



Lagging Indicator

Productions



Theatrical Poster #1

('Birdbrain')

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

THE PALACE...
NO ONE IS THERE, BUT A **FUNERAL** BELL WILL RING...

LINK'S ADVENTURE

Theatrical Poster #2

('Face to Face')

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: LINK'S ADVENTURE
A SCREENPLAY
BY SHANE KENT KNOLLTREY

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PREFACE

Hi, there. My name's Shane.

Have you ever seen "The Abominable Dr. Phibes?"

It's a Vincent Price horror-comedy: now a classic in the genre. I bring it up not because of its plot or its casting but because of the tagline originally released to promote that film:

"Love means never having to say you're ugly."

This witty tagline was a tongue-in-cheek reference to the movie "Love Story", released the previous year with its own well-known (and now overused) slogan. Today the famous "Phibes" tagline is probably even more well-known than either of the films it references.

I thought of this film while finishing work on "Link's Adventure", not because they have so much in common (they don't) or because I dreamed of casting the now-departed Vincent Price in one of this film's roles (which would be, admittedly, awesome), but because it made me think of a fitting tagline for "Link's Adventure": a pithy slogan to sum-up this screenplay in a nutshell. It would go something like this:

"Love means never having to *show* how ugly you can be."

Kind of lacks the same 'spark' of witticism as the original, doesn't it? Doesn't matter: it's *accurate*, as overall themes go, and I suppose that if you read "Link's Adventure" you would agree with me, to a point.

That said, it might be safe to say that— assuming you *do* read this screenplay— there will certainly be some things with which you do *not* agree. That also doesn't matter— not right now, at least. Unlike my "Ocarina of Time" screenplay (which, if you have not read, I *highly* recommend you do so before reading this story) I'm including a brief 'afterword' section at the end of this screenplay. "Ocarina", though it deviated enough from the game's storyline, didn't particularly merit such a 'defense' at its end. But "Link's Adventure"...

Well, trust me: this screenplay might need all the 'defense' it can get. The overall tone of this work is far different from "Ocarina", and although it enjoys a *greatly* reduced body count (Link kills only *once* during this entire story, but it's a doozy) the overall subject matter is significantly more 'mature'. In many ways I was sorry when I finished "Ocarina of Time" and saw that story finally reach its end. Not so with "Link's Adventure".

In point of fact? I was relieved to finish this one.

In keeping with my peculiarity of bestowing 'second titles' on my own screenplays I'd have to say that "Link's Adventure" would likely be referred to by the codename "Dark Knight" while in production (yes, I know...). This screenplay deals mostly with the difference between a 'hero' and a 'knight', inasmuch as people tend to conflate one and the other. The point made by this story (in frankly horrific terms) is that a knight can do some very 'anti-heroic' things (especially if that 'knight' also happens to be in love...)

There's a major 'plot-twist' at the center of this work, and while it would be possible to effectively maintain an aura of 'uncertainty' and 'mystery' over this twist if presenting the film in *theaters* (given a particularly gifted director's... well... *direction*) it is certainly not possible to maintain such an atmosphere in a written screenplay (with all the requisite 'clues' so obviously written down for all to see). Reading a screenplay is, after all, much like scanning over the blueprints to a hedgerow maze before you've gone into it: much of the mystery is taken out of the thing. As the writer of this screenplay (which 'almost surely', as they say in mathematics, will *never* be optioned for production) that's something I'm prepared to live with.

Meantime, I'll save my own impression (read: *defense*) of this work for the afterword section. This is a polite way of saying that we're done talking, for now. I'll see you at the other end of the tunnel. I'd put on a miner's helmet, if I were you, because it's a rather black tunnel, at that.

Anyway: you've already met the Hero of Time, so now meet Princess Zelda's knight...

FADE IN:

The sound of DISTANT LAVA FLOWS, accompanied by the rising sound of HEAVY BOOTS scuffling unsteadily over rough terrain. These footsteps grow LOUDER over time.

ON BLACK, the title in the LOWER LEFT (NOT the far lower left, but slightly closer to mid-screen than the final title screen from the previous film, "OCARINA OF TIME"):

"The Legend of Zelda"

EXT. OVERHANG ENTRANCE TO THE GREAT PALACE - LATE AFTERNOON.

A massive, open-air entrance to a once-grand palace. The floor is littered with moldy debris. All the bricks and metal furnishings of this place were originally hewn in brilliant gold, but are now faded with extreme age. In the distance beyond the palace entrance is the steep drop-off of a mountain edge; beyond this are other mountain peaks surrounded by elegiac fog. Many of these other peaks glisten with small orange lava flows.

A blond, 23-year-old man in a ratty, dark brown tunic and cloak (complete with a flaccid, pointed hood) stumbles into this overhang area. He moves through the clutter, appearing EXHAUSTED. This is LINK. His eyes are blue, although his LEFT EYE is slightly discolored, making it a ruddy RED tint.

Link's clothing is SCORCHED and TORN in several places and he bears several DRIED, BLOODY WOUNDS along his body. He BLEEDS from several fresh, superficial cuts to his body and his face and he LIMPS due to a deep wound on his right leg.

Link stumbles past a mess of broken columns, most of them bearing fierce BIRD-LIKE carvings on their tops. BROKEN STATUES line the corridor he moves through; many are FACELESS and bear gigantic BIRD'S WINGS. LINK'S BOOTS brush against a busted MUSIC BOX lying in pieces on the floor; this causes the device to sputter and then it erratically plays a short mess of disjointed notes (these are the FIRST 10 NOTES OF THE 'GREAT PALACE THEME').

Link STARES DOWN at the box, emotionless, as it sputters out and goes quiet. When it finishes Link LOOKS FORWARD,

drawing a breath, and he WALKS FORWARD. He slowly DRAWS AN ARMING SWORD from a scabbard on his waist and descends a debris-filled staircase.

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (CONTINUOUS).

A very large irregularly-shaped stone-carved room. The walls are covered in strange writing and pictograms. Countless maze-like passages branch off this area, all of them plunging into darkness.

A standing pool of black water graces the central part of the room, around which a spacious walkway allows access to all branching corridors. A MASSIVE STONE TABLE rests near one corner of the room, surrounded by piles of debris.

Link reaches the bottom of a staircase on the far side of the room; wan daylight struggles through this stairway.

Link crosses around the black water at the room's center, looking down the various pitch-black corridors as he moves. Several STRANGE, UNINTERPRETABLE NOISES sound from throughout the structure. Link NOTES these with unease.

Link reaches the MASSIVE STONE TABLE and circles it slowly. He KNEELS DOWN beside it and RUNS ONE HAND along the large stone rim of the table; a very large inscription is carved directly into the rock in 'Ancient Hylian' (ie: Scots-Gaelic). Link runs his hand along every letter of the inscription. It reads:

"I speak the truth: one suckles at Death's breast
Who nourishes neither God nor a friend
But puts— alone— a bitter harvest to his mouth:
Be sure that your sin will find you out."

(NOTE: There is NO translation, or subtitle, provided to the audience)

Link LOOKS UP and beyond the stone table: a MASSIVE GOLD-TRIMMED DOOR stands directly behind this table. It is the only closed door in the massive chamber.

There are many STRANGE HEIROGLYPHICS and GIBBERISH SYMBOLS all along the door. TWO CRUDE ETCHINGS stand out, appearing to have been VERY RECENTLY carved (there is no mold or fading in the cuts to the stone). One is an INTERLOCKING

TRIANGLE SYMBOL near the door's center (ie: the TRIFORCE symbol) and the other is a LINE OF TEXT, again written in 'Ancient Hylia'.

CAMERA ZOOM on the fresh line of text; it reads, in Scots-Gaelic:

"May the way of the hero find its worth in Farore's footsteps."

This text is SUBTITLED in English for the audience.

Link STARES at this text seriously. Eventually Link BRINGS HIS ARMING SWORD UP and TURNS, again facing the STONE TABLE. SLOW ZOOM on Link's face as he stares at the table; his BREATH soon becomes visible in the air. Link JAMS HIS SWORD into a pile of debris, leaving the hilt protruding from the rubble. Link approaches the table and CLIMBS UP ON TOP OF IT. He LOOKS AROUND the dank chamber again, uneasily, before slowly RECLINING and resting his head against the table, lying fully supine.

CLOSE-UP on Link's head; Link BREATHEs uneasily, although his breathing soon becomes more relaxed. Link CLOSES HIS EYES and breathes more quietly.

SLOW ZOOM, from above, on Link's head. As the camera closes on Link's face the STRANGE, UNINTERPRETABLE NOISES from afar become slightly more pronounced. Link (eyes still closed) suddenly 'catches' a breath as the camera reaches his face.

(NOTE: from this point on, and throughout a large portion of this story events are presented in flashback, and on several occasions during or (most often) in-between these scenes there are intermittent 'jumbles' of chaotic colors and rapid-fire images showing events both in the past and in the future (usually VERY quick, on the order of one-second long or less); these jumbles are referred to as 'GLITCHES' in this screenplay. The particular story images shown are entirely random in nature unless otherwise stated and are accompanied by various 'scratches' of disjointed sound and strange 'static' noises.

Cue a TWO-SECOND-LONG 'GLITCH'.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES: they OPEN with a start and

Link stares ahead, WIDE-EYED. The sound of LEAVES RUSTING in a gentle breeze and BIRDS TWEETING replaces the lonely sounds of the palace.

Link is standing in a field of PINK FLOWERS; many brilliant white trees sway in the distance. Across from Link (about fifty feet ahead) a blue-eyed, 23-year-old woman stands in the field of flowers wearing a purple satin dress— her hands folded neatly in front of her— SMILING demurely.

This is PRINCESS ZELDA.

She wears a very thin, dainty CROWN on her head which holds one single, elegant gemstone in its centerpiece, directly over her forehead (this 'crown' is, in effect, an extremely slender TIARA). The construction of this crown most obviously appears to be designed around the COMFORT of its wearer, allowing it to be worn at nearly all times as a somewhat unobtrusive piece of jewelry and NOT as overbearing, ceremonial headgear.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES: Link's eyes WIDEN.

A MUSICAL CRESCENDO begins.

In the reflection of LINK'S EYES we see the hint of a DIFFERENT FIGURE standing before Link: someone wearing BRIGHT WHITE instead of purple.

ON BLACK, CENTER:

"Link's Adventure"

(NOTE: upon appearance of this text the music immediately CUTS OUT with one LOUD DRUMBEAT)

Cue a one-second-long 'GLITCH'.

EXT. GULF OF THE RANGES - AFTERNOON.

A field of short grassland covered in a brooding overcast of low, fast-moving clouds. Very far off in the distance is the shoreline of a massive body of water (the LAKE OF NO NAMES). Withered, broken trees stand at very sparse intervals.

PAN DOWN from the overcast sky showing, first, the barely-visible body of water in the distance and then the grassland. During this slow pan TEXT appears (fade-in) at LOWER CENTER:

"The Gulf of the Ranges"

And below that, seconds later:

" 'Threadbare Lands' "

Both lines of text FADE OUT at the same time.

(NOTE: Most of the scenes occurring in the Threadbare Lands should be musically dominated by variations of the "TAL-TAL MOUNTAIN THEME" from "THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: LINK'S AWAKENING" (mostly a slow and 'elegiac' rendition; a BAGPIPE should be included in the arrangement). This song should serve as "Marin of Ainurad's" leitmotif).

SLOW PAN over a small clearing in the grassland: a blue, waist-high creature HOPS about in the dirt. It possesses eight extremely long legs like a spider (although they are not as 'bent' as a normal arachnid's) and a bony, armored body. One stubby 'eye stalk' protrudes awkwardly from the front of this carapace. This creature is a TEKTITE.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on a tangled bunch of grass in the distance: SLOW ZOOM as the grass sways, revealing LINK'S RIGHT EYE peering out from the weeds. The weeds continue SWAYING, blocking the scene, and when they again move away Link's REDDISH LEFT EYE has moved into the frame.

The TEKTITE continues milling around in the dirt; a small gust of wind ripples all the grass around it. The Tektite BECOMES ALERT, rising on all its legs and making a STRANGE CLICKING NOISE as its stubby eye stalk STICKS OUT a bit from its carapace; it looks in the direction Link is lurking, but after several seconds it goes back to milling around.

Cut back to LINK'S REDDISH EYE in the weeds; his eye NARROWS and his brow FURROWS sinisterly. There is the faint sound of METAL SCRAPING AGAINST METAL.

The TEKTITE again goes ALERT and makes a very sharp CLICKING NOISE; it looks to Link's location with even more alertness.

A GUST OF WIND ruffles the grass around Link's body, partially revealing the man's location, CROUCHED in the weeds.

The Tektite 'SCREAMS' and quickly turns on its axis, LEAPING THROUGH THE AIR very quickly, and bounding very high with each leap.

The Tektite quickly leaps into a small quarry of stones, diving amongst a large grouping of stones that are almost identical in appearance to the creature's distinct blue carapace. It sits in the pile, motionless, with its eye stalk DRAWN IN against its body. It is nearly indistinguishable from these rocks.

SLOW PAN around the creature and the many stones it is hiding amongst. The camera pans a full 360 degrees, although once it returns to its starting position (on the Tektite's face) LINK is lying directly behind the creature, slowly rising up on his elbows and SNEERING.

Link very suddenly HOLDS HIS ARMING SWORD up over the Tektite's body and, GRUNTING, thrusts it downward. The sword's head SPARKS as it hits the creature's carapace, GLANCING OFF as the creature 'SCREAMS'.

The Tektite rolls over on its side, uninjured, and Link quickly SWIPES at it with his sword. More SPARKS fly and the Tektite clumsily pushes out with its legs, throwing Link backwards a bit before the creature suddenly TAKES OFF, again hopping over the terrain.

Link regains his footing and SNARLS, holding his sword at his side. He then notices, however, that his attacks on the creature have DULLED the sword's head and left JAGGED MARKS along one side of the blade.

Link GRUNTS appreciatively. He SHEATHES his sword and produces a small HOOKED KNIFE from his gray tunic with a glistening, sharp edge.

The Tektite HOPS madly across the grassland; Link follows on foot, running very quickly.

CAMERA FIX on the Tektite, face-to-face as it hops through the air (with Link pursuing in the background). Suddenly a BLUNT STICK swings in from the side, hitting the Tektite head-on and crushing its eye-stalk.

The Tektite FLYS BACKWARD, 'SCREAMING', and hits the ground hard. Link comes to a stop about twenty feet from the creature, looking ahead. ZOOM OUT from low across the ground: twenty feet to the other side of the creature a pair of SLENDER, FURRY BOOTS stand on the ground.

A young woman (appx. 19-years-old) with bright hazel eyes and fiery red hair stands opposite the Tektite. She holds a large oak walking stick in one hand and wears a large rucksack on her back. She is dressed in a bright white top and bottoms.

The TEKTITE WRITHES on the ground between the pair in PAIN.

Link watches the woman suspiciously. He LOOKS at the Tektite, then back at her.

The woman looks at the Tektite, and then back at Link. She STANDS AGGRESSIVELY and BRANDISHES her walking stick.

Link SMILES and pulls the HOOKED KNIFE out of his tunic, COCKING a brow.

The woman CASTS her walking stick aside and removes a larger KNIFE from her boot, COCKING HER HEAD to one side while SNEERING.

Link GRINS, nodding slightly, before slowly DRAWING HIS ARMING SWORD from its scabbard. He BRACES himself, WINKING at the woman.

The woman DISCARDS her knife and retrieves a VERY SLENDER, POINTED IRON ROD from her rucksack.

Link CHUCKLES derisively.

The woman very quickly removes a SMALL CROSSBOW from the rucksack and sets the iron rod into it; the device CLICKS as the rod is inserted.

Link's smile FALLS immediately. He SWALLOWS and then GRUNTS appreciatively. Link NODS at the woman, and then he looks down at the wounded Tektite. After a pause he again SQUARES HIMSELF with his sword and takes ONE STEP FORWARD.

The woman HOLDS UP the crossbow, menacing.

Link STOPS walking.

LINK

"Hope to Heaven you hit my heart..."

WOMAN

(in a very thick Scottish accent)

"Ease your passing, huh? I suppose— otherwise— you'd suffer—"

Link TIGHTENS THE GRIP on his sword.

LINK

"Suppose— otherwise— I'd charge right through this gap and skewer you alive."

WOMAN

(smiling)

"Are 'ya so hearty, then?"

LINK

"'Driven', let's say..."

WOMAN

"Ah, but alas: a lass has so little luck hitting a man's heart, though..."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD with the faint tick of a smile on his face. He EASES UP a bit on his sword, LAUGHING QUIETLY with a pronounced grin on his face. He does not fully lower his sword.

The woman takes a STEP FORWARD, holding up her crossbow even more prominently.

WOMAN

"A li'l boy's, though..."

LINK

"And just who's the kiddo, kiddo?"

WOMAN

"Maybe not e'en a boy: a babe, maybe? Just where is it you hail from?"

Link DOES NOT ANSWER for several seconds.

LINK

"I travel from the North—"

Suddenly the crossbow in the woman's hand DISCHARGES; Link STARTS reflexively and the Tektite between the pair SHRIEKS in pain. The creature SPASMS on the ground and falls backward: the small iron bolt is sticking out of its eye stalk. It does not move after this.

The woman LOWERS her crossbow, smiling at the creature in satisfaction. She looks back at Link.

WOMAN

"The North. Coming down from the Tal-Tals, huh?"

The woman motions behind her with her head; a LINE OF MOUNTAINS is barely visible in the dank gray background.

WOMAN

"The mountains out there?"

LINK

"Yes."

WOMAN

"Must've taken the pass down from the mountaintop desert, eh?"

Link NODS.

WOMAN

"You're from the town up there, then? Aren't you? Ainurad, is that right?"

LINK

"That's right—"

WOMAN

"Oh, but that's wrong, little boy. You're no native of the Tal-Tals— I know that— an' a fistful of gold rupees says

you're not from anywhere around here, either. Makes you a foreigner, doesn't it? You crossed over from the Lake of No Names, did you not? You're from the Old Shores."

LINK

"And if I am? What does that make me to you?"

The woman again looks at the DEAD TEKTITE between them.

WOMAN

"Same thing you were just a moment ago: competition for lunch. Life's a touch simpler in this place than it is on the Old Shores, if you haven't figured that out, yet."

LINK

"Is it no place for 'little boys', hmmm?"

WOMAN

"Ne'er you doubt it. But if you come here all alone, and fresh from the Old Shores? Well: you're more a baby fresh breeched from the womb, aren't you? Twice as helpless, though..."

LINK

"That a fact? And just how does that math add up?"

