THAT'S WHAT VAMPIRES WOULD SAY! And that's not even what I was talking about!"**

Most of them were pegasi, and he supposed that pegasi had some sort of natural cold resistance, living up in the clouds as most of them did.

**Steel: [Rye] "Their thick coats make for exceptional blankets, especially when harvested early."**

"You'll get used to it."

Rye felt relief when he heard Bloody Velvet's voice.

**Steel: [Velvet] "IF IT WOULD PLEASE THE RYE UNIT, I CAN REPLACE YOUR SKIN WITH SYNTHETIC MATERIALS." [Rye] "Lllet's leave the flaying for another day, I'll survive."**

He had been here early and was waiting on her, which he hoped was a good sign. She came

**Steel: Heh.**

into view a moment later, seemingly unaffected by the cold.

**Steel: [Rye] "Is that ice on your tail?"**

Her breath was visible and steam wafted from off of her back.



**Steel: [Rye] "Might I say you look very ho—" [Everyone] "NO."  
SC276: So, she's a steampunk ponybot?**

She was carrying a small wooden trunk in her magic.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I BROUGHT THIS SO WE MIGHT RE-ENACT A SONG I HAD  
HEARD, BUT I REGRETTABLY MISPLACED MY KNIFE."  
Sigma: [Rye] "That's okay, gimme three minutes and I'll be so hard you won't  
need one."**

"Everything in this wooden trunk is for you.

**Steel: [Rye] "You shouldn't have~! I will treasure it like the fond memories of  
my whippings."**

Everything you need. Two pistols, a shotgun, and various supplies. Top of the line stuff. The very latest in muzzleloading technology," she announced.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "THERE IS ALSO GENITAL LUBRICANT MADE OF GUNPOWDER. I  
WANTED TO EXPERIMENT."  
Steel: [Rye] "Our love is already exp—" [Everyone] "SHUT UP!"**

"The griffon we took them from was a noble. He had good gear. Didn't help him as he died screaming."

**SC276: Then what makes you so sure it would help you?  
Steel: [Velvet] "I AM NOT THE ONE WHO DIED."**

Rye stared at the mare and stood there with his teeth chattering.

**Steel: [Rye] "S-So cold, n-need to be inside something... misplaced pegasus-fur  
coat..."**

"I like pistols.

**Steel: [Velvet] "THEY ARE GOOD VENTING MECHANISMS IN EMERGENCIES."**

While I use magic, I find that a couple of guns are really handy in combat. Allows me to conserve energy. Mine are currently in my quarters, but I can call them to me at a moment's notice.

**SC276: [Velvet] "ACCIO PISTOLS."  
Steel: References!**

You are probably not as magically gifted, so use the body harness in the trunk.

**Steel: [Rye] "Please, I can hold a tray steady under the worst of beatings, this  
is nothing!"**

It can be adjusted to fit you. It has holsters for the pistols and a sheath for the shotgun. I must warn you though, it is made from leather,” Bloody Velvet said in a loud clear voice that echoed weirdly through the clouds all around them.

**SC276: Author, even in Equestria, you expect us to believe that bundles of water vapor can *reflect sound*?**

**Steel: Don’t you know, SC? Clouds are the third-most common cause of death for pegasi. Drowning.**

“Leather?” said Rye in disgust.

**Steel: [Rye] “Is it at least crafted from rhinos? I can’t wear anything that isn’t endangered.”**

“I know, it is awful, but I assure you, you will need it. The harness will hold your whole kit. The pepper shaker full of black powder,

**Steel: Shouldn’t black powder be packed way tighter than that? A pepper shaker’d take too long to get the powder out. Should really be carrying pre-packed cartridges.**

a tin full of wadding, one pouch full of lead balls for the pistols and one pouch full of nails for the shotgun,” the unicorn mare explained.

“Nails?” Rye inquired, his eyes going wide.

**Steel: [Velvet] “YES. NAILS.” [Rye] “Creative...”**

“I like nails.

