

***If You Lost Either Your Best Friend, Your Brother, or Your Child to
Illness,
You Would Know Exactly One Third of What Twilight Must Have
Felt;***

***A Review of [Fire Spores](#),
By [applecinnamonspace](#)***

Even an amateur jeweler can see the shining facets in an otherwise raw stone. One truly who loves diamonds may even weep on encountering such a rough stone, seeing so clearly what a beauty it could be cut into. No, to such a lover that unfinished gem is beautiful already. Some stories need to be crafted into masterworks but no story can go from rough to set-in-gold unless it is first beautiful in it of itself.

I wrote rather hastily when I composed the above, and what followed it, about *Fire Spores*. I did not at all intend to imply that the story did not meet the standards of quality of FiMFiction. I merely wished point out that it had some editorial [sic] flaws—flaws that I am so keen to catch and wont to work over. Moreover, I would much rather focus on the diamond qualities of applecinnamonspace's piece than on it's carbon qualities.

So, where does *Fire Spore* succeed? Why, in achieving each of its author's stated goals:

- Focus on the dynamic between Twilight and Spike, because I think it seriously needs more attention in the series.
- Include a heart-to-heart between Rarity and Twilight, because they really haven't bonded much canon-wise.
- Attempt to write in the style of an episode. Albeit quite a dramatic episode. (applecinnamonspace, Comments)

Rarely, I say, does a piece do this.

But in what other ways does this work succeed? Well, it succeeds in making me cry. I submit to you that were I to fault style and grammar to a point unendurable—by story author and review reader—I could never deny with a clean conscience that I was instantly and powerfully affected by the story, regardless of any minor composition issues.

I think that the genius of applecinnamonspace in *Fire Spores* was in the subtext of the story. The subtext was blindingly apparent; I hesitate to even call it subsurface. Perhaps to another reader applecinnamonspace did not state it explicitly enough; the author, in fact only stated it once. But to me the author's implication was stark and obvious—remember that Spike is a *child*.

The fact that Spike is a child added to everything in the story—absolutely everything. A child is expected to outlive its parents; this fact added immense weight to Twilight's (now shattered) assumption that Spike would be in her life forever. Also, the fact that Spike is a child allows for Twilight to have a unique relationship with the little dragon that is at one and the same time that of a best friend to friend, of a sister to a brother, and of a mother to a child. The mane-six, similarly, are allowed by Spike's youth to share an equally unique relationship with him that is at once that of a family to a favorite cousin, and that of big sisters to their baby brother.

Finally, applecinnamonspace's tale about a child that falls mortally ill, harkens us back to dark days of yore when a Whooping Cough or Cholera could take away a child at any moment; red days dimly remembered in scarlet stories that have been passed down to us from ages hence, when a teddy bears' wooden swords were all that stood against dread diseases, and a mourning mother was as willing to believe that a witch took her innocent, as she was certainly *not* willing to accept that the earth had taken from her a further third baby. I hope you have understood some of my references, and I hope you lucky children of modern medicine remember those days—which it is *Fire Spore's* greatest strength to have reminded us of.

In short, theme and plot, thanks to the undergirding idea that Spike is a baby dragon, makes applescinnomanspace's story shine as an example of a classic literary

trope, that is at the same time novel for having been forgotten by us modern readers.

Fire Spores does struggle in a few areas, however, and as a service to the author and to my (bored) readers, I will bullet my advice to aforesaid writer:

- A simile is a comparison using like or as; you use ‘as’ way too much and it makes your sentences hard to read. There’s little pause in your work (save what’s created by the fantastic dialogue) unless the reader creates it. Your use of ‘as’ to add detail about character action is what most often creates this run-on quality that I noticed in your work.
- A personal peeve: you do not do this much at all—good on ya—but still I must say that you resort to ‘pinkie the party-pony-isms’ to describe characters; that really doesn’t work. Just use their names; you won’t confuse us.
- Stop—and-go, it’s your friend; In most writing, especially scholarly writing such as I am now composing, detailed and unbroken sentences, with everything in them but the kitchen sink, are ideal; not so in fiction. In fiction timing is key. Short and choppy sentences are often your friends here. Your descriptions especially (though I’ve already harped on those), but also your dialogue, limp oftentimes because you fall into the philosopher’s habit of shoving every bit of information into a sentence that you possibly can (and probably shouldn’t). If you were Milton, I suppose, you could get away with this; as it stands, I suggest you read Tolkien—guilty though he is of verbosity—as an example of how to use chop.
- This is not a criticism; This is merely a suggestion. If you established clearly *when* in the MLP FiM timeline your story took place, it might make the story more affective. Had your ‘episode’ happened after *Owlicious*, there would have been a logical motivation for Spike’s overworking himself, and you would also have been able to heap even more guilt onto Twilight, undervaluing Spike now in your episode as she had just so recently done

in another. If you established that *Fire Spores* took place after *The Secret of My Excess*, Rarity's deep care for Spike would not only have been touching, but also sensibly motivated (and all the more touching for being so). Again, these last words are not criticisms, merely suggestions. Your story does fine without taking any of them

In closing, I have a question for the author: I am very curious as to *why* you had it that Spike in the end "knew nothing" of his illness.

And also a comment: "You're not gonna cry again, are you?" Spike asked, his voice constricted as she cuddled him close./"Yeah, I probably am," is one of my favorite pieces of dialogue on FiMFiction. I do not know why, but that scene is just so vivid for me when I read it.

Thank you again applecinnamonspace; keep on *chugging* along as an author,

[Orient Explorer](#),

[Strange](#)~