WOMAN

"Because the Golden Goddesses pay this land half the attention they do the rest of the world. If that. These lands are worn, you know: they can hardly hold our biddy lovelies' holy attention. Result's a territory that's a bit more savage 'n tattered than most."

LINK

(smiling)

"'Threadbare', wouldn't you say?"

WOMAN

(scowling)

"I wouldn't. I would say that it's a curious thing: the sight of a li'l boy and his big sword walking out in the wastes. I'd ask more of 'ya, if only out of curiosity, but a story such as this cannot have a pleasant end to it..."

The woman retrieves her LONG KNIFE and brandishes it, stepping forward combatively.

WOMAN

"...also, I'm more hungry than curious, currently..."

LINK

"Well, you must certainly be hungry enough; I'll give you that..."

WOMAN

"Few give anyone anything in this place, baby-o-mine: you won't find yourself living off anyone's charity out here."

LINK

"That a fact?"

MARIN

"Ne'er you doubt it."

The man RAISES HIS SWORD combatively.

LINK

"You gotta take what you want? Is that it?"

Seconds pass. A small SMILE creeps over Link's face. THE WOMAN, however, remains icy.

Eventually Link SHEATHES his sword, CHUCKLING.

The woman BRACES HERSELF in anticipation, but Link TURNS HIS BACK on her and steps away.

LINK

"Thanks for the lesson. And you enjoy your lunch..."

Link WALKS AWAY a few steps, however his STOMACH GROWLS fiercely.

The woman LAUGHS.

WOMAN

"Now, the story of a li'l boy and his stomach: tha's more a universal thing, is it not?"

The woman BATS HER LASHES coquettishly and APPROACHES Link slowly; Link UNSHEATHES AND RAISES HIS SWORD defensively, but allows the woman to stand face-to-face with him.

WOMAN

"You're hungry enough, aren't you? Care for a bite, do you?"

LINK

"This your idea of charity?"

The woman SMILES and MOVES ONE HAND along Link's sword-bearing hand. She SHAKES HER HEAD.

WOMAN

"No: my idea of 'taking what I want'..."

The woman's hand MOVES UP LINK'S SWORD; she 'flicks' the dull iron blade with one finger, making the blade 'tingle' with a noise.

Link looks first at the woman, and then both of them look at the DEAD TEKTITE in the camera background (SHIFT FOCUS to background).

EXT. GULF OF THE RANGES - NIGHT.

A small clearing in the grassland, surrounded by taller brush and a few sheltering withered tree trunks. A CAMPFIRE burns at the center.

CAMERA PAN up and around the campfire: the many armored pieces of the dead tektite are scattered around the area, glistening with ruddy WHITE bloodstains.

Link busily SHUCKS a piece of the tektite's flesh from part of its body, using his broadsword as a crowbar. Link PANTS with the effort; sweat is visible on his brow. When he is finished he SIGHS dramatically.

The WOMAN chuckles from the other side of the fire. Link LOOKS UP at her, reciprocating the smile in a self-deprecating manner.

LINK

"S'more?"

The woman NODS. Link TOSSES the shucked flesh across the fire; the woman catches it and SPEARS it with a crossbow bolt, setting the head over the campfire flames as she speaks.

WOMAN

"Oh, yes, indeed. Little girls and their stomachs: that's just as universal as anything else, isn't it?"

Link PREPARES ANOTHER PIECE OF FLESH for the fire, spearing it with his arming sword.

LINK

"Mmm. You strike me as a woman of large appetites, huh?"

The woman LICKS HER FINGERS, finishing off a previously-cooked piece of flesh.

WOMAN

"Living in lands such as these gives one such large appetites, really, but with precious few things around to sate 'em..."

The woman LOOKS UP at Link with large (innocent!) eyes; she LICKS tektite grease off several of her fingers in quick succession, quickly running her tongue over her upper lip afterwards.

MARIN

"We've nothing here, really. Nothing of interest, I should say..."

The woman EYES LINK suspiciously.

WOMAN

"...or shouldn't I? 'Cause for one to come so far— stepping out across the waters like you have— well, you must be most interested in this land, mustn't you? Or at least something about it, hmm?"

Link LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, evasive.

The woman LEANS FORWARD, chuckling. She WAGS a piece of the tektite's carapace in one hand.

WOMAN

"And here I thought tektites were the Goddesses' most shelled-up beings! They've nothing on little boys— do they?— or their little secrets. Hmph! No matter..."

The woman PUTS ONE HAND over her chest.

WOMAN

"Marin. That's my name, it is."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD.

LINK

"Pretty enough..."

MARIN

"Mmmm. I wouldn't disagree. But my name's also got a nice ring to it, does it not?"

Link SMILES and CHUCKLES.

LINK

"Marin, Marin. And just where is it you hail from—"

MARIN

"From the North: I'm Marin of Ainurad."

Link's SMILE FALLS. He NODS.

LINK

"The Tal-Tals. That would explain a few things—"

Marin SHAKES HER HEAD.

MARIN

"That is not how I knew you were a foreigner, you know."

LINK

"How, then?"

MARIN

"Oh, you're very strong— don't misunderstand— and you can run a tektite down reasonably well-enough. But it was your laugh. The way you do it; the sound you make. It's so fresh— so bright— too bright for these lands."

LINK

"Should I have been more sinister, do you think?"

Marin busily attends to the fresh piece of tektite on her bolt, messily chewing it while staring down into the fire and working her words around her chewing.

MARIN

"Hmmm: truth be told you look damn-well plenty sinister
enough to me as it is, bright eyes..."

Link suddenly, reflexively, LOOKS TO HIS LEFT, moving his
fully-blue eye into the firelight and hiding his ruddy-red
eye. He SWALLOWS.

Marin LOOKS UP regretfully.

MARIN

(whispering)
"Stupid lass!"

MARIN

"I am sorry! That was uncalled for: too rude!"

LINK

"It's fine—"

MARIN

"Get a little food in me an' all my basic sense of manners
'n decency goes out the bloody window!"

LINK

"Don't worry about it."

MARIN

"I'd never think to insult a body I'd share a fire with—"

LINK

"That doesn't bother me—"

MARIN

(holding up a piece of tektite carapace)
"Let alone my can-opener, no less—"

LINK

"Marin! Forget it, alright?"

Marin LOOKS UP at Link, eventually smiling.

MARIN

"Charitable of you: forgiving. Don't bother with it,
though: by nature forgiveness is a 'charitable' thing, and
one won't live on another's charity. It wouldn't do one..."

LINK

"What do you suggest, then?"

Marin SMILES.

MARIN

"You could hit me, I suppose..."

Link RECIPROCATES THE SMILE. He answers after a pause.

LINK

"I'll consider it."

MARIN

"Well: given you're forgivin' me for now, at least, we're still on decent terms, I think. So what should I call you?"

LINK

"Besides 'can-opener', you mean?"

MARIN

"In addition, maybe..."

Link STARES at Marin mischievously. He SCOFFS lightly.

The woman spots Link's DARK TAN CLOAK lying on a log beside the fire. She HANDLES the fabric, musing.

MARIN

"If you're really gonna be as shut-in as a tektite then I may need some creativity about me. Hmmm: 'Dark Walker', perhaps? Good a name as any, is it not?"

LINK

"Mmmm: plenty sinister enough for me. But I did actually have a horse, you know, up until the port at Odium across the way; Nanona had never seen a ferry before— let alone been on the water— and the trail over here would've been too rough for her as it is. I had to leave her behind..."

Link REACHES OVER and retrieves his dark cloak.

LINK

"And my name is Link, if you're curious."

MARIN

"Curious? The Goddesses know: no! That's a trait that's gotten many a little girl into trouble, isn't it?"

LINK

"Just hungry, then..."

MARIN

"An' you aren't a useless thing to have around, are you?"

LINK

"As can-openers go?"

MARIN

"The very best, I wager! So, to where are you headed in these savage, savage lands, my good mister Link?"

LINK

"I'm not a 'mister', Marin..."

MARIN

"You've a better title where you come from, d'ya?"

LINK

"No. 'Mister' implies a gentleman. I'm no gentleman."

Marin LOOKS OVER at Link's vest: a small gold-embossed EMBLEM graces the left breast, depicting a sword set into the ground with an elaborate hilt.

MARIN

"You've got a keen brain in your head, don't you? And the body to match. Is it a knight's temperament you have about you, hmmm? They've knights on the Old Shores, do they not? So, it wouldn't be Sir Link, would it?"

LINK

"Not exactly. Squire Link. I'm no knight; not yet."

Marin LAUGHS.

MARIN

"Ah: but you've come to a fair damsel's aid tonight— have you not?— and what could be more heroic than that?"

LINK

"So you're calling me a hero?"

Marin SHRUGS.

MARIN

"Why not? Don't tell me that heroics don't interest you?
Yes, rather ordinary though they be, but..."

LINK

"Well: you could say that I'm an ordinary hero trying to
become a knight."

MARIN

"And one becomes a knight where you come from by trudging
out into the Threadbare Lands, eh? How very...
'adventuresome' of you--"

LINK

"That's not even a word--"

MARIN

"Pretty sure it is--"

LINK

"Sounds completely ridiculous--"

MARIN

"It just seems to be an 'adventuresome' quest you're on, is
all--"

LINK

"Anyway, where I come from one becomes a knight by proving
their devotion."

MARIN

"That's why you're here, is it?"

LINK

"I'm here to see a girl."

MARIN

"You have seen one, I think..."

Marin begins idly SIFTING through the tektite remains.

MARIN

"...an' two, in fact, if this tektite's got the proper bits
to it..."

LINK

"I'm here to see a girl about a girl."

Marin SHAKES her piece of Tektite at Link vigorously.

MARIN

"That's more the answer I'd expect from you: cryptic as all get out! Well where exactly does this girl-about-a-girl dwell in our fine lands, then?"

LINK

"The Southlands."

MARIN

"Is it Urooban Village you head for, then? Coincidentally that's my own destination, truth be told. Convenient enough; is that where your girl resides?"

Link LOOKS UP at Marin suspiciously.

LINK

"Not quite. Past that; a little further south."

Marin LAUGHS.

MARIN

"Your geography's way off, boy-o: south of Urooban is the Adhavore River. Doesn't do a man to cross over that. You wouldn't know that, I take it, not being a native, but anything beyond the Fairy Knowe is country given back over to the Goddesses from whence this world came into bein'. See, they say that past that river is a great Aged—"

LINK

"Veil running smack between the mountains and the endless swamps of the southeast. The path winds through extreme old country, dead for a century at least, out to the far southern shoreline of the lands. A gap in the path leads up through the otherwise impenetrable back of the Dawnland Stairs Mountain Range: the oldest mountains in all of Hyrule. And then, in a mess of volcanic trenches and caverns— 'Her Divine Footsteps', the old mapmakers called them— there is a path of ascent up to the great northern peaks of the Dawnland Stairs..."

Link LOOKS BEHIND HIM, southward; LIGHTNING flashes in the far distance, accompanied by thunder. It illuminates some very distant mountain peaks (the Dawnland Stairs).

Link again FACES Marin.

LINK

"...where the first civilizations flourished under the new-formed sun. Also, somewhere up there is a place where, a very long time ago, one of three Sisters began Her journey—and played Her part— to make the land of Hyrule. That's where I have my business, Marin."

Marin has been watching Link with RAPT ATTENTION. She sets aside a piece of tektite flesh UNSTEADILY and LICKS HER LIPS.

MARIN

"Y— you cannot mean... W— who exactly is this 'girl' you've come to see?"

LINK

"Her name, you mean?"

Marin NODS somberly.

Link LEANS FORWARD, his face intent.

LINK

"Farore."

Marin's EYES BULGE.

MARIN

"I do not know whether to laugh or cry."

LINK

"They say you can't go wrong doing what comes naturally..."

Marin LAUGHS.

MARIN

"What comes naturally? That'd be running headlong away from this campfire, my tail between my legs and all. A li'l boy that would face up to the power of a Goddess? Big sword and all notwithstanding, I reiterate: a story such as this cannot have a pleasant end to it."

LINK

"I never said anything about 'facing up' to anyone."

MARIN

"No: you're just seein' a 'girl-about-a-girl', right?"

Link NODS.

Marin SCOFFS skeptically.

LINK

"That any worse than what you're doing here in the Gulf?"

MARIN

"I am a native--"

LINK

"Of the Threadbare Lands, yeah, but not the Gulf. Ainurad is a long way up in the Tal-Tals; why'd you come all the way down here, huh? What are you doing out on the road, Marin?"

Marin LOOKS BETWEEN HER FEET for a moment, and then to ONE SIDE. She STANDS slowly and ADJUSTS her white top.

MARIN

"Seems I'm traveling with a loony, for a short ways, anyway. If you're moving through Urooban then I suggest we move together, at least that far. If you're keen on venturing south of the Adhavore, though, I'll wish you well, but I don't envy your journey, that's for sure..."

Marin WALKS AWAY from the fire, NESTLING DOWN against an upturned log and bedding down against her rucksack.

MARIN

"And Squire Link..."

Link LOOKS UP from the fire.

MARIN

"I do hope this girl- the one about whom your girl-about-a-girl is concerned- is worth all this effort. Is she?"

Link SMILES.

LINK
(Slight Scottish accent, mocking)
"Ne'er you doubt it, Marin."

Link RECLINES against a pile of brush behind him, pulling his cloak over his body and staring into the fire. Eventually Link removes a SILK, FEMININE HEADSCARF from his breast pocket; it is folded neatly into a square. Link gently UNWRAPS it, after which a SMALL FLOWER falls out. The tiny flower is almost entirely RED, however the very outer fringes of its petals are WHITE and show evidence that they, too, are slowly turning RED.

Link TURNS the flower over in his hand; the flower REFLECTS in Link's REDDISH LEFT EYE along with the fire's flames.

Link HOLDS THE UNROLLED HEADSCARF up to his face, staring at the patterned fabric. Eventually he BALLS UP the headscarf and replaces the SMALL FLOWER within its folds.

Link SIGHS uneasily.

Cue one-second-long 'GLITCH'.

EXT. NORTH CASTLE GROUNDS - LATE AFTERNOON.

NORTH CASTLE is a grand gothic structure mostly covered in ivy; many outer sections of the castle are uninhabited RUINS, however the massive central keep shows obvious signs of retrofitting and refurbishment.

(NOTE: It is permissible to use the LEGEND OF ZELDA MAIN THEME as background music during scenes in North Castle, especially (or even exclusively) during scenes which include PRINCESS ZELDA)

TIGHT CAMERA FOCUS on a single large white rose; CAMERA PAN UP AND OUT to reveal a much larger rosebush covering a set of moss-covered ruins along the exterior of one ruined North Castle wall.

A SQUAD of horsemen moves across the grounds in an orderly formation at a slow gallop. The men all wear long cloaks similar in design to Link's; many are GREEN-colored, while a few on the outside are YELLOW and one— at the front of the line— is RED.

PAN THROUGH a large semi-open area, once a grand hallway and now partially open to the elements; it is nearly a story above the well-manicured lawn below it. Arched windows run all along walls that are, in places, crumbled and decayed. TORCHES are lit at regular intervals and at the far end of the hallway a man in his early 50's, wearing a deep PURPLE cloak, sits at a small table, WRITING. This is BAGU.

Two young men in red cloaks stand before him.

The sound of FOOTFALLS echoes from down the hallway. A MAN'S BOOTS walk quickly down the hall.

CLOSE-UP on Bagu's chin and lips; a small SMILE forms.

The MAN'S BOOTS reach Bagu's small table.

Bagu looks up at the men in red cloaks and HANDS them a scroll of paper.

BAGU

"Cavalry techniques are taught quite well enough throughout the ranks, but what I'm more concerned about is the basics; I don't want our boys nailing a target with an arrow at a full gallop from 100 yards if they can't tell one end of their own swords from the other."

The men BOW slightly.

BAGU

"And one more thing..."

Bagu POINTS at the men sternly.

BAGU

"I'll hear no more of any superstitious nonsense winding through the ranks: the next man who so much as breathes a word of 'demons moving in the darkness' will find himself on solitary patrol at midnight in the deepest part of the Western Woods!"

The men in red cloaks BOW SLIGHTLY and TURN TO LEAVE.

BAGU

(playfully whispering)

"And Farore help them if they can't tell their hilts from their blades, then!"

The red-caped men DEPART.

Bagu LOOKS UP at the other man that approached his desk; the man sets HIS HANDS down on the desk, leaning down. When his face comes into the frame we see a LARGE BRUISE on the man's forehead. He SCOWLS darkly.

Bagu's SMILE WIDENS.

BAGU

"Having that problem yourself these days, Alltfirean?"

ALLTFIREAN

"My problem is the usual, Bagu; what I can never fathom is why you don't see it as a problem, either."

BAGU

"I take it our little 'wild child' gave you a spot of trouble, did he?"

ALLTFIREAN

"The boy attacks me in broad daylight, Bagu; broad daylight! Now, I don't know whether to request his balls on a spit or his head on a pike—"

BAGU

"A pike? Perhaps like the one you used when you tried to run him down out in the Eastern field? I must say, Alltfirean, that your cavalry techniques might benefit from a little refresher—"

ALLTFIREAN

"His Majesty's Master of the Moat should have no need for armed combat as it is, especially from within our own ranks! Your boy was crossing over the drawbridge without permission! He flaunted our procedure—"

BAGU

"And you overreacted. Attempting to run down a member of the New Hylian Guard is hardly a rational action in itself—"

Alltfirean SCOFFS and appears ready to make a speedy retort but Bagu HOLDS UP one hand.

BAGU

"He should be punished, Alltfirean— don't misunderstand me— but at the same time you need to take into account certain... 'realities' of the boy's mindset: he's a native of these Old Shores, you know. We've been back here barely 10 years, now, and we're just beginning to know our way around, and we're just beginning to understand the 'mentality' of the people who call this place their home. There's a fierce independence about all of them— most of all him— and such a thing is like kindling for a fire: when properly encouraged and controlled it makes for a fine and strong pillar of flame— a great purpose— but when disrespected, or left without proper management, it can erupt into a wild conflagration."

ALLTFIERAN

"Your boy is more a wildfire!"

Bagu SCOFFS. He RISES, slowly and casually, and WALKS over to one crumbling arched window.

BAGU

"If we weren't so familiar I might take issue with you constantly referring to him as 'my boy'—"

ALLTFIREAN

"What else is he, then?"

BAGU

"Not immune from the rules, but still, he is a rather special case."

Alltfirean SCOFFS derisively.