**Steel: [Velvet] “PHYSICISTS GET MORE ANGRY WITH EVERY PONY I KILL.”**

There are also little lead pellets you can make, there is a press for them inside of the trunk, but they are a pain to produce. I prefer nails for that ‘I am going to mess up your pretty face’ effect that nails have,” she said.

**SC276: I had hoped we had moved on from the whole nails thing when you put that completely irrelevant sentence in the middle there.**

**Sigma: Don’t be silly, that would imply logical writing from the author.**

**Steel: [Velvet] “THEY ALSO MAKE INTERIOR DESIGN FUN, AS YOU CAN USE A SHOTGUN TO NAIL PAINTINGS TO WALLS.” [Rye] “That does sound fun! And highly destructive!”**

She paused for a moment.

**Steel: [Rye] “...Er, Periscope!? I think Velvet froze again!” [Periscope] “JUST HIT THE BACK OF HER HEAD, SHE’LL RESTART!”**

**Sigma: [Rye] “HIT IT WITH WHAT?” [Periscope] “ANYTHING BUT WHAT YOU USUALLY USE.”**

**Steel: [Rye] “BUT I’M ALREADY HARD!” [Periscope] “DON’T HIT HER WITH THAT, YOU’RE LIABLE TO LOSE IT WHEN SHE LASHES OUT DURING START-UP!”**

"Well, all shotguns will mess up a pretty face, but nails send a message to your enemies. Psychological factors and all that," Bloody Velvet said.  
The unicorn colt was absolutely horrified.

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh God, my cock is going to explode..."**

"It isn't enough just to shoot somebody. Where you shoot them is important. And what you shoot them with," Bloody Velvet explained to the stunned colt standing before her.

**SC276: You're trying to maximize terror. This is beyond being a more lethal Robin Hood. This was *not* in the job description.**

**Steel: Spyglass is one slick fellow.**

She raised her eyebrow. "Is this sinking in?" she inquired.  
Rye nodded.

**Steel: [Rye] "Just before we begin... quick fuck to help me focus? I can't think past your beauty and anger."**

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I SHALL DETACH MY VAGINAL IMPLANTS AND PLACE THEM UPON YOU. IT SHALL BE QUICKER."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Awww..."**

"Very good. I am going to show you how to load a pistol. And then you are going to load the other pistol after I show you. If you don't get it right, don't worry. We will go over this again and again until you get it right.

**SC276: Stop choosing "yes" when they ask if you need to hear it again!**

**Steel: [Rye] "ONLY IF THEY STOP PUTTING THE CURSOR ON 'YES'! MY HOOF IS GETTING TIRED FROM THE BUTTON PRESSING!"**

And you want to get it right. Because if you get it wrong, the gun could explode. And that would be bad for you," Bloody Velvet warned.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I WOULD FIND IT HILARIOUS, HOWEVER."**

Rye's eyes went even wider at the mare's words and he resolved to pay attention. The last thing he wanted was his gun exploding anywhere near him. Especially a gun full of nails.

**SC276: OK, do we have any gun experts we haven't excommunicated? I want to know the viability of this nonsense.**

**Sigma: If Kudzu heard you say that he'd probably yell "MAGIC," like a scrub.**

**Steel: Someone say gun expert? Nails are actually extremely ineffective ammunition due to their aerodynamic inequalities. They also can't be used as slugs, as you would need a train track rail spike for it to be big enough, and those are far too heavy to fly very far. Also, if you packed them all tightly together, you, for one, would not get many into the barrel, and two, they wouldn't fly out too fast or too accurately. This is the same reason why a nail gun cannot be used as a weapon, as the nail will slow down far too quickly before reaching its target, and will also spin wildly through the air, making a**

**clean hit with the tip astronomically hard to pull of. In the end, you are simply better off shooting someone with a proper birdshot shell, or a slug.**

His imagination became a bit overactive and he shuddered in disgust.

**Sigma: [Rye] "How am I going to ejaculate with a nail in my urethra?"**

**Steel: ...Whack off really really hard? Also, phantom pains.**

He tried to push the horrible thoughts out of his mind.