BAGU

"Let me tell you a little story, Alltfirean. You know that I was one of the leaders in our scouting party all those years ago, right? It's been more than a decade now since His Majesty the King made his decree: we were to pack-up from the New Kingdom and return to the place from whence we all first came. His Majesty wanted to return the Royal Family's court to the Old Shores of Ancient Hylia. And so we advanced scouts prepared ourselves for a journey into this misty land of Utter East. Having to trade the soft pleasantries of Castletown for the hardscrabble nightmare that awaited us out here was bad enough, let alone the fact

that all our historical maps were completely useless. Not to be immodest, but I'm a good enough tracker, and so we found the deserted ruins of North Castle itself; the journey here was not so interesting as the subsequent exploration of the woods and cliffs along the southern edges of the territory, though. I was with a small contingent— three other men, all of them now captains of the Guard— and we were moving through rough territory: high weeds and bramble. We didn't truly know where we were, but we were close enough to one of the locals for them to take 'issue' with our presence. He came out of nowhere, savage and relentless. Bruised two ribs on one man and gouged the calf on another before we knew what was happening. Used the land for cover perfectly, and the way they handled a blade— oh, what savage art! If 'finesse' wasn't one of their assets then at least a pure, driven strength of will was, never mind their apparent distaste for raw killing. It took all of my effort just to hold my ground in that first moment, and then it took all of the fight in me just to get them spun around right: I got a clean opening against their back. After that it was the sword for him..."

Alltfirean NODS.

ALLTFIREAN

"Well, if good manners don't tame the savages out here then the sharp end of a blade works just as well!"

BAGU

"No, Alltfirean: it was the blunt end of the sword for him."

ALLTFIREAN

"You didn't kill him? And after he attacked you, unprovoked?"

BAGU

"Killing him didn't seem to be the fitting thing to do. A creature deserves a longer life than that: our attacker didn't have more than 12 years on him, if that..."

ALLTFIREAN

"What: a boy?"

Alltfirean LOOKS DOWN, perplexed, and after a moment looks up in SURPRISE, SHAKING HIS HEAD.

ALLTFIREAN
"Not Link?"

Bagu NODS.

BAGU

"When I first met Link he was already an unspeakably accomplished swordsman. Unnaturally accomplished, even: two-decade's worth of skill in a body barely past its first. What he lacked, and what all boys lack barring direction, was purpose and control. Link had more than a few things to teach us, about geography as well as about fighting, even, but we had just as much to teach him, if not much more, about how to channel his abilities and how to make the most of them. Link does respect that fact, I think, although he's still got that fiery Old Shores blood in him. He's much like a wild horse that way, and while he can be downright civil in many respects I honestly don't know if he can ever be civilized."

Alltfirean OPEN HIS MOUTH but Bagu again HOLDS UP one hand.

BAGU

"I'll have him report to the captain on watch, Alltfirean: he will be properly and objectively punished for his actions, but I hope that you'll take my point to heart in any other 'future' altercations you may have with him..."

Alltfirean COCKS HIS HEAD, and then he BOWS slightly. The man turns to leave the corridor, making it a few steps before turning around.

ALLTFIREAN

"You know, Bagu, perhaps he is more like a wild horse, as you say. If that were the case then he's not in need of 'civilizing', is he?"

Bagu FACES Alltfirean.

ALLTFIREAN

"He would need to be 'tamed'. Funny, isn't it, that where everything else seems to have failed only one person has ever shown any sign of success in that regard?"

BAGU does not respond.

ALLTFIREAN

"How was it when the Royal Family first arrived at North Castle, hmm? I do believe the first time he ever laid eyes upon her was the closest I've ever seen to that boy becoming 'tame'. No one doubts that their relationship is—well, what would you call it?— 'special'. The two of them practically grew-up together in North Castle, after all. And she certain has a calming effect on the boy, does she not? Amazing, isn't it: the effects that the opposite sex can have—"

BAGU

"Your words become dangerous, my old friend."

Alltfirean PLACES ONE FIST over his chest.

ALLTFIREAN

"Farore as my witness: may all the Golden Goddesses strike my beating heart dead should I ever insult Her Highness, Bagu, but now the boy seeks promotion into the ranks of her own personal guard! Velvet settees and afternoon teas are hardly the stuff of a savage mind, you know. But a tame heart?"

Alltfirean SHRUGS.

BAGU

"Link gives you any more trouble you come to me, Alltfirean, and immediately. I can't have you running around trying to kill that boy; my calendar is too full these days and I can hardly schedule the time to attend your funeral."

Alltfirean SCOFFS and STORMS OFF, MUTTERING under his breath.

Bagu SIGHS and leans against his small table. He SHAKES HIS HEAD while RUBBING the bridge of his nose.

Slow CAMERA PAN around BAGU'S FACE as he does this; once the camera reaches the other side of his head we see LINK standing in the background. He stands with arms crossed, wearing a GREEN CLOAK.

BAGU

"I might just have the time, however, to arrange your funeral, Link..."

LINK

"I thought I was being rather generous to the old man—"

BAGU

"Did it not happen as he says? Were you violating procedure, Link?"

Link WALKS around the desk and looks out one of the windows.

LINK

"Everything he says is true; I am guilty."

BAGU

"What were you doing leaving North Castle?"

LINK

"I wanted to go into town."

BAGU

"To Urar? For what: diversion? Amusement?"

Link answers after a PAUSE.

LINK

"Yes—"

BAGU

"I don't think so. What diversions are there for you in Urar? You're not like the other Squires; you don't spend your leaves carousing in town. Last you had time off, as I recall, you spent almost all of it alone, hiking the Southeastern woods—"

LINK

"Spelunking, actually. In the Southern caverns—"

BAGU

"Whatever; either serves to prove my point."

Link does not respond to this.

Bagu SIGHS.

BAGU

"Whatever it was, I do hope it was worth it. You will

report to your captain, Squire. Immediately. By Farore's grace this punishment might teach you something..."

Link PUTS HIS HEELS TOGETHER and rests one FIST AGAINST HIS HEART. He begins WALKING AWAY down the corridor.

BAGU

"...despite the fact that I think it won't."

Link TURNS and faces Bagu.

LINK

"I don't do anything senselessly, you know. But still: I am sorry..."

Link again WALKS AWAY. Bagu looks up, TROUBLED, and calls after him.

BAGU

"Squire!"

Link TURNS.

BAGU

"A knight is a savage creature, you know. We all can be, at least."

LINK

"I have seen that side of you—"

BAGU

"And we're not the type of creature that takes to... 'taming'..."

Link's face SCRUNCHES in surprise.

BAGU

"It doesn't do a knight to be tame, after all. And you aren't, are you?"

Link displays ANNOYANCE.

BAGU

"Her Highness is returning from her trip to Midoro tomorrow—"

LINK
"I didn't know that--"

BAGU
"Didn't you?"

There is a LONG PAUSE. Link eventually BOWS very slightly and turns away, again moving down the hall.

Bagu CALLS AFTER HIM.

BAGU
"Wild horses throw their riders, Link. Remember that..."

Link EXITS the hallway, his FOOTFALLS echoing.

Cue two-second-long 'GLITCH'. Among other images present in this glitch is that of a white horse running through hardscrabble wasteland with mountains looming in the background. This image appears TWICE in this glitch, non-sequentially.

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (INDETERMINATE)

LINK, still lying supine on the ceremonial table, SPASMS briefly, GRUNTING, and his head COMES UP from the table by a few inches.

As Link's head rises off the table there is the faint outline of a MISTY CREATURE'S BODY barely visible in the gloom of the room, seeming to HOVER in the air directly over Link's body, face-to-face with him; LINK'S BREATH comes billowing out his nose and mouth in noticeable vapor trails, HIGHLIGHTING the ghastly creature's mostly unobservable features.

This is the THUNDERBIRD.

Link is GASPING for breath; he does not appear to notice the creature above him, and the thing's presence is VERY FLEETING (and 'SUBTLE'...)

SLOW CAMERA PAN around LINK'S HEAD as the man again rests his head on the slab; his breathing soon becomes more regular and he again RELAXES his muscles.

In the distance (out of focus) about twenty meters away, sitting on a pile of rubble, a FIGURE DRESSED IN WHITE watches the young man. The camera focus is such that this person's features are not entirely distinguishable.

CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES; he soon CLOSES HIS EYES and DRAWS A DEEP, CONTROLLED BREATH.

Cue one-second-long 'GLITCH'.

EXT. SPORRAN WOODS - MIDMORNING.

A densely-packed forest of strange, sickly-looking but nonetheless very dark green trees; a WINDING TRAIL cuts through the greenery, all the while ASCENDING in inclination.

Link and Marin walk along the path with Marin using her large walking stick to navigate the uneven terrain.

MARIN

"They call this wood the 'Sporran'. A strong forest; feeds on all the misty weather seepin' off the Gulf. Very much old growth. Now, nothing as old as what you're bound to see in Southland, but--"

LINK

"I know where we are. I've studied the maps."

MARIN

(laughing)

"Ah: maps. Maps! Aren't we in good standing, then? He's studied the maps. Well, dear one, you should probably take this little nugget of wisdom to heart: a map's of good enough use around here, to be sure..."

Marin STEPS IN FRONT of Link, FACING HIM, and stops walking; Link similarly STOPS. Marin SMILES.

MARIN

"...as good toilet paper is such a valuable thing to have. Around here you only get into trouble with maps when you try something damned-foolish, like reading the bloody things!"

LINK

"The cartography seemed simple enough to me--"

MARIN

"Hmmm. An' how, specifically, are you planning on getting to Urooban Village, if I may ask?"

LINK

"The Sporrán Woods wrap around a big limestone shelf; grassland leads around the drop-off in either direction—North or South— so obviously I can take my pick of routes."

Marin LAUGHS heartily. The woman CONTINUES WALKING; Link follows her, abreast.

LINK

"And I'm starting to think I should take whatever route doesn't include a sarcastic local tagalong laughing in my face—"

MARIN

"Ah: I'm starting to think it's a damn-lucky thing you came across me. There's a few thousand things a map doesn't include, you know: things like weather patterns, vegetation, growing seasons and such—"

LINK

"And what are you: a field-hand or something? A farmer's daughter?"

Link LAUGHS.

Marin LOOKS AWAY; she does not answer.

Link NOTICES the change in her. Marin answers after a pause.

MARIN

(whispering)

"No: neither of those, at present at least..."

The pair SLOW their pace.

LINK

"Marin?"

MARIN

"I'm fine."

LINK

"I... didn't mean to—"

MARIN

"Leave it, would you?"

LINK

"But... if I hit a nerve I—"

MARIN

"Leave it. Got it?"

Link appears TAKEN ABACK by Marin's savage reply; he NODS slowly.

Marin TURNS to continue down the trail, walking ahead of Link by a few paces. As she rounds a group of very large trees on the trail, however, she STOPS.

A MAN stands at the opposite end of the trail; his body is largely obscured by sunlight streaming through the forest canopy and he wears STRANGE and FRIGHTENING CLOTHING (furry animal skins, perhaps with a macabre 'animal-head hat').

Marin STARES FORWARD, skeptically alert.

THE MAN steps forward a few paces, bringing his features into more definition; he is in his mid-40s with several FIERCE SCARS on his face.

MAN #1

"G'day, there: little love."

MARIN

(nodding microscopically)

"`Day."

MAN#1

"And a fine day for a walk in the woods, is it not?"

MARIN

"`Tis, at that..."

Marin begins TURNING HER HEAD to face Link.

MARIN

"...isn't it n—"

Marin suddenly discovers that Link is not anywhere in sight; despite the relatively wide-open ground of the trail around them he has VANISHED.

MARIN
(softer)
"...now?"

MAN #1 MOVES CLOSER towards Marin; the girl SETS HER WALKING STICK in the ground, BRACING HERSELF.

MAN #1
"Fine day to be alive, right?"

MAN #1 INHALES DEEPLY, CLOSING HIS EYES, and EXHALES, relishing the motion.

MAN #1
"Fine day to stay that way, is it not, little love? A spot of treasure from you, perhaps? Something for your crossing, maybe?"

MARIN
"Crossing's free, if I'm not mistaken: what claim have you to these woods?"

MAN #1
(shaking his head)
"Oh: no claim... no claim..."

MAN #1 LICKS HIS LIPS and SMILES; he produces a THIN, CRUEL-LOOKING KNIFE from his furs.

MAN #1
"And surely a lass can spare a spot of treasure for a humble, claimless soul..."

Marin COCKS HER HEAD slowly, but then very suddenly PRODUCES HER CROSSBOW from behind her back with her one free hand; she LEVELS it at MAN #1.

MARIN
"A lass hasn't a rupee to her name, point of fact, and unless you wish for me to claim your humble soul..."

MAN #1's SMILE WIDENS.

A 'WOODEN' CLICK sounds from off the path to Marin's RIGHT. Marin's eyes WANDER to the right; CAMERA PAN reveals a SECOND MAN— dressed similarly to the other man— POINTING A CROSSBOW at the girl.

MAN #1

(taking ONE SMALL STEP forward)

"Oh, but any lass always carries 'treasure' with her; regardless of your finances you've certainly got... 'payment' on you, I should think..."

Marin SLOWLY SCOWLS at MAN #1, still holding her crossbow on him.

MARIN

"One can't expect to draw water from the well for nothing..."

MAN #1

(smiling lasciviously)

"Are 'ya that prudish, little love?"

MARIN

(snarling)

"Uncharitable, you could say..."

A FARTHER CAMERA VIEW shows Marin and MAN #1 from about 10 yards away, viewed from the green brush beside the trail. A GUST OF WIND causes TREE BRANCHES outside the frame to wave and dip into the forefront, eclipsing the view momentarily. When the branches again move away from the camera the BACK OF LINK'S HEAD is visible in the forefront.

MARIN

"It doesn't do one to be charitable..."

After a brief moment MAN #1 TURNS, noticing Link.

LINK

"And it certainly doesn't do one to live on another's charity, does it?"

Marin quickly TURNS HER HEAD in surprise, also noticing Link.

MAN #1

"Private conversation here, blondie. As you can see: I'm much too busy to talk to a stranger. Best you find yourself on your way, my friend—"

LINK

"But I'm not your friend— 'friend'— and as it unfortunately happens, my way is her way."

MAN #1 FACES LINK, motioning at him with his large knife.

MAN #1

"That is a spot of misfortune, isn't it?"

Link 'FLIPS' the scabbard attached to his hip into his RIGHT HAND; he pulls it upside down, slanted along his body, with militaristic precision, and slowly GRIPS the hilt of his sword, which is now directly in line with his DOMINANT LEFT HAND.

LINK

(whispering)

"You have no idea..."

Link CROUCHES slightly and quickly RIPS the sword from its sheath, extending it STRAIGHT OUT in a line pointing directly to his left.

MAN #1 SMILES.

MAN #1

"You have a pair on you, do you not? Pity, almost, to shear 'em off..."

Link puts his arming sword in BOTH HANDS, his scowl DEEPENING.

MAN #1 suddenly FACES the man holding a crossbow on Marin.

MAN #1

"Gabh air!"

(NOTE: There are no accompanying subtitles).

MARIN

"No!"

The man with the crossbow (MAN #2) quickly points the weapon at Link; it DISCHARGES with a TWANG.

Link SQUARES HIMSELF, swinging his arming sword through the air in a lightning-quick motion, holding the hilt up near his head; the sword's blade comes to rest down in front of his torso; during this quick movement a 'METALLIC FLASH' and CLANGING NOISE sound.

MARIN immediately SHOOTS MAN #1 with her crossbow; the bolt strikes the man's RIGHT SHOULDER as he lunges after her. Marin then lands a GLANCING BLOW on the man with her walking stick as he TACKLES her.

During this time MAN #2 is quickly RELOADING his crossbow; he gets the weapon up just as MAN #1 and Marin make contact; he brings the crossbow up to level.

CAMERA VIEW from MAN #2'S PERSPECTIVE; Marin stands before him with Link in the background on the opposite side of the trail. MAN #1 TACKLES Marin and the pair disappear off to the LEFT SIDE of the frame. After their departure, however, Link is no longer in the frame; he has VANISHED.

MAN #2 BLINKS in confusion, LOOKING AROUND frantically. Eventually he turns his attention to MAN #1 and MARIN, who are STRUGGLING with each other on the ground behind him.

MAN #2 turns to assist MAN #1.

CLOSE-UP as MAN #2 walks; LINK is inexplicably revealed to be standing close behind the man (in the background) as he walks. Link quickly 'HAMSTRINGS' one of MAN #2's legs with his arming sword, performing a brutally clean cut deep into the man's tendon, moving his sword from a lower position to an UPWARD one while performing the strike.

MAN #2 SCREAMS in pain and FALLS TO HIS KNEES; Link, meanwhile, moves his sword up above MAN #2 in a seamless motion to compliment the hamstringing. Link then brings the SWORD'S HILT down between the man's hands, DESTROYING his crossbow. Moving forward quickly Link then performs a cursory BACKWARD KICK against the man's chest, sending him sprawling onto his back, still SCREAMING.

MAN #1 and Marin continue WRESTING on the trail with MAN #1 on top of Marin. He gets the girl by the THROAT and holds

her down, but RAISES HIS HEAD in response to MAN #2's SCREAMS. Looking off the trail he sees MAN #2 WRITHING in agony, gripping his BLOODIED LEG; Link is nowhere to be seen.

Marin GRITS HER TEETH, producing another CROSSBOW BOLT from behind her back; she viciously JAMS THE SHARP END of the bolt through MAN #1'S FOOT, prompting the man to SCREAM and then BACKHAND Marin hard. Marin's head hits the dirt of the trail; she GROANS. CAMERA PAN OUT reveals LINK'S BOOTS standing mere inches from her head.

MAN #1 LOOKS UP in surprise just in time to see Link's SWORD-BEARING LEFT HAND as it smacks him in the face: Link has struck the man with the hilt. MAN #1 goes sprawling backward, ROARING with anger.

The man struggles to his feet; he WIPES blood off his chin and spits out a ball of saliva mixed with dark blood. The man GROWLS at Link and unsheathes a BROADSWORD from beneath a layer of his furs.

Link again SQUARES HIMSELF defensively; his face maintains a COLD, clinical look.

Although it is NOT ENTIRELY OBVIOUS, during the duration of this scene Link's REDDISH LEFT EYE shows more signs of REDNESS and 'IRRITATION' (as if the blood vessels were 'HIGHLIGHTED', slightly). This effect is SUBTLE.

MAN #1 BEARS HIS SWORD aggressively.

CAMERA SHOT from a distance, showing the two men in a silent standoff. MAN #1's breathing becomes more INTENSE and 'aggressive-sounding'.

After a moment MAN #1 ROARS and CHARGES Link.

Link immediately KICKS UP DUST from the trail, momentarily BLINDING MAN #1, who wildly SWINGS HIS SWORD in Link's direction. When he opens his eyes, however, Link is nowhere to be seen.

MAN #1 appears FRANTIC; he looks all around, manically searching for Link.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on MAN #1's collar at the back of his neck: a BREATH- visible in the foggy dampness of the woods- wafts over the man's neck, suddenly raising his hairs.

The man CRIES OUT and WHIPS AROUND, lashing out with his sword; Link is directly behind him. In a quick, rapid succession of brutally effective blows Link manages to disarm MAN #2, in the process BREAKING the man's dominant, sword-bearing RIGHT ARM directly below the shoulder. After this Link THROWS him to the ground.

MAN #1 SCURRIES backward, 'crab-walking' in fear. Link follows, his arming sword pointed at the man's neck. The man butts up against the base of a tree; Link GETS TO ONE KNEE, staring down at the man coldly.

MARIN runs up from behind the pair; she has a small GASH on her head, a welt on her face and she is covered in dirt from the trail but is otherwise uninjured.

MARIN

"Tha sin glè mhath! Finish the dog!"

LINK

(smiling at MAN #1)

"How very uncharitable she is, huh?"

MAN #1 PANTS in fear.

Link presses the TIP OF HIS BLADE against the man's neck, drawing a train of BLOOD.

Link SNARLS very quietly. After a pause Link suddenly SHEATHES his sword, from the crouching position, and then stands up. He TURNS HIS BACK to the man and walks away, moving closer to Marin, and eventually PASSING the woman.

Marin WATCHES Link angrily; she RELOADS her crossbow and AIMS it at MAN #1.

LINK

"Leave it."

MARIN

"Not bloody likely--"

LINK

"Likely enough—"

MARIN

"Bastard deserves the Goddesses' judgment: I can send him right up to them—"

LINK

"Marin! Leave it!"

Marin TURNS HER HEAD, looking at Link AGGRESSIVELY.

MARIN

"What: would you really stay my hand? Would you stop me, foreigner?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD slowly, COCKING A BROW and TURNING to one side.

LINK

"No: they're alive by my charity; you can do as you will, of course..."

Marin COCKS the crossbow.

LINK

"...however, the only reason you've got him in your sight right now is also because of my charity, you know. So if you kill him that'd be the reason why."

Marin's EAR TWITCHES.

LINK

"Are you the type of person who lives on another's charity, Marin?"

Marin's CROSSBOW TWITCHES a few times very slightly. After a pause the girl LOWERS her weapon, staring down at the sniveling MAN #1 with DISGUST.

MARIN

(snarling)

"Farore would likely throw you back, anyway!"

Marin SPITS at him. She then CALLS OUT to Link with a louder voice.

MARIN

"And with that self-righteous attitude of yours, Squire Link, I have a feeling that she might just do the same to you—"

Marin TURNS to face Link as she says the last of this line ("...same to you—") and her voice TRAILS OFF as she finishes; Link is no longer standing behind the girl; he has VANISHED.

MARIN

(whispering)

"If she's got a true, blue, female mentality about her then I imagine she might do much, much worse than that, even..."

Marin STARES DOWN at the sandy trail; Link's FRESH FOOTPRINTS are visible in the dirt, moving off further down the trail, beyond the point where Marin first encountered MAN #1.

EXT. FORK OF THE WOODS - EARLY EVENING.

A very high point in the Sporrán Woods; a place where two main paths diverge. There is a gigantic sloping DROP-OFF along one side of the forest composed of jagged limestone (obviously too treacherous to traverse on foot).

Marin walks past a series of very large trees; beyond this is the edge of the drop-off, flanked by scraggily trees.

LINK is sitting on a stump near the cliff edge, his back partially turned to Marin. He is WIPING THE BLOOD FROM HIS BLADE with the fringe of his cloak.

Marin CIRCLES Link, hesitant.

MARIN

"Tell me: j- just how did you do all that?"

LINK

"Swordplay's like anything else: practice makes perfect. It helps a little to be left-handed, too: it's unexpected—"

Link SHEATHES his now-cleaned sword.

MARIN

"Not that: I don't mean the fighting—"

Link LOOKS UP at Marin 'CURTLY'; in the waning afternoon light his REDDENED LEFT EYE is more visible than normal (ie: the 'heightened effect' on his eye from earlier has not yet dissipated).

LINK

"What, then?"

MARIN

"H— how do you move the way you do? What you did back there with those men: how did you keep... well, disappearing, and then reappearing—"

LINK

"That's not what I was doing, Marin. It's impossible to disappear..."

Marin STARES at Link INCREDULOUSLY.

LINK

"...but it's— it's not impossible to play a few tricks on a person's mind."

Marin COCKS HER HEAD quizzically.

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"Never mind. It's just that, well... sometimes people's eyes don't always see everything that's there. Sometimes they see too much, and sometimes they see way too little..."

Link SMILES and looks at the ground.

LINK

"...and ever since I can remember I've always been pretty good at getting people to 'overlook' some things that they really need to see. I can't explain it; I'm just good at getting others to see way too little. That's all."

Marin CROSSES HER ARMS.

MARIN

"Hardly got me to 'overlook' you. Truth be told you damn—"

well made me want to shag you like a wolverine, after what you did back there and all."

Link LOOKS at Marin with SURPRISE, unable to conceal a BLUSH.

MARIN
(smiling)

"We speak quite frankly up in Ainurad, you know."

LINK
"I'm sure that's true."

MARIN
"N'er you worry, though: I know you've got your girl to think of. Besides, after how things ended back there you damn-well made me want to spear you like a wolverine, in the end..."

Marin SCOWLS.

LINK
"I take it that's not another clever euphemism..."

Link SMILES.

LINK
"...knowing you, though, I'd be pretty scared either way."

Marin is unable to prevent a small, reflexive SNORT of laughter breaking though her stony façade.

LINK
"And, anyway, it helps you to 'overlook' the possibility that I'm superhuman, right?"

Link slowly lets his brown cloak SLIP down his back; he is CRADLING A DEEP FLESH WOUND on his right arm. The crossbow bolt from MAN #2's weapon (pg. _____) is STUCK skirting Link's arm, partially PIERCING his flesh (ie: NOT cleanly embedded in his arm).

Marin GETS TO HER KNEES.

MARIN
"Ciod? Dè a tha seo?"

LINK

"Yeah: that's exactly what I was thinking at the time. At least I think it was, anyway..."

MARIN

"You... you were hit?"

Link SMILES self-deprecatingly.

LINK

"Somebody took a shot at me with a crossbow bolt— Marin— aiming for dead-center; of course I was 'hit'..."

Marin PRODUCES A CLOTH from her rucksack, DABBING at Link's wound.

MARIN

"Well, I— I just though—"

LINK

"That I was superhuman; I know. Well: now you don't, do you?"

Marin GRIPS the bolt in Link's arm.

MARIN

"This is likely to hurt, I would think..."

Link RAISES HIS HEAD, 'Zen-like', and closes his eye, drawing a breath.

Marin NOTES Link's stoicism APPRECIATIVELY; the woman suddenly YANKS the bolt from Link's arm.

Link EXHALES loudly, but does not scream.

MARIN

"Well: that's superhuman stoicism on you, at least..."

Marin TURNS AROUND to discard the crossbow bolt and retrieves some HEAVY WOOL cloth from her rucksack.

While Marin's back is turned Link quickly PUTS ONE FIST in his mouth, BITING DOWN, and bears an extremely TORTURED LOOK on his face.

When Marin LOOKS BACK at Link he has quickly REMOVED THE HAND from his mouth, appearing to be DISINTERESTEDLY INSPECTING HIS FINGERNAILS; he returns Marin's gaze with a COOL, INDIFFERENT LOOK.

Marin begins TENDING to the wound on Link's arm.

MARIN

"You shouldn't have stopped me, you know. You know what their plan was, did you not? They deserved to be laid low—"

LINK

"Maybe they did."

MARIN

"'Maybe they did', he says? If you think they deserved it then why in the world would you—"

LINK

"Deserve's got nothing to do with it, Marin; it wasn't worth killing over."

Marin SCOWLS at Link, SULKING with a POUT; the girl has been TYING OFF a makeshift bandage on Link's arm. At these words (after a brief pause) she suddenly KNOTS THE BANDAGE down with extreme force; Link's body BUCKS SLIGHTLY at this treatment (his face remains STOIC, however).

Marin STANDS and turns away from Link.

As soon as Marin turns away Link suddenly MOUTHS A SOUNDLESS SCREAM and GRIPS his wound with his left hand, CRADLING IT gently.

MARIN

"Tell me something, then 'Squire' (NOTE: MOCKING INFLECTION) Link..."

Cue a very, very brief GLITCH (less than one-second long): this one is accompanied by one very, very brief and 'unobtrusive' squeaking sound. This glitch is a lightning-fast flash of images; the speed of this glitch is such that it could be easily missed by some viewers. Among the very, very few images in this glitch is, at the very end, an EXTREME CLOSE-UP of LINK'S HAND, from above, holding MARIN'S HAND at the WRIST, as if Marin's body is dangling off something (NOTE: because of the very short length of

this glitch all the individual images in it, including the aforementioned one, are not necessarily identifiable by the audience).

MARIN

"...is there anything out there you'd find worth killing over, hmm?"

Link LOOKS UP from his wound with an EMOTIONLESS expression.

Cue another GLITCH, this one boarding on SUBLIMINAL in length and not accompanied by ANY SOUND at all. The only image appearing is the one of LINK HOLDING MARIN'S WRIST, appearing in a FLASH (again: unbelievably fast).

LINK

"If someone's driven enough, I guess, then they could kill for just about anything, really..."

MARIN

"Are you 'someone', or not?"

Link LOOKS BACK DOWN at his wound.

Marin SCOFFS when Link does not answer. She begins WALKING AWAY.

MARIN

(muttering)

"Just what kind of knight is this, then?"

Link LOOKS DOWN, SHAKING HIS HEAD. He WHISPERS when Marin is out of earshot:

LINK

"No knight, here: just an ordinary hero, that's all..."

EXT. FORK OF THE WOODS - TWILIGHT.

One of the paths leading down along the edge of the precipice. The sun is SETTING on the far horizon.

Link AMBLES along the path slowly. As he walks his cloak CATCHES on a COLORFUL PLANT growing along the trunk of a tree; it is a delicate-looking flower surrounded by 'CRUEL-

LOOKING' THORNS; on of these thorns has caught in Link's cloak.

Link EXAMINES the flower curiously; eventually he SLOWLY REMOVES the barbs from his cloak, holding the delicate FLOWER PORTION of the plant (ie: sans the thorns) in his hand.

A FAINT SIGH sounds from the other side of the path; Link SPINS around, ALERT.

MARIN is sitting on the grass by the drop-off, watching the sunset. Far away, in the distance, the OCEAN is barely visible.

MARIN

"They tell a story in the mountains- they do- about a man who cobbled shoes. He was the best at what he did- crafting superior footwear, so they say- but for all his success he was smitten by the mobys: these pesky little birds that make their nests in the mountain peaks. They could swoop about with such grace! One day the man thought: 'what good's a pair of shoes, anyway, if they can't help a body move with such freedom and grace?' That day he made a decision: he spent many a year wandering the mountaintops, following the mobys on all their migrations, scouring the land to collect their choicest molted feathers one-by-one, until he had enough to assemble his own special pair of boots..."

Link STANDS BEHIND Marin, looking at the view, and then he looks down at the girl.

MARIN

"They were winged boots, so they say. These boots allowed him to go where he pleased, whenever he pleased and without restriction. He could chase the sun itself around the sky with ne'er a bother or a worry. He could do whatever he wanted; he was free."

Link SITS DOWN beside Marin as she finishes this last line; Marin LOOKS OVER AT Link, SMILING ruefully. She MOTIONS to the ocean with her head.

MARIN

"When I was a wee little sprout of a thing I liked to pretend that I was a sea bird. They aren't like the mobys-

they're so radiantly white, captivating enough to a little child, anyway. I'd have dreams about them— still do, at times— flitting about in the sky, moving about with the flock, happy, my wings all bright and shining in the sun, beaming like shards of glass. Maybe in another life I was a sea bird, or maybe in my next life I'll become one, I don't know..."

Marin LAUGHS self-deprecatingly.

MARIN

"Childish fancy! Well, with boots I could walk on the water, I suppose..."

LINK

"Is that what you want?"

Marin's smile WIDENS.

MARIN

"It has its appeal. But I'd settle for bein' free."

LINK

"You couldn't be free in Ainurad, I take it?"

MARIN

"That a question?"

LINK

"If you want. I'd call it an observation..."

Marin BUNCHES UP HER LEGS and STARES INTO HER LAP.

MARIN

"My 'da— when he passed— he was the last of my kin I could count on. Before that I lost two brothers to the Mountain Forest Sweat during the rainy season. And my 'ma..."

Marin SHRUGS.

MARIN

"...well, she joined with Farore right after bringing me into this world."

LINK

"I'm sorry to hear that."

MARIN

"Well, not a bad way to go, at least: dyin' to see a new life through. Better than most ways to go, you know. After all, it isn't effortless, life here..."

Link SMILES faintly.

LINK

"Because it's a land more savage 'n tattered than most?"

Marin LOOKS AT LINK; she RECIPROCATES the faint smile.

MARIN

"Yes. But not without its beauty, either: I do so love it here. I suppose I cannot explain such a thing— wild love for such an untamed thing— but—"

Link LOOKS AWAY briefly, NODDING.

LINK

"You can't explain it, I know..."

Link LOOKS BACK at the woman.

LINK

"It's just a part of you, and that's enough."

MARIN

"I though Ainurad was a part of me, but my clan's farmland left me along with my father; 'twas my mother's brother took me in from there. He kept me on with his family..."

There is a PAUSE. Link finally speaks.

LINK

"Charity, huh?"

MARIN

"And that's bad enough, right?"

LINK

"You'd think so, I know..."

Marin again LOOKS INTO HER LAP.

MARIN

"It was the eventual payments, though, that made the

situation 'untenable', so to speak. It's true what that brigand said back there, you know, that a lass does carry 'treasure' wherever she goes..."

Link LOOKS AT Marin with a measure of SURPRISE.

Marin LOOKS UP at the man.

MARIN

"Urooban's a fresh start for me, Squire Link; they've less a head for the soil than we mountain folk. I can make my way honestly there, and without the trappings of 'charity' to aid me. Whatever happens— the Golden Goddesses themselves be damned— I won't live on another's charity!"

LINK

"It wouldn't do one, right?"

Marin NODS and LOOKS OUT TO SEA.

MARIN

"You saved my life today."

LINK

"Maybe just a little."

MARIN

"I should be grateful; I am, and I shouldn't have snapped at you back there..."

Marin again LOOKS at Link.

MARIN

"I won't apologize, though: lucky as I was to run into you, you're still quite lucky to have run into me."

Marin NODS at the FLOWER in Link's hand.

MARIN

"That is a Deacon's Fie lily, good Squire. Heard of them, have you?"

LINK NODS.

LINK

"Deacon's Fie? Yeah..."

MARIN

"Barbs're bad enough, mind you, but the venom's in the spines. A scratch is a pain 'n a tingling; a half-dozen knicks are a woozy, light head. A dozen more than that makes a body that's plum out of its mind..."

LINK

"And a couple of petals mashed up in hot water makes for a wicked good cup of tea, so I hear..."

Marin COCKS a brow.

Link SMILES.

LINK

"I don't know that from experience, mind you..."

MARIN

"You will if you go down either of those grassland paths you were planning on taking: the Fie grows thick this time of year. It's all wound tight and bunched-up in dense thickets, like the braids in a lass's hair. Passable, mind you, with a sword and a strong will about one; you might just clear a path to Urooban before the wintertime, but not much sooner than that..."

Marin LOOKS AT LINK seriously.

MARIN

"I know the way through, though. An' it isn't over—"

Marin MOTIONS TO THE DROP-OFF with her head.

MARIN

"—or around, but through. If you trust me, Squire Link, I can get you to Urooban. I can get you well on your way to Faro—"

Marin PAUSES briefly.

MARIN

"Well, to your 'girl-about-a-girl', as it were. Sufficient payment, I think, for services rendered. Is it not? The only question is: do you trust me, then?"

LINK

(smiling)

"Never doubt a farmer's daughter when it comes to the lay of the land. So this 'through' you're talking about: it's not over, or around, huh?"

Marin SHAKES HER HEAD.

MARIN

"Under. But not now: not this evening. Tomorrow: fresh and bright, as it will not be that way for most of the journey. I believe that the cavern entrance is a rather difficult thing to find anyway, even in broad daylight."

Link LIES DOWN ON HIS BACK, staring up at the STARS forming in the sky. He SIGHS.

LINK

"Chilly, tonight. Still: it's not as cold as I thought it would be out here..."

Marin similarly LIES BACK, beside Link, also staring up at the STARS.

MARIN

"We could make a fire— if you like— or maybe it's the thoughts of your girl that keep you warm. Hmm?"

LINK

"It's not like that, Marin. She isn't my girl. She could never be, really..."

MARIN

"You're her boy, though, are you not?"

Link again SIGHS. He stares up at the stars and does not answer.

MARIN

"However it is, the lass is damned lucky to have you, if I don't say so myself."

LINK

"Right now she's just damned, though."

There is a LONG PAUSE.

MARIN

"What, cursed, you mean?"

LINK

"Something like that. I don't know. That's what I want to talk to Farore about..."

Marin SMILES; she suppresses a small CHORTLE.

MARIN

"A girl worth calling on a Goddess for. That's something to have, in this world..."

Marin ROLLS ONTO HER SIDE, facing Link.

MARIN

"And a boy up to actually doing it: that's something more, I suppose. She must really be something, this lass. Tell me about her, huh? If you only think you could, I mean. What's your girl's name, Squire Link?"

OVERHEAD SHOT of LINK'S HEAD as he lies in the grass, staring up at the sky.

Cue a THREE-SECOND LONG GLITCH. Most of the images in this glitch are of North Castle and the people within it, including scenes with BAGU, LINK and ZELDA. During this glitch we hear MARIN'S LINE ("What's your girl's name, Squire Link?") ECHOING in the background, and then just a part of that line ("What's your girl's name...?") quickly repeated by the end snipped ("...girl's name...?").

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (INDETERMINATE)

Immediately following the glitch is a brief OVERHEAD SHOT of LINK'S HEAD as he lies on the ceremonial stone table in the Great Palace chamber.

Link's eyes are OPEN, however Link appears to be in the middle of REM SLEEP; his eyes move in disjointed, unsteady SACCADDES and his eyelids FLUTTER.