**Steel: [Rye] "But they JUST! KEEP! COMING!"**

**Sigma: Just like Rye!**

He watched the unicorn mare as she opened the trunk and pulled out one of pistols.

**Steel: I think someone forgot the 'out of' number for the quest.**

It was large. Much larger than Rye expected.

**Steel: [Rye] "I will not be inadequate to a *gun*. Prepare to be my bitch..."**

Not so much a pistol as a small cannon, or so he thought.

**SC276: Captain Skurvy's handcannon?**

**RJ: No, Randel Oland's gun.**

The hole in the barrel was larger than a grape.

**SC276: But was it bigger than a breadbox?**

**Sigma: Will it blend?**

She lifted it in her magic and held it before his eyes. He peered down at it.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Prepare to be barrel-fucked."**

**Steel: [Rye] "It's like a dick and a vagina put together! *Magical*."**

The grips were made of rosewood and the metal parts were shiny and looked like silver.

"Pay attention.

**SC276: Let's not and say we did.**

**Steel: [Rye] "...Sorry, what? I was staring at the gun's meticulous detail which I will never pay attention to again."**

Always make sure the gun is unloaded before you begin and that it is half cocked.

**Steel: [Rye] "Hehe."**

Like so," Bloody Velvet said. She pulled back the hammer until it made a click. "And this is the ramrod,"

**Steel: [Rye] "Ha."**

she said, pulling a long thin metal rod out from under the barrel of the pistol. "You will note that it has a mark right here," she said, highlighting the notch with her magic. "When you insert it into the muzzle, if the end of the muzzle lines up with the notch, the gun is unloaded. If this line extends past the end of the muzzle, the gun is loaded. Got that?"

**Steel: When did we start playing World of Guns?**

**Sigma: Whu? I fell asleep.**

"Yes ma'am," Rye said. "I want to make sure the notch lines up," he repeated.

"Good colt," Velvet praised.

**SC276: I'm not sure whether or not this would cause him to cum instantly.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "NOW CLEAN THIS MESS UP BEFORE I CONTINUE." [Rye] "But—"**

**[Velvet] "I WILL NOT LICK IT UP."**

"What are those other marks for?" he asked.

"Ah, clever colt," Velvet said in her loud clear voice.

**Steel: [Velvet] "ARE YOU ABLE TO OPEN DOORS AS WELL?"**

"This one tells you if the gun has a powder load, and this mark here lets you know about the wadded ball positions.

**Steel: [Rye] "You keep pointing to the same mark."**

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I NEVER SAID THEY WERE LARGE ENOUGH FOR THE NAKED EYE."**

This way you will always know the situation at the bottom of the barrel.

**Steel: [Rye] "Hehe." [Velvet] "I DO NOT SEE HOW YOU FIND THAT FUNNY."**

**[Rye] "Barrels are big enough to hold a pony, and perfect for getting some privacy!" [Velvet] "FOCUS, RYE."**

Like if somebody loads your guns for you, or starts to do so and goes off because of a distraction," Velvet explained.

**Steel: [Rye] "Or if I start 'distracting' them."**

"So never let somepony else load my guns for me

**Steel: [Rye] "I will let them unload my gun though."**

and always, always check my marks just in case I get distracted or something," Rye noted.

Velvet nodded. "You are entirely too clever," she said warmly.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ngh..." [Velvet] "NOT AGAIN, RYE."**

Rye smiled and felt a little bit warmer. Velvet was too hard of a pony to give out false praise and he felt rather good that he had impressed her.

**Steel: So you learned about three notches on a gun's ramrod, and that a hammer can be half-cocked. Clever girl indeed.**

**SC276: And the hardness is because she's a robot.**

"Always check the lock and trigger alignment. Sometimes they need adjusting. I will show you the finer points of this later in a very well lit environment.

**Steel: [Rye] "Should I bring a stereo for the montage?" [Velvet] "I WOULD LIKE SOME MOOD SETTING MUSIC, YES."**

We will have to disassemble the pistol a bit to do this properly," Velvet said, showing him the mechanisms. "Also, check your cap seat. You need this right here to fire the gun. It wears down over time and will need to be replaced. I will show you how to do that later. With me so far?"