SLOW ZOOM on LINK'S HEAD: a PURPLE BRUISE suddenly begins welling up along the left side of his head, above his eye. Link reacts by WINCING IN PAIN and CRYING OUT, but he does not appear to fully awaken from his trance.

Cue a TWO-SECOND LONG GLITCH. The images in this glitch involve scenes of Link interacting with either MARIN or ZELDA, all mixed up in a 'competing' montage.

INT. GREAT HALL OF NORTH CASTLE - EVENING.

A massive (football field-sized) chamber inside the refurbished heart of North Castle. The ceiling is ridiculously high up and massive columns dominate the hall. Plush purple carpeting weaves paths through the pillars and a central RAISED DAIS sits in the middle of the rectangular room. Upon this dais are TWO THRONES, one of them at dead center and another off to the side; the one to the side is far more slender and less-ornately draped than the one in the center.

At various points throughout the chamber ARMED GUARDS stand, most of them wearing YELLOW CAPES, while those closest to the center of the room wear RED CAPES.

A phalanx of WOMEN IN DARK PURPLE ROBES come milling through the chamber, all of them with their hoods up. The women surround another woman in the center of the group; this woman's cape is slightly more ORNATE and decorated than the other plain purple robes.

A MAN IN A YELLOW ROBE patrols through part of the chamber, weaving around a darkened area of the room with many columns. He moves past several of these, TURNING HIS HEAD AROUND suspiciously.

The man steps directly in front of a column and PAUSES, looking around. After a moment he CONTINUES MOVING through the hallway.

As soon as he moves away LINK is revealed to be standing directly behind him, clad in a GREEN ROBE and LEANING CASUALLY against the column with his arms crossed. He WATCHES the man move away with DISINTEREST.

Link WATCHES INTENTLY as the phalanx of robed women move through the central part of the hallway in the far distance; the RED-CLOAKED MEN standing at the hall's center all KNEEL, putting their foreheads to their bent knees, as the WOMAN IN THE ELABORATE ROBE passes them.

A FAINT NOISE sounds from the darkened area Link stands in; Link's body TENSES as he hears the noise. It is loud enough to attract the attention of several YELLOW-ROBED MEN, who CALL OUT to each other with VARIOUS PHRASES to investigate the sound.

These men RUSH the area; the camera moves past SEVERAL COLUMNS quickly as the men swarm the area. At EVERY OTHER SPACE BETWEEN COLUMNS we see Link standing ALERTLY (ie: having inexplicably 'hopped' from space to space, undetected).

At one such space, however, a PURPLE-ROBED FIGURE is revealed to be standing directly behind Link; the camera STOPS at this.

Link GASPS suddenly; a SMALL DAGGER is shown to be pressing up against Link's back. The purple-robed figure WHISPERS TO LINK.

PURPLE-ROBED WOMAN

"Isn't it past bedtime for little squires?"

Link suddenly SMILES.

LINK

"Little girls, too..."

PURPLE-ROBED WOMAN

"You're in an awful lot of trouble, do you know that?"

LINK

"Is that right?"

PURPLE-ROBED WOMAN

(leaning close to Link's ear, HISSING)

"You'd better believe it."

LINK

"Well, that makes two of us, I guess..."

A YELLOW-ROBED MAN comes running up through the columns and comes up behind the purple-robed woman, sword drawn.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #1

"You, there: stop!"

The purple-robed woman TURNS AROUND to face the man; Link is revealed to have VANISHED, although the purple-robed woman shows no surprise at this.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #1
"Drop that dagger, you!"

The purple-robed woman DROPS her dagger onto the plush carpet.

SEVERAL OTHER yellow-caped and red-caped men swarm the area. A MAN IN A RED CAPE approaches the woman.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD #1
"Off with that hood! You show yourself, now!"

The purple-robed woman slowly REACHES UP and DROPS the hood from her head; the woman is revealed to be PRINCESS ZELDA.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD #1 ROLLS HIS HEAD, SIGHING in frustration. The man also ROLLS HIS EYES while he KNEELS, placing his forehead onto his knee.

All the other men do LIKEWISE.

BAGU stands in the lighted area of the chamber.

BAGU
"Now, you weren't so long in Midoro, were you? Has Her Highness really forgotten the way through her own castle?"

Bagu APPROACHES Zelda, SMILING.

BAGU
"How embarrassing for Her Royal Highness..."

Zelda RECIPROCATES the smile, MOVING TOWARDS Bagu.

ZELDA
"No more embarrassing than the New Hylian Guard capturing their own princess, wouldn't you say, His Noble Marshal?"

Bagu LOOKS at the men around him, all of whom are still kneeling.

BAGU
"Oh, one of the tasks of our Guard is to be watchful and to

confront any and all troublemakers. In that regard, my lady, I think that my men have succeeded most admirably. Wouldn't you say?"

Zelda's smile WIDENS; she gives a conciliatory SIDEWAYS NOD.

Bagu again looks at the kneeling men around him.

BAGU
"Knights: to your posts!"

All the men RISE and, cementing their FISTS TO THEIR CHESTS, depart to various places inside the chamber.

Bagu CROOKS HIS ARM out to his side.

BAGU
"Shall I escort our lost lady to her quarters?"

Zelda ACCEPTS the offered arm and the pair MOVE OFF through the chamber.

ZELDA
"Her Highness can find her own way, you know."

BAGU
"That is debatable, my lady..."

ZELDA
"Her Highness could order you away, could she not?"

BAGU
"True, but for the fact that one follows the orders of His Majesty and not Her Highness..."

ZELDA
"Well, consider the fact that someday Her Highness will be a 'Her Majesty'."

BAGU
"And Farore save all Hyrule, then."

Both Bagu and Zelda exchange SMILES.

ZELDA
"And you are aware that I wasn't lost, right?"

Bagu SMILES BROADLY.

BAGU

"And you are aware that it wouldn't be the first time if you were, Highness?"

ZELDA BLUSHES, POUTING.

ZELDA

"That was long enough ago!"

BAGU

"Oh? Was it?"

ZELDA

"A decade, at least! You well know! I was three years removed from my first corset, back then."

Bagu BLUSHES.

BAGU

"Zelda! For the Goddesses' sakes!"

Zelda LAUGHS.

ZELDA

"It's good to know I can still embarrass the Marshal of the Guard. I was afraid I might have lost my touch."

BAGU

"Afraid that the culture in Midoro might rub off on you? That it might 'civilize' you a touch, my lady? My, my, my: such unfounded fears you have..."

Bagu and Zelda reach a NARROW HALLWAY budding off the main great hall; all the purple-robed women from earlier are there, their HOODS DOWN.

One of the women hands Zelda the MORE ELABORATE ROBE, although BAGU respectfully steps between the women and intercepts it.

BAGU

"Tell me: who were you talking to back there? Who was with you in the great hall?"

Zelda COCKS HER HEAD. After a moment she RUFFLES HER LASHES innocently.

ZELDA

"Nobody, naturally."

Bagu COCKS A BROW suspiciously. He LOOKS AROUND the great hall behind them slowly. Eventually he FACES ZELDA with a GRUDGING SCOWL on his face.

BAGU

"Naturally, Highness..."

Bagu TURNS to the robed women with Zelda. He NODS at them while holding up the ELABORATE ROBE.

BAGU

"And just which one of you ladies happened to be wearing this on the way in, hmm?"

None of the women respond. Zelda SMILES at Bagu while gently GRIPPING at the ROBE in his hands.

ZELDA

"A different nobody, Bagu."

Bagu ALLOWS Zelda to remove the garment from his hands; he eventually NODS politely.

BAGU

"A pleasant evening, Your Highness."

Zelda CURTSIES, her smile BROADER.

ZELDA

"And to you, Noble Marshal."

Bagu WATCHES as Zelda and her attendants move down the hallway. Soon a RED-ROBED MAN approaches Bagu, who TURNS towards him. This man SALUTES Bagu.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD #2

"Sir, I checked the barracks for curfew violations, as requested."

BAGU

"And?"

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD #2 LOOKS AROUND uncomfortably,
eventually LEANING FORWARD.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD #2

(whispering)

"And, with due respect, sir: would you like to guess who's
not in their bed, tonight?"

Bagu LOOKS DOWN AT THE GROUND for a moment. Finally he
LOOKS UP and begins WALKING OFF.

BAGU

"I'd guess that everything is currently in its place,
Captain... for better or for worse, anyway..."

Bagu WALKS BACK through the great hall with CAPTAIN OF THE
GUARD #2 following close behind, looking bewildered.

EXT. NORTH CASTLE SPRING - LATE EVENING.

A natural freshwater spring wells up within the refurbished
inner portion of North Castle, surrounded by tall, leafy
trees and foliage that branch out along the water's length,
stretching out for many acres across the rest of North
Castle's massive sprawl. A two-story stretch of
elaborately-carved castle wall is adjacent to this; unlike
the crumbling ruins further out along the water this
section of the castle is obviously more well-kept and has
many lighted windows.

LINK PACES about along the grass below. He stands
underneath a set of particularly large ARCHED WINDOWS on
the second-story above him. He briefly LOOKS UP a few
times.

Link appears IMPATIENT as he paces. Eventually he SHAKES
HIS HEAD, looking up one last time before SIGHING. He
WHISPERS to himself as he WALKS OFF.

LINK

"And I'm in trouble? Just who keeps who waiting, huh? Too
much to expect from a 'dignified' lady of the court..."

Suddenly ZELDA comes crashing down into the grass in front
of Link; the woman lands on her hands and knees, clumsily

crashing into a small overgrowth of weeds in front of Link and DISAPPEARING inside the foliage.

ZELDA
"Ouch."

Link SMILES.

LINK
"You know, you did that kind of thing a whole lot better when you were a kid."

Zelda quickly STANDS UP from the weeds; she is wearing a sleeveless 'tank top' and knee-length skirt (all-in-all more 'casually' dressed, although she still wears the crown on her head).

Zelda LOOKS DOWN at her legs; she APPROACHES Link with an 'impish' expression on her face.

ZELDA
"Skinned knees were less a problem, back then. These days they just don't do for a 'dignified' lady of the court: sticking out beneath a formal skirt."

Zelda COCKS A BROW.

ZELDA
"Of course, sneaking out for a little moonlight stroll doesn't do a lady either, I suppose. Do you think I should keep more 'regular' hours, Link?"

LINK
"Honestly?"

Zelda NODS.

Link SMIRKS.

LINK
"I think you should get a longer dress."

Zelda RECIPROCATES the SMIRK.

EXT. NORTH CASTLE SPRING RUINS - LATE EVENING.

A deeper section of the spring lake; this area is surrounded by even more dense foliage and the disjointed ruins of ancient North Castle.

Link and Zelda WALK through the dense foliage along the water, moving side-by-side with Zelda walking closest to the water. LIGHT from small crystals embedded in both the shore of the water and in the ground beneath the water radiates out, illuminating the scene and making the stream exceedingly blue in appearance.

ZELDA

"It's a strategic location, you know: set right between the southern coast and the Unnamed Mountain Range—"

LINK

"It's... a swamp."

ZELDA

"—and they can grow every manner of foodstuff in the sod, there: so many exotic fruits and vegetables—"

LINK

"It's— it's a swamp."

ZELDA

"The people are so very industrious, too. And their culture is very, very—"

Link STANDS IN FRONT OF Zelda; the woman STOPS when he blocks her path.

LINK

"It's a swamp, Zelda."

Zelda LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, evasive, before MEETING LINK'S GAZE.

ZELDA

"Yes, it is..."

Link SMILES; he turns and CONTINUES WALKING along the shoreline. Zelda CATCHES UP to him, still walking close to the water.

LINK

"And you were there long enough, weren't you? What did your

father have you doing there, anyway?"

Zelda SHRUGS.

ZELDA

"Getting the lay of the land. Being seen around the towns; playing nice with their leaders. Just fluff: lots of hand-kissing and curtsying, that kind of thing."

Zelda GLARES at Link critically.

ZELDA

"And yes: it was a long time. After a month I was waiting for a hero to come and rescue me. But, lo and to my surprise, guess who didn't come over to Midoro with the rest of my honor guard to pick me up. Some hero you are, huh?"

Link SMILES BROADLY and NODS.

LINK

"And that's why I'm in 'big trouble', right? Can't fault me for that: Bagu wouldn't let me go to 'collect' you. They don't let heroes ride out on missions like that; only knights."

ZELDA

"Give it enough time and you'll be the greatest of all our knights, Link."

LINK

"Yeah, well: give it enough time and the sun will dry up and die..."

Link LOOKS OVER at Zelda with a conspiratorial glance.

LINK

"...give it enough time and you'll be a queen, won't you, Zelda? Makes me wonder though, sometimes, just what exactly you'll be the queen of..."

Zelda LOOKS AT Link with a surprised expression.

Link LOOKS AT ZELDA.

LINK

"Your father still needs an alliance somewhere, doesn't he?"

He's got a good foothold here on the Old Shores, but it might not be enough to reestablish the Old Kingdom; isn't that right?"

ZELDA

"He has the New Hylian Guard for that; your swords are all the help we need—"

LINK

"No: you're not that naïve, Zelda. You've always been much smarter than I am, and even I've figured out what your father's going to do to ensure the land's security. Ten-thousand of our swords aren't even half as valuable to the kingdom as your hand is..."

Zelda STOPS WALKING; Link does likewise.

LINK

"Is it gonna be Midoro: the royals out there? Is that who you're being offered up to?"

Zelda first LOOKS AWAY, seemingly ANGRY, but then she FACES LINK, head bowed slightly, and she SHAKES HER HEAD. Zelda MOVES CLOSER TO THE WATER, looking across the glowing spring at VINE-CHOKED RUINS across the water.

ZELDA

"No. Father didn't let me go when I was of age, you know, and we're not so willing to enter into that kind of alliance now, either. He wants to tame the Old Shores from here, with North Castle as the center of our power, just like it was back in the days of our distant ancestors."

Zelda TURNS and faces Link.

ZELDA

"It's a dynasty we're after. If that were the case— if we could manage that— then I could stay here in North Castle forever..."

LINK

"I wouldn't mind that. But he's keeping his options open with these little 'diplomatic' trips, isn't he? And you? You're willing to just walk away from here, aren't you?"

Zelda abruptly TURNS and faces the water again, SEETHING.

ZELDA

"It's not about me, Link, or my father. We're servants- I'm a servant- and whatever I can do that's in the best interest of our people is the only thing that I can do. If there's a famine tomorrow and people begin to starve what else could I do but present myself to the Royal Family at Midoro? We could easily feed our people off their surplus and keep our population alive, all in exchange for my hand; that's a very small price, if you ask me--"

LINK

(whispering)

"Oh, I don't..."

ZELDA

"--and what if there's a plague tomorrow and people start dying in droves: what else could I do but present myself to the rulers of Odium, and in doing so gain the attention of their alchemists and healers?"

LINK

"You are a person, you know, and not just some 'commodity' to be bartered with."

ZELDA

"I... can't afford to be a 'person', Link..."

Link PACES behind Zelda's back; eventually he APPROACHES the woman, SMILING faintly.

LINK

"Just what is it they put in the water over in Midoro, huh? Something that can make a girl so depressed and... mopey, huh?"

Zelda ARCHES HER BROW.

ZELDA

"'Mopey'?"

Zelda also SMILES.

ZELDA

"I'd be depressed if I lived in a giant swamp, too, you know..."

Zelda FACES Link, putting her back to the water.

ZELDA

"You think I'm being too grandiose, huh?"

LINK

"Or too dramatic, at least. Yeah, you're really overestimating your own importance."

Zelda CROSSES her arms, smiling impishly.

ZELDA

"Is that so?"

LINK

"Oh, yeah. All these suitors you're talking about are fighting over a prim and proper princess, you know..."

ZELDA

"Yes?"

LINK

"...and they're not planning on getting a coltish tomboy with her own brain in her head, not to mention a set of scrapes on her knees..."

Zelda LOOKS DOWN, blushing.

ZELDA

"I am taking myself too seriously, aren't I?"

Link NODS seriously.

There is a LONG PAUSE.

Zelda LOOKS UP, SMIRKING. She is BLUSHING as well.

ZELDA

"For Farore's sake: did you really have to compare me to a horse, Link?"

LINK

"If the horseshoe fits..."

Zelda suddenly takes ONE AGGRESSIVE STEP towards Link, who stands his ground despite his surprise. Zelda GLOWERS at Link sinisterly; eventually ZELDA'S SANDAL-CLAD RIGHT FOOT comes up off the ground, briefly, before the girl quickly

SCRAPES it across the ground twice, 'pawing' delicately at the earth.

Link SMILES broadly.

ZELDA

"I only act like a wild horse, you know..."

LINK

"Is that so?"

ZELDA

"You're the only one of us that's the real thing. A real wild beast..."

Zelda LOOKS DOWN.

ZELDA

"...but you're also right. Maybe I do take myself too seriously. It's hard not to, though: when I think about our people, and what could happen to them in the future— and how to give them the best possible future— I get overwhelmed. I'm twisted in so many ways! I'd make such a terrible ruler, Link. At least I think I would. With all that staring me in the face it's hard not to be serious; but I am just a person, too, and I wish I could think of a way to remember that. To cut myself down to size..."

There is a SHORT PAUSE.

Link then SMILES AT ZELDA, warm; he slowly RAISES HIS LEFT ARM and rests his hand on Zelda's shoulder.

Zelda LOOKS OVER at the hand on her shoulder, and then she LOOKS UP at Link with her own faint SMILE.

Suddenly Link VIOLENTLY SHOVES Zelda backward with his left arm. The girl goes careening directly into the spring lake behind them, SCREAMING, and then SPLASHING into the water and FLAILING AROUND in a shocked, undignified manner.

Link LOOKS UP, SIGHING dramatically as Zelda SPUTTERS in the water.

LINK

(whispering)

"I'm gonna get hell for that..."

Zelda SCREAMS UP at Link while flailing in the water.

ZELDA

"Y- you! You- y- you insane, demented—"

Link PACES along the water's edge, SMILING bemusedly.

LINK

"`Wild beast'? Yeah..."

Link KNEELS at the water's edge.

LINK

"Isn't it funny, though, just how much a cold dose of spring water can make you feel like a 'person'?"

Zelda gets to the water's edge, STARING up at Link with a livid expression.

LINK

"And I thought that horses liked water."

Zelda continues STARING at Link angrily, but then she begins to SMILE; eventually that grin becomes UNSETTLINGLY POLITE.

Link STANDS.

LINK

"I only thought you needed it, you know..."

ZELDA

"It is enough to clear my head, I think. I certainly feel quite different, now..."

Zelda EXTENDS A HAND out of the water.

Link BENDS OVER and GRIPS her offered hand, ready to pull her out.

LINK

"Like a normal person?"

Link gets Zelda PARTIALLY OUT of the water, with the girl's foot and knee still in contact with the edge of the waterline.

Zelda's smile becomes DEEPLY UNPLEASANT.

ZELDA

"No: like a colt."

Zelda suddenly uses her free hand to 'DEADLEG' the back of LINK'S LEG; this causes Link to DROP TO ONE KNEE, GRUNTING, after which Zelda quickly UNDOES the sheath around Link's waist, causing his BROADSWORD to fall into the grass. She then GRABS the man around the neck with BOTH HANDS; Link's green cloak flutters off his body and the pair quickly FALL BACK into the water together, DISAPPEARING.

Link emerges from the water, SPUTTERING and FLAILING around, undignified.

Zelda APPEARS soon after this, her head rising elegantly and slowly.

Link STOPS thrashing upon sight of Zelda; the man RECOVERS from the shock of the water and eventually SMILES at the woman, conciliatory.

LINK

"Rather beastly of you..."

ZELDA

"Quite, right?"

The woman FLOATS ON HER BACK, gently propelling herself farther out into the water with a delicate flutter kick.

Link BREAST STROKES out with her.

Eventually Zelda RIGHTS herself and the pair bob in the water, face to face.

Zelda LOOKS DOWN at her reflection in the clear water: a light coating of makeup has run from her cheeks, revealing two sets of very faint 'TEARSTAIN' MARKS that run from directly under both her eyes down her cheeks, much like birthmarks.

ZELDA

"You've gone and ruined my makeup..."

Zelda gently BRUSHES ONE HAND over one of her MARRED CHEEKS.

ZELDA

"Now look at me. Honestly!"

LINK

"Mmm: this is the only way you ever look even halfway close to decent, Zelda. No trappings, no tricks..."

Zelda SMILES WIDELY.

ZELDA

"I missed you, Link."

Link RECIPROCATES the smile.

LINK

"Yeah."

The pair slowly CIRCLES around in the water, facing each other.

ZELDA

"This castle's always got enough going on to keep you occupied, right? Bagu certainly keeps you busy enough, doesn't he?"

LINK

"He does. But this castle is a depressing shell of a ruin—no offense, my 'lady'—"

Link performs and AWKWARD MOCK-BOW in the water.

ZELDA

"You'd be happier out on the plains, wouldn't you? Running with the other wild horses?"

Zelda CHUCKLES.

Link SMILES.

LINK

"There isn't much around that can make this castle bearable..."

Link gently PROPELS himself forward in the water, slowly CLOSING THE DISTANCE between himself and Zelda.

LINK

"...and there isn't much around that can make it beautiful.
The Goddesses only know how you manage to do that..."

Zelda STARES AT LINK intently.

LINK

"I missed you, Zelda."

The pair comes close enough to each other that their noses nearly touch.

ZELDA

"Yeah..."

Link STARES AT ZELDA intently; he continues LEANING FORWARD.

Zelda abruptly TURNS HER HEAD away, looking EVASIVELY to one side.

ZELDA

"It- It's very late, isn't it Squire?"

Link BLINKS; he BACKS UP in the water, also LOOKING to one side.

LINK

"Yeah..."

He LOOKS UP at the woman.

LINK

"Yes, it is, Highness..."

Cue ONE-SECOND LONG GLITCH.

EXT. NORTH CASTLE SPRING RUINS - (CONTINUOUS).

Zelda stands in the thick of some foliage beside a ruined wall near the spring. Link's green cape rests on some of the stones of this ruin. Zelda PUTS ON a sandal and WRINGS water out of her hair. A GLITTERING TRINKET on a tree branch beside her CATCHES her eye; Zelda discovers a SILVER

PENDANT hanging on the tree. The pendant is in the shape of THREE INTERLOCKING TRIANGLES (IE: The 'Triforce' Symbol).

Zelda is SURPRISED to see this; she LOOKS UP through the dense foliage in a certain direction, SMILING.

Link is SHIRTLESS in another section of the dense foliage, busily WRINGING OUT HIS SOCKS. A SCAR is clearly visible on LINK'S STERNUM; it appears to be the FLAT END OF A SWORD BLADE, as if his flesh were seared over with a red-hot sword at some point (NOTE: This scar effectively BLOTS OUT the café-au-lait birthmark Link previously carried in the previous screenplay "THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME").

The bushes RUSTLE behind him; ZELDA calls out from behind the foliage.

ZELDA

"Now, I know you didn't 'disappear' yourself out to Midoro and slog through 100 square acres of swamp water to find this..."

Link SMILES as he puts on his leggings.

LINK

"Not exactly. That'd be just a little too 'heroic' of me..."

Link SUDDENLY STANDS and TURNS to face the bushes as Zelda EMERGES; she is wearing his long green cape around her shoulders.

She HOLDS UP the pendant.

LINK

"...but they make silver jewelry well-enough in Urar; when some of your aides came back last week I heard about that, um... little 'tumble' of yours..."

Zelda CROSSES HER ARMS, POUTING.

ZELDA

"Riding horses through swampland is not an easy thing!"

LINK

"And you did that a whole lot better when you were a kid, too..."

CAMERA SHOT FROM BEHIND LINK'S BARE BACK, focused mostly on ZELDA; many FRESH WHIP MARKS are visible on Link's back.

ZELDA

"You and the other squires are being kept on tight leashes, recently; Bagu must've given you hell for running off to town like that."

LINK

"No, he didn't. Anyway, I'd do almost anything for that smile, there."

Zelda TOYS with the pendant, SMILING, and moves closer to Link; Link, meanwhile, DRAPES HIS SHIRT over his back, leaving his back mostly covered and his bare chest still mostly uncovered.

ZELDA

"I was very upset when I lost my pendant back there; it was a gift from my mother--"

LINK

"Yeah: I know."

ZELDA

"--and it should always feel unique to me. It's one of the best ways I can remember her. But this--"

Zelda again HOLDS UP the silver pendant, 'WEIGHING' it in her bouncing hand.

ZELDA

"--this feels just as good to me: the same. I don't know why that is, but it is."

Zelda STEPS FORWARD, moving closer to Link; she RESTS A HAND on his chest.

ZELDA

"I guess they're both so similar to me because they both have the same meaning; almost, anyway. My mother's pendant was a symbol of how much one person cared for me when back

she was alive. This pendant, though, can remind me of how much two people do that..."

ZELDA (very PROPERLY and CHASTEY) KISSES Link's cheek.

ZELDA
(whispering)
"Some hero you are, huh?"

After the woman PULLS BACK from the kiss Link SMILES MISCHIEVOUSLY.

LINK
"You smell like a wet dog; do you know that?"

ZELDA
"Pots and kettles, Link..."

Suddenly the bushes behind the pair RUSTLE and a figure quickly EMERGES; a sword-wielding man in a yellow cape charges before the pair, SCREAMING as he emerges from the thicket.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #2
"Halt! Who goes, there?"

Link and Zelda take note of the man, with Link TURNING HIS HEAD QUICKLY; his RED LEFT EYE seems to reflect a 'disproportionate' amount of moonlight (as if, more than just by a trick of the light, it could be considered GLOWING; this is a SUBTLE effect). Zelda still has one hand on Link's chest.

The knight, meanwhile, takes note of the mostly bare-chested Link and the princess, who wears his cape.

Both parties STARE AT EACH OTHER, unemotionally, for a very awkward time (NOTE: this PAUSE lasts for nearly eight seconds).

Eventually the knight SWALLOWS uncomfortably and, LOOKING AROUND awkwardly, he POINTS HIS SWORD in some random direction behind him.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #2
"Well, uh... think I hear a noise over there, somewhere. That bears investigating, I should think..."

The man quickly WALKS OFF. He MUTTERS UNDER HIS BREATH as he departs.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #2

(whispering)

"...more than other things, at least..."

Link and Zelda SMILE AT EACH OTHER after this.

EXT. NORTH CASTLE SPRING RUINS - (CONTINUOUS).

BAGU stalks through the foliage by the spring water with two red-caped captains of the guard behind him, both bearing TORCHES; they are followed by two of Zelda's female, purple-robed attendants.

Bagu PARTS bushes as he walks and quickly comes upon ZELDA, who stands beside a large tree.

BAGU

"The hour is late, is it not, Highness?"

ZELDA

"Late enough, I suppose..."

Bagu WALKS TOWARDS the woman.

BAGU

"They say that Ganon eats little girls who go running off out of their beds after dark. He starts with their toes, so they say, at least."

Zelda SMILES. She WALKS FORWARD. As she walks we can see Link's green cape hanging on a tree limb in the background on the other side of the tree from Bagu and his party. Zelda's body ECLIPSES this as she passes, and when that tree-limb is again visible we see that the cape has VANISHED.

ZELDA

"And what is it they say about superstitious Marshals?"

BAGU

"Oh, we have swords: we don't bother eating toes..."

Zelda SMILES begrudgingly. Bagu RECIPROCATES.

Bagu MOTIONS to his party with one hand, RESPECTFUL, and Zelda JOINS HIS GROUP as they escort her back through the foliage.

LINK is sitting far away, on the opposite side of the spring from the group where he and Zelda first entered the water, wearing his green cloak, which blends in with the dark green foliage all around him; he is wiping grass stains off his broadsword sheath.

He WATCHES as Bagu, his captains, Zelda and her attendants make their way back in the direction of the refurbished section of North Castle. Link SMILES faintly as the captains' torchlight disappears into the foliage, eventually RECLINING onto his back; he STARES UP at the stars in the sky and SIGHS.

LINK

"Yup: I'd do almost anything for that smile, there..."

Cue a FIVE-SECOND LONG GLITCH: laced within this glitch are brief snippets of scenes showing Zelda sitting up in her bed, her face appearing GAUNT and UNHEALTHY, appearing to be speaking with and reacting to someone off camera (the speech is echoed and garbled to the point of unintelligibility). This glitch ends with a quick progression of snippets focusing on Zelda's face, drawing in to her EYES which, when they are in EXTREME CLOSE-UP, LOOK UP at the camera. During this glitch, too, we can hear the faint, echoing phrase "do almost anything..." several times as, each time it's said, it OVERLAPS on itself, dissolving into a jumbled mess of sound.

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (INDETERMINATE)

The glitch cuts out immediately to reveal LINK'S EYES in EXTREME CLOSE-UP. Link SPASMS and CRIES OUT in pain; he is doused in sweat and many of the previously dried wounds on his body appear to be once again OOZING BLOOD (NOTE: it is obvious that he is only losing a faint, 'cosmetic' amount of blood from these wounds).

Link ARCHES HIS BACK, WINCING, and suddenly ROLLS OFF the stone table, landing in a pile of soggy, soft rubble.

Link GETS TO HIS KNEES and puts his knuckles on the ground in front of him; he quickly SHEDS his undershirt, as if he is too hot, and then BOWS HIS HEAD, staring down and PANTING HARD.

Link's BREATH, as well as his BODY HEAT, are visible in the chamber as faint trails of STEAM; THUNDERBIRD can be seen flitting about through this steam behind him, very briefly.

Link SITS ON HIS HAUNCHES and CRANES HIS HEAD BACK; while he is in this position a SMALL, BLOODY LINE begins to form over his right chest area, above his nipple and down to near his mid-rib area; this 'phantom wound' soon begins LEAKING BLOOD (again: a 'cosmetic' amount).

When Link again RETURNS HIS HEAD to level we see that the SMALL BRUISE that has been developing over his RIGHT EYE is growing inexplicably LARGER and more purple in color.

Link CRAWLS to the MASSIVE GOLD-TRIMMED DOOR across from the table; he appears EXHAUSTED. He lies against the door, gently PRESSING HIS BODY up against the base of it; eventually he PUTS ONE EAR to the door.

CAMERA PAN around LINK'S HEAD as he listens at the door. Eventually we see a pile of rubble in the background, upon which MARIN is sitting; CAMERA FOCUS on Marin, who watches Link without speaking.

Link TURNS HIS HEAD; he LOOKS at Marin before again RESTING HIS HEAD against the door, 'COOLING' his forehead against the cold gold trim.

LINK

"The door will not open... it's very quiet..."

Marin WATCHS Link without speaking; the girl eventually LOOKS OVER at the CEREMONIAL TABLE, and then back at Link.

Link NODS.

LINK

"Yeah... I know..."

Link STANDS, with effort, and WALKS back over to the ceremonial table; he once again LIES DOWN on the slab, gingerly RESTING HIS HEAD.

Link CLOSES HIS EYES; he appears CALM for a brief moment before drawing in a SHARP, PAINED BREATH.

Cue ONE-SECOND LONG GLITCH.

INT. FO-LÀRAICH CAVERNS (THE 'COIN SLOT') - MORNING.

A bleak network of underground passages and tunnels, all leading DOWNHILL beneath the limestone drop-off in the Sporran Woods above. Some rare SPLITS in the cave ceiling far overhead allow faint trails of light in at very irregular intervals. Otherwise the place is almost completely PITCH BLACK.

PAN DOWN from the cracked roof and into the gloom of the cavern. During this slow pan TEXT appears (fade-in) at LOWER CENTER:

"Fo-Làraich Caverns"

This line of text DISAPPEARS (fade-out) within a few seconds.

Link and Marin WALK through a section of cavern with a split along the roof; very faint lines of LIGHT pierce the gloom and barely illuminate their path.

MARIN

"...and- long story short- that is why I was never allowed near that threshing gadget again..."

Link STOPS WALKING; he LOOKS AROUND the gloom, suspicious.

LINK

"...and why your younger brother grew up without eyebrows?"

Link continues LOOKING AROUND; eventually he FACES MARIN.

MARIN

"Well, they did grow back..."

LINK

"Do you really call that a long story made short, Marin?"

MARIN

"What is it? What's wrong?"

LINK
"Urooban is due east, isn't it?"

MARIN
(nodding)
"Duly..."

Link FACES FORWARD, MOTIONING with his head.

LINK
"This... is not east."

MARIN
"It is. At least it is eventually..."

LINK
"As the seagull flies?"

MARIN
"As the snake twists; we're in the 'Coin Slot'."

Marin POINTS OVERHEAD.

MARIN
"That chunk of split earth above us snakes all about this cavern's length—"

LINK
"Not a very direct route..."

MARIN
"But a lighted one. It is most unwise to step out into the darkness of Fo-Làraich, my good Squire: this is a very treacherous and wet place, after all. Any lights one can strike do not tend to stay lit for long, and travelers left in the dark, well... they're sure to be found in here still when the world meets its end—"

Link suddenly TAKES MARIN'S HAND and begins LEADING HER into the darkness of the cave.

Marin RESISTS.

MARIN
"Did you not hear what I just said? Without a light—"

LINK

"Forget a light. We don't need a light."

MARIN

"But—"

Link TAPS THE LEFT SIDE OF HIS HEAD, near his REDDISH EYE.

LINK

"'Bright eyes', remember? We'll be fine..."

MARIN

"A lass has her doubts. I might question just how in the Goddesses' holy names you could possibly see—"

Link LOOKS BACK at Marin.

LINK

"No, the only question is: do you trust me?"

Marin LOOKS AWAY for a moment, uncertain, before LETTING UP on her resistance; the pair move through the darkness of the caverns.

LINK

"You should never doubt a member of the New Hylian Guard, 'lassie'."

MARIN

"But a loony? Huh?"

INT. FO-LÀRAICH CAVERNS (CENTRAL CHAMBERS) - LATE MORNING.

This section of cavern is almost totally devoid of light; Link and Marin are just barely visible as they walk through the gloom.

MARIN

"This is madness, Squire..."

LINK

"This is east, Marin. Direct, too. Each step we take is a step in the right direction."

MARIN

(sulking)

"Feels like I've stepped one foot in the grave."

Marin SHIVERS.

MARIN

"And so bloody cold, at that..."

Link, without pausing or turning around, REMOVES the brown cloak from his body and HOLDS IT OUT behind him as he walks.

Marin eventually DETECTS the garment dangling in front of her; she grudgingly TAKES it and wraps it around her body. The woman PANTS as she strives to keep up with Link.

MARIN

(huffing)

"You're hardly sparing a second, are you?"

LINK

"Well, 'my girl' (NOTE: sarcastic inflection on previous) can hardly wait much longer, can she?"

MARIN

"Truthfully, now: can you actually damned well see a damned thing in here? If you're just weaving some damned story then you truly are putting us both in the grave—"

LINK

(smiling faintly)

"Damning us, you mean? And watch your step, Marin..."

Marin immediately TRIPS over an uneven section of cavern floor; she nearly falls before REGAINING her balance.

MARIN

(sulking)

"Aren't we a one-man spelunking team, then? Suppose there's nothing I could do to add to this effort?"

LINK

"There is something you can do for me..."

MARIN

"Mmm? What's that?"

LINK

"Stop trying to stare at my ass, Marin."

Marin BUCKS, and then SNARLS; the woman TROTS UP BESIDE Link, walking abreast with him on his RIGHT.

LINK

"I'd stay back, if I were you—"

MARIN

"Your ass is not so attractive a thing that I cannot live without the sight of it, Squire."

Marin SNICKERS.

MARIN

"Truth be told I've seen finer rear ends on chickens in their coops!"

Marin LOOKS AT LINK while she finishes this sentence ("...in their coops!"): when the camera switches to Link we suddenly see a GIGANTIC, GAUNT FACE behind him in the shadowy background (this face is, by itself, easily as large as Link's body; only about half of it is visible in the shadows). The disembodied face 'GUMS' the air, bearing an UNPLEASANT, AMBIGUOUS expression.

As this face is far off to Link's other side the man appears not to notice. Link LOOKS at Marin (ie: AWAY from the face and towards the camera). He SMIRKS.

LINK

"I think that says more about your own peculiarities than it does about my backside—"

Marin's LIPS TREMBLE. The woman SKIDS to a stop; Link does LIKEWISE.

MARIN

"L- L- Link!"

Link sounds more SERIOUS, and VERY CALM.

LINK

"Yeah, I know, Marin. You can see some of them, huh?"

MARIN

"S- some of them?"

The GIGANTIC FACE'S one visible eyeball ROTATES unsettlingly; it seems to FOCUS ON LINK, briefly, before the head 'TURNS' in the air, apparently DISINTERESTED; it FADES from view as it does so.

MARIN

"What- what?"

LINK

"They won't hurt you, Marin. Can't. They probably wouldn't want to, even if they could. They don't care about you, or me."

Link CONTINUES WALKING; Marin quickly FOLLOWS SUIT.

MARIN

"Th- They?"