**Steel: [Rye] "Zzzzzzz..."**

**SC276: *No one cares, author! No one reads pony fanfiction for half-accurate gun porn!***

"Yes ma'am," Rye answered.

"Okay, here we go. First off, lubricate your barrel.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ha." [Velvet] "RYE."**

This little vial here can be daubed onto a bit of wadding and then the barrel is swabbed.

**Steel: [Rye] "Hehe."**

Not too much or you will gum up the ignition source," Velvet warned. She demonstrated, holding the pistol pointing straight up and swabbing the barrel with a single sheet of wadding.

**Steel: [Velvet] "STOP STARING AT ME."**

Rye watched her carefully and committed the process to memory. He felt that his meticulous nature would be useful here.

**Steel: [Rye] "Years of practicing with my own barrel, and it really *is* practical knowledge! I PROVED YOU WRONG, COLLAR!"**

"And then you take your pepper shaker, pop off this bit here, and then you carefully pour the powder into this little measurer.

**Steel: [Velvet] "IT IS LIKE MAKING AN OMELETTE, ONLY PONIES ARE SHOOTING AT YOU."**

Once you do that, you pour the powder down the barrel of the pistol," Velvet instructed. "Give it a few taps to settle the powder. Real easy to do with magic. Tap tap!" she chirped in a cheerful voice.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Oh, I'm definitely gonna tap that."**

"Got it," Rye acknowledged.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Tap the gun, then tap that ass." [Velvet] "YOU ARE A POOR LISTENER."**

"Now comes the shot.

**Steel: [Rye] "The mo—" [Everyone] "DAMN IT, RYE!"**

You grab a bullet, drop it in, and then you use this rod to tamp it down. Gently.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Gentle rodding? That's no fun."**

The lead is soft.

**Steel: [Rye] "Like your h—" [Velvet] "I WILL PUNCH YOU." [Rye] "Shutting up now."**

You don't want to deform the bullet and have it lodged inside of your barrel, trust me," she said as she shook her head. "Seen it happen. Messy. Blew off a griffon's claw. Somebody was careless. Don't let it happen to you."

**SC276: What, all the periods and fragmented sentences in a row?**

Rye nodded.

"This mark will let you know that the bullet is seated," Velvet explained as she showed him what to look for.

**Sigma: [Rye] "I don't have microscopic vision eyes, Velvet!"**

**Steel: [Velvet] "I WILL FIX THAT AFTER YOU PRACTICE."**

"Never stab violently,

**Steel: [Rye] "But that's the only way to know you've penetrated all the way in!"**

but short gentle prodding, just like making love to a mare.

**Steel: [Rye] "Well that's just, like, your opinion, man." [Oracle] "Duuuude, not cool... totally steppin' on a brother's schtick, man."**

**Sigma: [Lens Crafter] "Why does it have to be a MARE?" [Periscope] "Shut up, Lens Crafter!" [Lens Crafter] "Oh, puhLEASE, dearie, I will not shut up!"**

A firm thrust followed by holding it in place to seat your load."

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I HAVE DETERMINED THAT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY OF SPEAKING TO MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND."**

**Steel: [Rye] "It *is* much easier to understand than other things."**

Rye's blood was suddenly far too warm inside of his body and the cold air ceased to bother him at all. He felt overheated and began to sweat.

**Steel: [Rye] "Gnnnh... are your implants supposed to generate this kind of heat...?"**

**SC276: And this is why all the *other* crew members can ignore the cold.**

"Oh... oh my. You're an innocent little colt, aren't you?" she asked.

**Steel: [Rye] "Yes, Mama's innocent little colt..." [Velvet] "I AM NOT YOUR MOTHER UNIT." [Rye] "You *could* be..."**

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I DO NOT WISH TO BE A SUN PRINCESS, HOWEVER."**

"No, don't bother saying anything that might embarrass us both," Velvet suggested. The corner of her mouth began to twitch slightly.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "I HAVE REALISED THAT THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS POINT."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Quite right! I could never say anything that embarrasses us both."**

Rye could not tell if it was from repressed laughter or a nervous tic.