Link NODS SLOWLY; he LOOKS AT the pitch blackness all around them, purposeful, at times appearing as if he is LOOKING at certain objects in the dark.

Marin LOOKS AROUND as well, but very confusedly; it is clear that she cannot see anything.

LINK

"They're all around us, here. There's lots more, too, holed up deeper in the dead-end passages off to either side--"

MARIN

"Who are they?"

LINK

"What are they. Used to be a 'who'..."

Link SPREADS HIS HANDS to either side; we very briefly see a STRANGE, 'HUMANOID' FIGURE lumbering through the shadows far away in the distance (NOTE: think strange, 'Silent Hill'-type 'backward-walking' movement), but it disappears almost instantly, too fast for its features to be discerned (NOTE: Seriously, it disappears VERY FAST).

LINK

"They're 'Hill People'. And honestly: they're no threat to anyone. Not anyone in this lifetime, anyway. We've got them on the Old Shores, too, mostly in the Unnamed Mountain Range, places like that."

MARIN
" 'Hill People' ?"

Link NODS.

LINK
"Don't know exactly why they call them that: they don't live inside hills so much as mountains, and as for being people, well, that's debatable..."

Link LOOKS BACK at Marin, noticing the girl's BEFUDDLEMENT.

LINK
"Look: there must have been a great battle here, right?"

MARIN
"No—"

LINK
"No? Not ever?"

Marin COCKS HER HEAD.

MARIN
"The— the War of the Mourning Mermaid, perhaps..."

LINK
(arching his brow)
" 'The Mourning Mermaid' ?"

Marin SHAKES HER HEAD.

MARIN
"It was a statue. There was this spat about an Emperor's stature that got vandalized— it is a very long and petty story— but eventually the situation got a mite out of control—"

LINK
"A mite?"

MARIN
"Whole of the land eventually got into the fray. Tens of thousands dead, too, by the time the last sword was sheathed—"

LINK

"A fight across the whole of the Threadbare Lands? They fought here, too, didn't they?"

MARIN

"What? In Fo-Làraich? Nonsense! Only mushrooms and slime mold fight it out in here!"

LINK

"But around here, right?"

MARIN

"The Sporrán... yes, it saw some action back then. But that was half-a-dozen generations ago! All those combatants are long since—"

LINK

"No: they never stopped fighting. They just... 'relocated'."

Marin LOOKS AT LINK quizzically.

LINK

"You get a thousand bodies together— and all of them with their blood boiling from the heat of battle— strange things can happen. Some of the dead, once cut down, refuse to even acknowledge their own death. To them the only thing that matters is the very last sensation they remember when they were alive: the heat of battle, the terrible thrill of combat. They think they still have a job to do..."

MARIN

"To fight, you mean?"

Link NODS.

LINK

"So they do that. Forever, too. Don't know why they choose to congregate in caves like they do. Makes sense, though, doesn't it? Maybe the sunshine reminds them that there's more to life than their trivial obsessions—"

MARIN

"Or it reminds them that their lives have ended?"

LINK

(shrugging)

"Yeah. So it goes: a body that's driven enough can turn a blind eye to all the 'trappings' of humanity..."

Link eventually TURNS and looks at Marin; he notices the girl's OBVIOUS UNEASE.

Link LOOKS AHEAD, searching with his eyes until he eventually MOTIONS through the darkness with one hand.

LINK

"C'mon: there's another lighted path down here."

Marin SHAKES HER HEAD.

MARIN

"No: I'm fine—"

LINK

"No, you're not. And if you were you'd be braver than I am; the first time I ever saw Hill People I wet myself..."

MARIN

"Embarrassing, for a Squire."

Link LOOKS BACK AT MARIN.

LINK

"Not too unpleasant at first: it was a very cold cavern, you see..."

MARIN

"You seem to take to caves rather naturally, though."

LINK

"Well, you're never alone when you step into one. I suppose I'm kinda fond of the Hill People, too. I like to think I can identify with them—"

MARIN

"On the basis of your intellects, you mean?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

(whispering)

"On the basis of our drives..."

MARIN

"You really can see in the dark, can't you?"

LINK

(nodding)

"Yeah. Well enough, anyway. Come on: we can leave the dead to the dead, Marin. The two of us are about to do something they can't do at all, anymore..."

Marin COCKS A BROW.

MARIN

(quizzically mischievous)

"Do tell?"

LINK

"Mmmm."

Link PATS HIS STOMACH.

LINK

"Time for lunch."

INT. FO-LÀRAICH CAVERNS (FAULT LINE) - LATE MORNING.

This area of the cave has a SLENDER CRACK in one wall, exposing it to the outside elements; outside is a sheer cliff drop-off, plunging down many stories, revealing grassland and the distant seaside in the background.

Link and Marin RECLINE across from one another beside this crack, lounging on stalagmites. The pair EATS a small assortment of FRUITS from Marin's rucksack. Their PERSONAL ITEMS are strewn around the area as a makeshift camp.

Marin SMACKS on a juicy peach; she is sitting against Link's BROWN CLOAK, using it as cushioning.

MARIN

"Your wee bonny princess certainly sounds nice enough, Squire Link. She has what they call a 'radiant personality', right? But it seems she might be a bit of a quaintrelle, mind you..."

Link COCKS A BROW.

MARIN

"Is she something of a quaintrelle?"

Link FUMBLES for words.

LINK

"I- uh... suppose I wouldn't know her well enough to know..."

Marin SMILES WIDELY; she continues EATING her peach.

MARIN

"Do you know anything of the land out east from here? A little island apart from the island?"

LINK

"Someplace east of the Threadbare Lands?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"No."

Link BITES into an apple.

MARIN

"It's a tiny little place, full of lonely little rock formations and petrified bramble. They call it the 'Island of Infinite Horizons'—"

LINK

"'They' seem to have a flair for the dramatic, don't they?"

MARIN

"—it's easternmost of all the land of Hyrule. When the Golden Goddesses choose to end this world that's where all the 'fun' is allegedly supposed to start from. What they say, anyway. There's a rector there and his congregation of wizzrobes— Carock is his name— and his flock is said to be the most 'mystical' of all the mystics..."

Marin BITES OFF and CHEWS a particularly large chunk of peach; she MOTIONS to Link's face as she works her words around the mouthful.

MARIN

"...though I doubt even they've seen anything the likes of

you, before. Maybe you should pay them a visit, someday. You know: teach them what it really is to be a magician?"

LINK

"I'm no magician, Marin."

MARIN

"So you say..."

Link SMILES.

LINK

"Is this 'Island of Infinite Horizons' one of the places you'll want to go when you get your wings?"

Marin BLUSHES and puts on a DEFENSIVE BODY POSTURE.

MARIN

"Here's a perfectly good reason never to share a thought with another body. You know, Squire Link: a true gentleman wouldn't toy with a lass so—"

Link SPREADS HIS HANDS, SMIRKING

LINK

"Ah: I'm not a gentleman, either. Remember?"

MARIN

(pouting)

"Truer words were ne'er spoke."

LINK

"You'll be rid of me at Urooban, you know. That's coming soon enough, too."

Marin LAUGHS.

MARIN

"Ah, pity that! It's for the best, though, I'm sure. You'll want to keep on at a more 'lively' pace once you cross the Adhavore, after all, and as for me, well..."

Marin FLUTTERS HER LASHES at Link coquettishly.

MARIN

"...I'd just as soon keep on living. No offense."

Link SMILES, GESTURING with his hand.

Marin DISCARDS the pit of her peach, LICKING HER FINGERS.

MARIN

"Funny, isn't it, how very little anything seems to rile you, Squire? Some would call that kind of temperament a 'coolness', but another might just call it being 'cold'..."

While speaking this last line of dialogue Marin SEARCHES around her for something to wipe her hands on; eventually she finds the SILK HEADSCARF (pg. _____) and retrieves it from the cave floor. She begins CLEANING HER HANDS as she speaks the last of this line ("...another might just call it being 'cold'...").

Link suddenly realizes what she is doing; he moves LIGHTNING FAST, getting to his knees and moving up against Marin's body, his face stopping an inch from hers. Link GLARES at the woman and the pair STARE at each other for an awkward time.

MARIN'S HANDS drop the headscarf into LINK'S HANDS.

MARIN

"A remarkable thaw, that..."

Link BACKS OFF, returning to his stalagmite. He DRAPES the headscarf over his lap and SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"Sorry..."

MARIN

"I meant no disrespect. A farm-girl knows no manners, I suppose."

Link LOOKS UP.

LINK

"You know enough. And you have helped me through these lands, Marin. Thank you for that. I didn't mean to be so stern..."

Marin NODS silently.

MARIN

"It was just nice to see something of a fire in your eyes,
at long last. Suppose I should've known what would kindle
that in you..."

Link LOOKS AWAY from Marin, staring out the fissure of the
cave.

MARIN

"If anyone can save this lass, Squire Link, I think it is
you."

LINK

"You don't know me, Marin—"

Marin STANDS UP and shrugs.

MARIN

"Mmm. Kinda makes the vote of confidence all the more
remarkable, does it not?"

LINK

"You say so..."

Marin SMILES faintly. After a PAUSE the woman UNFASTENS A
SMALL CHAIN around her neck; she retrieves a LARGE CELTIC
CROSS dangling inside her shit, HOLDING IT UP to the light.

MARIN

"You know: for the time bein' we're both somewhat linked—
no pun intended, mind you— and there's a bit 'o a tradition
about that sort of thing around here..."

Link LOOKS UP at Marin.

LINK

"Tradition?"

Marin HANDS the large CELTIC CROSS to Link.

MARIN

"My da' made that for me, he did. It has such a large part
of my own 'heart' in it, if you're the type to fawn over
such sentimental similes."

Link TURNS THE CROSS over in his hand.

LINK
(staring down at the cross, whispering)
"Metaphors..."

MARIN
"What was that, then?"

Link LOOKS UP at Marin.

LINK
"Why are you giving me this?"

MARIN
"Two whose fates are linked, even for the briefest of journeys, cannot be at their very best moving 'hand-in-hand', but are most effective as a team when they move 'heart-in-heart', so to speak. You'll give that back to me in Urooban, Squire, and 'till then we're nigh inseparable, hearts on each other's sleeves, you ken..."

Link COCKS HIS BROW at these words, and then LOOKS between Zelda's HEADSCARF in his lap and MARIN, ANXIOUS.

Marin LAUGHS.

MARIN
(shaking her head)
"Ne'er you worry, Squire: I wouldn't ask a thing like that from you in return. Perhaps something you're more keen on partin' with, temporarily at least. What about that wee red flower, hmm?"

Link COCKS HIS HEAD.

LINK
"Flower?"

MARIN
(nodding)
"Aye: that little thing you seem to enjoy twirling about in your hands so pensively in your idle hours."

Link appears UNCOMFORTABLE.

LINK
"That wouldn't do..."

MARIN
"Why not?"

LINK
"That flower... it doesn't have any of my own 'heart' in it—"

MARIN
"Surely it was given to you by—"

LINK
"No one I know..."

Link PRODUCES the RED FLOWER.

LINK
"When I was little I made a journey from the New Kingdom to the Old Shores; someone planted this thing on my body as I slept. That, and a note..."

MARIN
"Creepy, that. What'd the note say?"

LINK
(shaking his head)
"I can't remember. But this flower... it was all white, back then. It doesn't wilt, but the color seems to change over the years. It's a curious thing, Marin, but it's just a curiosity to me: it's not something special, and it has no place in my heart. I don't carry many things that do..."

Marin NODS at the man, slowly. She LOOKS DOWN at the HEADSCARF in Link's lap.

MARIN
"Suppose it doesn't do a 'squire' to have such a burgeoning heart, does it? And I suppose it's only... what, 'tactically sound' to hold on to any stray pieces of it that he can?"

LINK
"Marin, I—"

MARIN
(shaking her head)
"Just never you mind. I fancy a brief nap, don't you? Can't have the sun in my eyes, though..."

Marin CIRCLES AROUND to the other side of her stalagmite to BED DOWN.

Link remains where he is, STARING out the fissure with the HEADSCARF still in his lap.

SLOW CAMERA ZOOM on the HEADSCARF.

Cue a TWO-SECOND-LONG 'GLITCH'.

INT. PRINCESS ZELDA'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS - MIDMORNING.

An elegant bedroom befitting a royal princess's taste; a massive CANOPY BED dominates the room.

An IDENTICAL SHOT of Link's lap from the previous scene, however this time Link is sitting upon the velvety bed, adorned with light pink linens; AMPLE (even 'overpowering') SUNLIGHT streams in from a bank of large, gothic windows beside the bed.

There is a DIFFERENT HEADSCARF on Link's lap; CAMERA PAN OUT as Link's hands work at FOLDING the scarf. (NOTE: Camera does not reveal more than Link's upper chest in this shot).

CHIRPING BIRDS can be heard at the windows.

ZELDA can be heard speaking, although she is not in the frame.

ZELDA

"It's... such a pain... how this bedroom faces the east; I can't sleep with the sun in my eyes..."

LINK

"It's good for you; it's healthy. Anyway, you've always liked this room--"

CAMERA REMAINS STATIONARY on Link's lap; Link takes to folding ANOTHER HEADSCARF.

ZELDA

"Yes: when I could get out of it before dawn..."

Link SETS THIS SECOND HEADSCARF aside.

TIGHT CAMERA FOCUS on LINK'S FACE (most of the RIGHT SIDE of his face is in the frame, obscuring much of the bedroom background; his left eye is NOT in the frame). Link STARES FORWARD, seemingly emotionless.

ZELDA

"...I've always been an early riser, Link."

LINK

"Yeah, I know..."

ZELDA

"I've always been... a little unconventional, as princesses go..."

Link TURNS HIS HEAD, but only MICROSCOPICALLY; he SWALLOWS before returning his head forward.

ZELDA

"I've never been one... to be tied-down..."

LINK

"No. I know that--"

ZELDA

"We could both go to the garden, Link--"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"No we can't--"

ZELDA

"Or the outer walls. The moat--"

Link appears AGITATED.

LINK

"Don't... talk nonsense, Zelda!"

ZELDA

"Is it really nonsense-- Link-- not to want to go like this?
To want a more 'familiar' surrounding?"

LINK

"Don't talk like that either. By Din, Farore and Nayru: why would you say that?"

ZELDA

"You've never invoked their names, Link. Not ever, that I can remember."

There is a LONG PAUSE; eventually a SOUND can be heard, as if someone is DISTURBING THE BED behind Link. The bed itself MOVES lightly.

Zelda's voice is CLEARER, as if she has gone from a supine to sitting position. Despite the newfound clarity of her voice she now WHISPERS.

ZELDA

"Are you so frightened, Link?"

Link again SWALLOWS; his eyes MOVE slightly, but he does not turn his head.

ZELDA

"You... can't even look, can you? Is it so hideous?"

Link LOOKS DOWN at his lap before TURNING HIS HEAD to face Zelda; as he does so his face ceases to block the frame; ZELDA is sitting up in bed in a nightdress with the covers up to her waist. She wears the SILK HEADSCARF on her head. Zelda's face has an ALARMINGLY GAUNT, 'SICKLY' look to it; she is obviously EXCEEDINGLY ILL.

ZELDA

"Am... I...?"

The woman STARES INTO HER LAP.

SIDE-VIEW of ZELDA'S FACE as she stares into her lap; the bed again JOSTLES with movement. When Zelda LOOKS UP Link is sitting before her, still cross-legged. He is HUNCHED over to be eye-to-eye with the woman.

LINK

"You're not... I'm just a coward, that's all..."

Zelda SMILES, melancholy. She STROKES LINK'S CHEEK with one EMACIATED HAND.

ZELDA

"You're a hero, Link. You're very brave. You're strong—"

LINK

"So are you, though..."

Link gently TOUCHES Zelda's hand on his face.

ZELDA

"I don't think... that I'm stronger than this..."

Zelda CLOSES A FIST with her free hand and places it over her CHEST.

Link STARES at Zelda with a FORLORN look.

ZELDA

"Do I really look so hideous to you?"

There is a LONG PAUSE. Eventually Link SMILES gently and SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"No. Coltish, Zelda."

Zelda RECIPRICATES the smile.

ZELDA

"We've always just been a couple of colts, haven't we? I know you'd be happy just roaming the grasslands and exploring caves for the rest of your life. As for me? Well..."

Zelda's HAND falls away from Link's face; she LOOKS DOWN, melancholy.

ZELDA

"...I wouldn't mind that, too much."

LINK

"Zelda, you've got to think positive! It doesn't make any sense to dwell on—"

When Zelda LOOKS UP her eyes are TEARY.

ZELDA

"Link: you're brave, and you're strong. I need you to understand something, for me, please. Once, a long time ago, someone..."

Zelda LOOKS DOWN for a brief moment before LOOKING BACK UP AT LINK; she again TOUCHES HIS FACE, briefly, before WITHDRAWING her hand, hesitant.

ZELDA

"...someone very important to me told me something I've never forgotten. This person wasn't a philosopher, but he had a philosopher's heart in him. He... he was brave and strong, too, and when he was suffering under a great deal of pain his mind seemed to be the most clear thing imaginable. He had lost a great many things— to someone else's senseless brutality— but in the thick of his grief he told me that he didn't lose those things senselessly, because he was the one who got to make sense of those losses. He told me that, at the very least, he deserved that chance..."

Link SCOWLS; we can tell that his eyes are on the verge of TEARS.

Zelda again STROKES LINK'S CHEEK. She LEANS FORWARD.

ZELDA

"You're strong, Link. Don't... don't be angry, or sad, or hateful..."

Zelda SMILES wanly.

ZELDA

"...or 'mopey'. Just... just be, Link. The sun'll keep coming up and setting down, and the ocean'll keep rising and falling. Time keeps moving..."

Zelda slowly REMOVES the SILK HEADSCARF from her head; we see that her hair is SPOTTY and LOOSE in places. Zelda gently FOLDS the headscarf and HANDS IT to Link.

ZELDA

"Nothing is senseless, you know, and you'll make sense of it all, Link. I know you will. You'll live through..."

Link STARES DOWN at the SILK HEADSCARF; when he looks up we see a SMALL TEARSTAIN along his right cheek.

LINK

"'Cause I'm such a great hero, right?"

Zelda SHAKES HER HEAD. She SMILES once again.

ZELDA

"No, 'cause I'm your princess, Squire, and I'm giving you an order."

Zelda briefly CHOKES UP; she SHRUGS OFF the emotion and STARES AT LINK intently.

ZELDA

"Go and be; this world is wonderful, Link..."

Link TAKES ZELDA'S HAND in his.

LINK

"This is an ugly world, Zelda. The Goddesses only know how you manage to make it so beautiful..."

TEARS flow down Zelda's face.