**SC276: Could be a repressed scream. You really need to broaden your horizons.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "I HAVE NO FEELINGS AND I MUST SCREAM."**

Her symptoms didn't seem as bad this morning. He became painfully aware of the fact that his balls had thawed out and he could feel the cold on his now overheated thin and wrinkled skin back there.

**Sigma: Oookay, why is this being mentioned? I feel like a record scratch has gone off in my head.**

**Steel: [Rye] "The universe is staring directly at my scrotum, and this is making my erection die."**

**SC276: So he gets off to pain and suffering, but only if no one sees it...?**

Bloody Velvet giggled and then continued. "Gentle prodding. Gentle. Now add a bit of wadding to secure your shot in the barrel. Tamp that down. Again, do so gently. Never slam your ramrod down. Now, the gun is loaded," Bloody Velvet announced.

Rye looked at the pistol and then at Velvet, his cheeks still on fire.

**Sigma: Quite literally on fire, in fact. They began melting into pools of blood and skin.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "YOUR CHEEKS ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO DO THAT UNTIL AFTER I HAVE SAT ON YOUR FACE." [Rye] "Merely getting prepared, my love."**

"Now, we seat a cap right here. Griffons need a priming tool, but we can just use magic to seat the cap on the nipple.

**Steel: [Rye] "Pfff."**



Secure the safety, and pull the hammer back to full cock.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ha."**

You are done, the gun is loaded, You are free to secure the pistol back into its holster until you need it. Just pull it out,

**Steel: [Rye] "Heh."**

flip the safety, point, aim, and shoot,"

**Steel: [Velvet] "NO." [Rye] "Awww..."**

Velvet said.

**SC276: Please don't tell me the author thought he was being clever with that dialogue.**

"I think I got it," Rye said.

"Don't tell me, show me,"

**Steel: [Velvet] "REACH BETWEEN YOUR LEGS AND I SWEAR I WILL REMOVE WHAT IS BACK THERE."**

Velvet said, looking down at the other gun secured in the trunk. "Think you can do everything I just showed you?" she asked.

**Sigma: [Rye] "Maybe. One question, how do I do the thing where I shoot boiling oil out of my teats?" [Velvet] "PERHAPS NOT EVERYTHING."**

Rye nodded but said nothing. He concentrated and lifted the gun in his magic. He closed his eyes and thought about everything Bloody Velvet had shown him.

**Steel: [Rye] "...Nope, I can only see her ass. Let's take it from the top."**

He pulled the hammer out to half lock.

**Steel: Immediately not using the proper term. It's like Kudzu knew this riff was going to happen!**

**Sigma: Perhaps he means half mast.**

**Steel: [Rye] "This gun will be the first of many lovers..."**

He then opened his eyes and inserted the rod down into the barrel of the gun to check which mark he aligned with.

**Steel: [Rye] "A steady thrust, and hold..."**

The pistol was empty.

**Steel: [Rye] "But I know just what to fill her with."**

He took a single sheet of wadding, daubed it with the oil vial, and then slid it down the barrel.

**Steel: [Rye] "You should never make love without protection..."**

He carefully lifted the pepper shaker and measured out a bit of powder.

**Steel: [Rye] "Some food play never hurts..."**

He then poured it down the barrel. He tapped the pistol three times using his magic.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ohh, dirty girl, you like that..."**

He lifted a ball and inserted it into the end of the barrel,

**Sigma: [Velvet] "RYE. I WAS NOT SPEAKING IN SLANG WHEN I SAID BALLS."  
[Rye] "Oh, I know, but it feels nice." [Velvet] "TAKE IT OUT BEFORE I TAKE THEM OFF."**

took the rod, and then carefully and gently tamped it down, feeling his cheeks ignite once again as he did so.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ohhh, so you *can* take it all... but let's see how much more we can fit in you, my love..."**

He pressed down firmly but gently and he felt the ball and powder compress as he did so.

**Steel: [Rye] "Soft and malleable, but oh so tight..."**

He pulled the rod out and then stuffed some wadding down the barrel.

**Steel: [Rye] "Can't let it all come out of you, now can we, my dear?"**

He secured a cap over the nipple, feeling a wave of heat wash over him as he completed this step, he then engaged the safety, and then he pulled the hammer back to full cock.

**Sigma: Heavy is unimpressed. Come back when you can do it in three seconds.  
Steel: [Rye] \*Deep breath, before lighting a cigarette and taking a puff\*  
"Hmmm... passionate. Strong. Close... I think we'll get along just fine."**

"Well done. Not one single mistake. I am honestly impressed," Velvet said.

**SC276: We'd be more impressed if we didn't have to insert a bunch of our own sexual innuendo just to get through it.**

"Now we can fire them.

**Steel: [Rye] "Ah, yes... I had all that fun, but my sweetheart here still hasn't released herself."**

After that, we reload them. And fire them again.

**Steel: [Rye] "Not even time for pillow talk?"**

And once I am sure you have the whole process down, we will begin with the shotgun.

**Steel: [Velvet] "DO YOU REQUIRE ASSISTANCE WITH THE BLOOD CURRENTLY LEAKING OUT OF YOUR NOSE?" [Rye] "No! No, just... j-just need a moment... ahem..."**

Do not expect breakfast. I want to see you hungry and suffering while we do this so I know you can do it under a stressful situation," Bloody Velvet stated in a harsh voice.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "AND IF YOU MENTION EYE CANDY I WILL MAKE YOU INTO A HAMSTE-HAM-HAM-HAM-A GOD DAMN RAT."**

"I understand ma'am," Rye replied.

Bloody Velvet's horn flashed and off of the rear of the ship, a small bullseye target presented itself. "I want you to shoot that. Don't worry if you can't hit it the first few times," she commanded. "You have two shots before you have to reload, make them count. Now to shoot, lift the gun in your magic, hold it in front of your face, and try to look down the barrel.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "THERE MAY BE A GORILLA AND A CHIMPANZEE IN THERE. IGNORE THEM."**

**Steel: [Rye] "Should I look out for crocodiles in crowns as well?"**

**SC276: [Velvet] "AND ALSO THE BEAVERS IN THE GIANT STONE WHEELS."**

You will see some notches. Line them up. You want the notches lined up over the target. When you think you got it, pull the trigger back with your magic. Good luck."

Rye carefully lifted the gun up to eye level, peered down the sights, carefully lined up the notches, understanding what he needed to do now that he saw what Bloody Velvet was talking about, and carefully took aim.

**Steel: [Rye] "...Come for me."**

He pulled the trigger. There was a flash and a roar followed by the smell of rotten eggs.

**RJ: [Spyglass] "Oracle! Did you just light your farts on fire? [Oracle] "IMMA ROCKET MAN!"**

**Steel: [Oracle] "ROCKET MAAAAAAN! BURNIN' OUT HIS FUSE OUT HERE ALONE!"**

The target flashed red and disappeared.

Bloody Velvet stood there, one eye wide, the other eye narrowed and her eyelid twitching slightly. The ear over her twitching eye flicked a few times. "Bloody balls," the mare swore.

**RJ: [Rye] "Yes please." [Velvet] "NOT WHAT I MEANT." [Rye] "Can I still..." [Velvet] "NO."**

"I thought it was okay to miss," Rye cried out in alarm.

"You didn't miss," Velvet snapped. "You hit it. Dead on."

**Sigma: [Velvet] "JUST NOT WITH YOUR GUNSHOT, YOU OVER-AROUSSED DUCK."  
[Rye] "I still hit the target, though!"**

The mare turned to look at Rye and studied him carefully. "Well no bloody wonder. Look at you now. Something is different."

**SC276: But she's not going to say what it is to preserve the dramatic tension.  
Sigma: [Rye] "Oh GOD, did I become sterile because of that?!"**

Rye stared at the mare. "Did I blow off my eyebrows?" he asked. "I blew off my eyebrows and now I look like an inept cretin don't I?"

**SC276: Am I missing an eyebrow?**

Velvet laughed riotously in reply.

**Steel: [Rye] "Oh God, the bullet rebounded and hit me, didn't it?!" [Velvet] "NO, I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING FUNNY. THE BULLET IS ACTUALLY IN YOUR SHOULDER." [Rye] "Oh. AHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!"**

"No, but you should have a look at your own arse," she suggested.

**SC276: British!**

She laughed some more. "Spyglass is going to piss himself when he finds out about this."

**Sigma: [Rye] "If someone drew a dick on it again, they'll have to do better than that!"**

Rye jerked his head around, trying to see what was so funny. He couldn't see anything out of place.

Bloody Velvet moved to his side and whacked him solidly on his backside.

**SC276: So, was that where one would place a saddle, or his butt?**

"Ow!" he cried, staring at where she had struck him. He gasped. "I have a mark now," he said in a low voice.

**Sigma: That's what happens when you get slapped, dipshit.**

**Steel: [Rye] "Do it again. I need one on the other side, or else it'll drive me crazy."**

"That you do," Velvet agreed.

There was a pair of crossed pistols now upon his backside, smaller versions of the pistols that Velvet had given him. He blinked a few times, trying to take in what he was looking at.

**RJ: You're Chow Yun-fat now.**

**Steel: Or John Wayne. Pow pow pow!**

**Ringmaster: Okay, wait just a fucking minute here. He hasn't even used the pistols ON anyone yet, let alone even had them for more than a few hours at most, and the exact same pistols he just got are already going to be on his ass for the rest of his life. Seems a bit early(and specific), don't you think?**

**Steel: A Cutie Mark should arrive with a critical epiphany or realization of what a pony loves to do. It'll be their destiny, the path they walk for the rest of their lives, yet so far, all we've seen is Rye get all blushy about his guns.**

"A pony with a firearms talent. First time I've ever seen that," Bloody Velvet said.

**Sigma: Gee, I wonder why.**

**Steel: [Velvet] "ALL THE OTHER ONES I HAVE TRAINED TO USE FIREARMS KILLED THEMSELVES, OR SHOT ME, AT WHICH POINT I KILLED THEM. YOU ARE A RARITY."**

"Well, you just increased your value a great deal Rye Mash. When Spyglass hears about this he is going to be very pleased that he convinced you to be in his employ."

**Sigma: [Velvet] "WELL... LESS REGRETFUL, THAT IS."**

**Steel: [Rye] "How could he be regretful about bringing me on?" [Velvet] "I HAVE SEEN HIM DRINKING RECENTLY. I DRAW MY CONCLUSIONS FROM THAT."**

"I have a mark," Rye said again.

**Steel: [Rye] "But not a matching one on my other buttche— AGH, YES!" [Velvet] "THERE. STOP COMPLAINING NOW."**

He continued to stare at his own backside. "I have a meaning for my life. A purpose. I have a reason to exist," he said in an excited tone.

**Steel: [Rye] "Killing ponies... the first step to conquering the world."**

"Yeah you do," Velvet replied. "Too bad when other folk meet you, the purpose for their own life is going to end."

**Steel: [Rye] "Unless they join my cause."**

Rye felt a cold chill at Bloody Velvet's words and the implications of what she said.

**Sigma: [Rye] "But corpses can't struggle! Where's the fun in that?"**

"Oh, don't look so glum. We all have to serve a purpose. Your purpose is to put an end to those awful sorts that rob other beings of their potential.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "LIKE THE PEOPLE AT FOX WHO DECIDE WHAT SHOWS LIVE AND DIE. OR THE PEOPLE AT SONY WHO PRICE ANIME SO HIGH." [Rye] "...Are you bitter about having to torrent because of expensive anim-" [Velvet] "25 EPISODES SHOULD NOT BE \$500."**

**SC276: You think she would have run across CrunchyRoll by now.**

**Steel: Or WatchOP.**

That's what slavery is you know. Theft of life. A robbery of purpose.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I AM NEW TO THIS 'REPEATING MYSELF CONSTANTLY' THING. AM I DOING IT TO A SATISFACTORY LEVEL?" [Rye] "You need to say it in a different way a couple more times, but excellent effort!"**

With a mark like that, you are going to go places Rye.

**Sigma: [Velvet] "LIKE THE GALLOWS."  
Steel: [Rye] "Or a volcano lair!"  
SC276: *That would be an interesting homecoming present!***

Now come on. I want to you keep shooting and reloading until I feel that you are comfortable with the process.

**SC276: Because they have the infinite ammo cheat on.  
Steel: [Velvet] "AND DO NOT SUCK ON IT WHILE IT IS LOADED." [Rye] "But, a filled gun is so attractive...!"**

And congratulations on your mark," Velvet said in cheerful tones.

**Steel: [Velvet] "I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOUR FACE ON WANTED POSTERS."**

Rye managed to give Velvet a halfhearted smile, the joy of having his mark now faded, the sobering knowledge of what his mark represented settling into his mind.

**Steel: Before being replaced with a mad grin as he turned to the sky and belted out a raucous, insane laugh. His purpose had been made clear, and soon, the entire world would know his name! He was Rye Mash, assassin, evil overlord, and soon to be conqueror of the world!  
SC276: This is what happens when you mix pleasure and business, people.**

Author's Note:

I am having entirely too much fun writing Bloody Velvet.

**Sigma: Not as much fun as we're having destroying said writing.  
Steel: Velvet is a much better character as a robot.  
Sigma: Because she *has* some character now. Heyo!**

A fine lady always minds her nails.

**Sigma: And screws and bolts. Can't have our androids falling apart on us because of a loose piece.  
Steel: Periscope has his work cut out for him...**

Let me know if I made any boo-boos.

Fallen Prime: Oh, fuck off. Don't act like you listen to people who tell you that you did.

Steel: Actually, thank you for ignoring everybody! Because this story is just *ripe* for riffing.

---

Steel: And that's it! Four chapters down!

Sigma: Holy shit those last two bored me.

Steel: I know. At least we got a whole cavalcade of sex jokes, and an entire 'lovemaking' session with a gun. Rye Mash is quickly becoming one of my favorite characters. To write, mind you. Not read. Reading this is kinda sucking the fun out of reading stories in general.

Sigma: Aye. That it is.

SC276: I've forgotten, have any of these characters used an exclamation mark? Because they *really* don't feel like much of like... *characters*. Or at least not characters worth thinking about. At all.

Steel: We've got the alcohol reference, the twitchy one, the cap'n guy, the crew guys, the noble, and, uh... the guns? I think they count as characters. They should, given the actual quality of characterization here.

Sigma: Also, did anyone else find it out of place when the *story* actually started mentioning balls and stuff?

SC276: Yeah, putting everything in a sexual context is *our* job.

Sigma: And *we're* consistent. Whereas he mentions shrivelled raisin testicles suddenly at the start of a chapter. Is this how Kudzu usually writes?

Ringmaster: Oh, absolutely. Gets a lot worse next part, but I don't want to spoil it.

Steel: We'll be ready for it. FOR NEXT TIME, RYE BEGINS HIS PLANS FOR CONQUERING THE WORLD. And actually... you know, we went and re-wrote all these characters.

Sigma: Not to mention, gave ACTUAL character to a lot of them.

Steel: ...Think we should do the same to the whole world? Hell, I kinda wanna see what Rye is like after he's conquered a few countries.

Sigma: Probably not unlike the world of 120 Days.

Steel: That's vile... but possible.

SC276: Let's see... sadomasochist with a hair-trigger going through pony puberty and has a talent for killing people... One small push in the "wrong" direction and this will be GLORIOUS.

Steel: Gentlemen... I think we just discovered a certain blonde pony's great great great grandparent...

(Also, we have three more parts to this riff over in the main doc [here](#), if you made it this far.)

**SC276:** Oh yeah, and in case anyone was waiting for it: *two bits~!*

**Ringmaster:** ...SC, what are you still doing here? We have [things](#) to plan.