ZELDA

"Be sure that the Goddesses will look after me, Link, and be sure they'll look after you, too..."

Zelda suddenly COUGHS, BOWING OVER to WHEEZE.

Link WATCHES her as this occurs. His eyes appear VACANT as he speaks.

LINK

(whispering)

"Damn them; damn each and every of them..."

Zelda suddenly LOOKS UP at Link, surprised at his blasphemy.

There is a FAINT TAPPING SOUND coming from the room adjacent to Zelda's bedchamber. Immediately after this a set of PURPLE CURTAINS along one of the bedroom walls parts; a YELLOW-CAPED MAN enters bearing a BREAKFAST TRAY with several small samplings of food and a DISTINCTIVE

CRYSTAL DECANTER of UNNATURALLY BRIGHT FLUID. This man is a few years older than Link.

This is NIMH.

Nimh enters the bedroom, professional and businesslike. We see that Zelda is alone in the bedroom; Link has VANISHED.

NIMH

"Pardon the intrusion, Your Highness..."

Nimh SETS THE FOOD TRAY DOWN on a small nightstand beside Zelda's bed, BOWING HIS HEAD slightly as he does so.

Zelda NODS slightly. She delicately WIPES HER CHEEKS with a kerchief.

ZELDA

"It's no intrusion, Nimh. Thank you."

NIMH

(shaking his head)

"But it is, my lady. I remain deeply ashamed to intrude on Your Highness' privacy— certainly no member of the Hylian Guard should ever set foot in these quarters— but His Majesty insists..."

ZELDA

"He doesn't trust my own attendants right now, Nihm. We should make the best of it, but it does hurt— it hurts me as much as it hurts them..."

NIHM

"I understand, my lady."

Nihm once again BOWS and STEPS BACKWARD; before leaving he LOOKS AROUND THE ROOM, suspicious.

NIHM

"Forgive my asking, but who was Your Highness speaking with just now?"

Zelda LOOKS down, again WIPING ONE CHEEK with her kerchief. When she looks back up her eyes are still red from tears, but her cheeks are now completely dry.

ZELDA

"Only the shadows, Nimh..."

Nimh COCKS HIS BROW, finally nodding and then he BOWS DEEPLY before leaving the bedroom. He moves through a large SITTING ROOM and past a heavy oak door into a large corridor.

NORTH CASTLE ROYAL CORRIDOR - (CONTINUOUS)

A large second-story corridor of marble and columns with a bank of small gothic windows overlooking the spring below.

Nimh emerges from Zelda's bedroom. He STANDS outside the bedroom door, staring down the corridor with an INEFFABLE EXPRESSION; he does this for several seconds. Eventually Nimh TURNS AROUND, CLOSING the oak door behind him.

As he does this the camera PANS with him, cutting off the section of corridor in front of him. After Nimh closes the door he begins TURNING AROUND and the camera once again PANS BACK to show more of the corridor.

Link is inexplicably LEANING against the wall of the corridor, standing casually just a few feet from Nimh. Link is staring down at the plush carpet beneath him, and not looking at the other man.

Nimh CRIES OUT in surprise; this cry quickly becomes an EXASPERATED SIGH.

NIMH

"Squire."

Link does not look up at the man.

LINK

"Nimh."

NIMH

"This whole area's off-limits, Link."

Nimh LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, GRUNTING.

NIMH

"Guess that's never stopped you before, so why should it stop you now, huh?"

LINK

"This is quite a promotion for you, isn't it? It beats cataloguing all those musty old tomes in the library, doesn't it? Less lonely, at least..."

NIMH

"Lonely by necessity: after all, only some of us have learned that knowledge is a far greater weapon than any blade."

Link STARES at his sheathed ARMING SWORD.

LINK

"Scissors cut paper, Nimh: I'll take my 'steel' over your books anytime."

Link PAUSES before continuing.

LINK

"She's getting worse. She's getting worse every single day!"

NIMH

(crossing his arms)

"You think so? You really know so much about medicine, and about curing, do you?"

Link finally LOOKS UP at the man, SNEERING.

LINK

"I know her. This... this 'thing' has already crushed her body, but now it's taking her spirit, as well."

Nimh SIGHS.

NIMH

"His Majesty has searched everywhere high and low for answers. None of our healers can make any sense of it, Link, and yes: it is worsening. We... we were counting on word from the scholars at Odium, if they had ever encountered a thing such as this before..."

Link RAISES ONE EYEBROW.

Nimh SHAKES HIS HEAD.

NIMH

"...but word came two days ago: they have nothing at their disposal to help us. They know nothing about any disease the likes of this."

There is a PAUSE between the men.

LINK

"And what about the king's vistor?"

Nimh SCOFFS.

NIMH

"What: that prattling conjurer who came to us from the western woods?"

LINK

"They do call him a 'wizard'..."

NIMH

"He promises the king much, but delivers quite little to engage confidence. It's all chicanery, I'm sure, but he has Our Highness's ear; he is abusing a king's trust!"

LINK

(shaking his head)

"No: he's abusing a father's desperation."

NIMH

"It's a dire situation, I'll admit. Ironically, it seems that the 'Weeping Princess' finally has something to cry about—"

Link instantly PUSHES OFF the wall he is leaning against; he quickly TACKLES Nihm, pushing the man against a wall and putting him in a combat hold with ONE HAND AGAINST HIS THROAT.

Link SNARLS at the man.

Eventually Nimh COUNTERS this hold; both men SPAR for a brief moment. This ends with Link standing a few feet away from Nimh, who stands DEFENSIVELY, GASPING from the strangulation. He gently RUBS HIS NECK with one hand.

NIMH

"I can overlook that, Squire, and I can also overlook you sneaking inside Her Highness's bedroom, skulking like a rat—"

LINK

"But a very affectionate rat, Nimh."

Nimh SCOWLS; he STANDS DOWN from his combat stance. Link does LIKEWISE.

NIMH

"She is dying, Link—"

LINK

"That can't happen."

Nimh, still BREATHING HARD, stares down at the floor. Eventually he looks up.

NIMH

"There is no answer to be found to this malady, not by any mortal hand—"

LINK

"No: no one is trying hard enough!"

NIMH

"I said no mortal hand, Link: do you understand?"

Link STARES at the man QUIZZICALLY. There is a pause.

LINK

"No, I don't. What are you talking about?"

Nimh SHAKES HIS HEAD, staring down; he appears to be DEEP IN THOUGHT.

NIMH

"What... would you be willing to do, Link, if it meant, possibly, that you could save—"

LINK

"I'd slit the Golden Goddesses' throats, Nimh. All three of them."

NIMH

"Blasphemy, Link..."

LINK

"Yeah, I guess it is..."

There is a PAUSE; Nimh SCRATCHES the back of his head, still DEEP IN THOUGHT. Nimh LOOKS UP at Link.

NIMH

"I... need to think on this, for a time..."

Link SCOFFS and LOOKS TO ONE SIDE.

LINK

"Spoken like a true scholar..."

NIMH

"And were you going to apologize for my neck, Squire?"

LINK

"When I'm in a better mood, maybe..."

Link PUTS HIS HEELS TOGETHER and sets his FIST AGAINST HIS CHEST; he BOWS HIS HEAD slightly before turning and STALKING OFF, his feet CLACKING loudly as they leave the plush carpet for stone.

Nimh WATCHES Link depart with an INEFFABLE expression. The man eventually LOOKS DOWN at his shirt; several of the buttons along his chest have been ripped off in his scuffle with Link, leaving his STERNUM partially exposed. As he ADJUSTS his clothing in an attempt to conceal his bare chest we see a TATTOO on his sternum: it is a stylish rendering of a LITHE-BODIED NUDE WOMAN STANDING WITH HER WRISTS CROSSED OVER HER BREASTS. Her wrists appear to be BOUND.

This is a depiction of the GOLDEN GODDESS NAYRU.

Nimh LOOKS AROUND suspiciously as he adjusts his clothes before once again LOOKING IN LINK'S DIRECTION; he CLENCHES HIS TEETH before setting off down the corridor in the opposite direction.

INT. GREAT HALL OF NORTH CASTLE - MIDDAY.

Inside the massive great hall the two thrones from earlier have been REMOVED from the raised section of floor at the

room's center; instead we see a RECTANGULAR GOLDEN PLATFORM that holds a bed of white linens on its surface.

PRINCESS ZELDA lies supine on this bed, unconscious, surrounded by bouquets of WHITE ROSES. Her hands are folded neatly over her chest; she does NOT appear to BREATHE.

The strong torchlight of the chamber makes the woman's TEARSTAIN MARKS below her eyes all the more noticeable.

Many of Zelda's purple-robed female attendants STAND in a group near this pedestal. In the distance of the chamber we see many SQUIRES and KNIGHTS of the New Hylian Guard seated in chairs in the darkness by the chamber's massive columns, all of them silent.

LINK slouches in one of these chairs; he LOOKS AROUND at many of the people in the Great Hall with disinterest.

Two older men in LONG, FLOWING CAPES (unlike any of those of the New Hylian Guard) approach Zelda's body; one of them gently PRODS the flesh of Zelda's backhand with a NARROW BLADE while the other (who wears gloves) touches the woman's NECK, FOREHEAD and NOSE, probingly.

We see a small DROPLET OF FRESH BLOOD produced when the narrow blade nicks Zelda's backhand.

Link's EYES NARROW as he watches the men attend to Zelda; he eventually GETS UP and moves away from the Great Hall, ducking through the shadows behind the columns.

INT. LOWER HALLS OF NORTH CASTLE (CONTINUOUS)

A series of tightly-packed rooms branching off a narrow hallway in a subterranean section of the castle.

Link passes by several closed doors as he moves down a corridor; one of these doors OPENS before he reaches it. NIMH emerges from behind the door; we see several LARGE STACKS OF BOOKS in the room on the other side.

LINK
(whispering intently)
"Nimh!"

Nimh HOLDS UP a WORN SCROLL in one hand.

NIMH

"You told me that you have a will, is that right, Link?"

Link NODS.

The man WAVES the scroll in his hand.

NIMH

"Well, I may just have a way..."

INT. BAGU'S OFFICE CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON.

A spacious meeting room inside the refurbished section of North Castle, complete with a fireplace and a very large window; this window looks out on a COURTYARD across from Bagu's office. At the center of this courtyard is a massive stone slab many yards across in diameter, and at the center of this slab is a VERY LONG ARMING SWORD stuck partially into the ground, its HILT glistening in light that falls through willow trees surrounding the stone slab.

This sword is the DHISE SLAIGHRE.

CLOSE-UP on the surface of Bagu's WOODEN DESK; the UNROLLED SCROLL is SLAPPED down on the surface. It is revealed to be a large MAP of Hyrule which includes (at its west) the shores of 'Old Hylia' and, further east, a massive island labeled the 'Threadbare Lands' and, further east still, a very small island labeled the 'Island of Infinite Horizons'. (NOTE: the overall layout of this map is startlingly faithful to the layout of the land in 'ZELDA II: The Adventure of Link', though many of the place names are altered).

There are SCRIBBLES all along the map as well, and at one location (within a mountain range on the 'Threadbare Lands') there is a large, hastily sketched CIRCLE around a certain area with a line of text beside it; this text reads 'THE THRONE' (NOTE: the area in question is identical to the location of the 'Great Palace' from 'ZELDA II: The Adventure of Link').

BAGU stands on one side of the desk, opposite LINK.

BAGU

"'The Throne of Farore's Wisdom'?"

Link NODS.

LINK

"Mmm. Not an easy thing to find, they say. Story goes that one of the first civilizations in ancient Hyrule built a gigantic palace; it was big enough—"

BAGU

"To contain their entire civilization. Yes, Link: I've heard the story."

LINK

"They didn't just build it anywhere: they built it on 'holy' ground..."

BAGU

(nodding)

"The Goddesses walked the earth and, in their footsteps, begat Hyrule. Yes, yes, and the location of that palace is where they say Farore began her journey, dancing across the land with her radiant plumage trailing, elegant, behind her. 'Holy ground' or not, though, it wasn't so lucky for the people there: their civilization decayed; it rotted into nothingness, cloistered deep in those dreary mountains."

Bagu SITS DOWN in a chair, crossing his arms.

BAGU

"And I'm still at a loss as to what any of this has to do with Her Royal Highness."

Link COCKS AN EYEBROW.

LINK

"Farore, Bagu. The Golden Goddess of Wisdom! Think about that."

BAGU

(shaking his head)

"The Goddesses left Hyrule when their work was done, Link. What do you expect to find out there?"

LINK

"More than all these 'alchemists' and 'healers' have discovered about Zeld—"

Bagu's BROW ARCHES.

Link begins again. As he speaks he PACES back and forth before the desk.

LINK

"More than all these so-called 'experts' have been able to discover about Her Royal Highness's condition. That's what."

Link RUNS A HAND through his disheveled hair.

BAGU

"When was the last time you slept?"

LINK

"Can't. Anyway, right now she's doing enough of that for everyone..."

BAGU

"Link, you should go and be with the rest of the guard right now: be with her. Keep a vigil over her until--"

Link SNARLS. He POINTS towards Bagu's office door.

LINK

"I will not be part of that sorry mess out there! I won't sit around at a funeral that never ends, for a girl who is dead, but then again isn't; we've sat around for two weeks mourning her; now we need get to our feet and actually help her!"

Bagu STANDS and begins PACING across the room. He moves towards the LARGE WINDOW on one side of the room.

BAGU

"Out of all three Goddesses, Link, you choose Farore? I could just as well ask you: what's wrong with Din, hmm? And tradition has it that Nayru is the most 'compassionate' of the three Golden Goddesses: why not plead your case to her?"

Link GRITS HIS TEETH.

LINK

"Don't insult me, Bagu! I'm not advocating you hunt down a

worthless, second-rate weakling like Nauru: I'm talking about a first-rate deity, here. As Goddesses go Farore and Din are the brains and muscle behind the creation of all of Hyrule—"

Bagu GESTURES APPROVINGLY with one hand.

BAGU
"Respectively, at that..."

LINK
"Hmmm. Farore's power can help us, Bagu— it can help Zelda— or at least whatever's been left behind at her 'Throne' can."

BAGU
"Why are you so sure, Link?"

Link answers after a PAUSE, LOOKING TO ONE SIDE.

LINK
(whispering)
"Because it has to..."

Bagu STANDS and again moves toward the WINDOW facing DHISE SLAIGHRE'S COURTYARD. He STARES OUT at the courtyard as he speaks, POINTING at the sword in the stone.

BAGU
"Do you know what that is, out there, Squire?"

Link SCOFFS, impatient. He CROSSES HIS ARMS.

LINK
"I'm not an acolyte, anymore; spare me the dogmatic indoctrination—"

BAGU
"Those are big words, Link! I suppose all that time spent in the company of Her Royal Highness has made an impression on you. Tell me: what other big words do you know?"

Bagu POINTS OUT at the courtyard purposefully.

Link ROLLS HIS EYES. He then STARES at Bagu menacingly while SLOWLY ENUNCIATING his next line, syllable by syllable.

LINK
"Dhi-se Slai-ghre."

Several PIGEONS perched on the window's ledge outside TAKE FLIGHT after Link says this last line (this action is NOT SHOWN in an 'obvious' way).

BAGU
"That blade is a testament to the power of the Golden Goddesses, you know. Since the dawn of time it rested right there, in that very courtyard, in the exact place where the Three Sisters met after walking the breadth of Hyrule, creating all things as they went. A dozen generations ago the Royal Family did something very, very curious: they uprooted Dhise Slaighre, ground and all, and carted it miles and miles away to the New Kingdom. Sealed it up inside a giant stone temple, too, all because of a vague little prophecy somebody scribbled out many eons ago. It was said at the time that the New Kingdom would one day become the 'Seat of Din's Judgment': the Goddesses' rage would be leveled against some 'great adversary' who would seek to appropriate their holy powers, and that the sword would be loosed from the temple's walls at that time. No hand could ever rend it from the earth, they said, except the hand belonging to one who holds the Goddess' favor: the one who could use Dhise Slaighre as a 'master'. Now, generations pass— many generations— and yet no great judgment comes. One day, though, the temple vicar enters that grand sanctuary and finds the path to Dhise Slaighre wide-open: the sword was miraculously exposed. That was fifteen years ago. Back then there was no great holy war or divine judgment to be seen in all the land. At that time the New Kingdom was at peace: there were some minor diplomatic hiccups in our relations with the Swamp Folk of the East— but nothing of major significance. This was also around the time the Gerudo of Utter West lost their high priest— he was murdered at the hands of their own crown prince, no less, and that prince took flight as a fugitive while under the guise of a 'diplomatic mission' to our own Castletown. He successfully disappeared while in our lands. From that point onward the Gerudo took to calling him 'Ganon', after some silly local legend—"

LINK
"And they spawned an equally silly legacy we're suffering through today. That's all total nonsense, Bagu—"

BAGU

"It is. But my point, Link, is that any given legend seldom holds up to the facts as they actually stand. The ancient texts were wrong about the 'Seat of Din's Judgment', so how can we possibly trust them in regards to what might exist at the 'Throne of Farore's Wisdom'?"

Bagu SCOFFS, WALKING back to his desk.

BAGU

"Never mind the truth, even: the legends, themselves, are incomplete! They don't even bother to specify a location for the supposed 'Heart of Nayru's Love'—"

LINK

"Because Nayru the Irrational is insignificant; Farore the Wise is not!"

Bagu LEANS DOWN against his desk, staring at Link INCREDULOUSLY.

BAGU

"How do we even know that the Goddesses would help us, should we seek them out? What if Her Highness's illness is, in fact, a manifestation of their own machinations? Who could truly know the will of a deity, after all..."

Link's face CONTORTS with LIVID RAGE.

Bagu NOTES this change in Link appreciatively.

BAGU

"This, Link, is perhaps the second time, I believe, that you've ever wanted to strike me..."

LINK

"I never said I did—"

BAGU

"Your lips didn't. But your face..."

Link SIGHS; he also LEANS DOWN against the opposite side of the desk.

LINK

"Farore would not see Zelda die like this! Farore is the

patron Goddess of the Royal Family, and more than that:
Zelda is branded with her mark."

Bagu COCKS HIS HEAD curiously.

Link ROLLS HIS HEAD and LOOKS AROUND, evasive.

LINK

"Farore's mark; 'Radiant plumage', Bagu..."

Link LOOKS THE MAN IN THE EYE.

LINK

"Tail feathers..."

Bagu appears QUIZZICAL, and then his BROW ARCHES in surprise. He GLARES at Link.

BAGU

"And you would know this how, exactly, Link?"

LINK

"We've skinny-dipped together, her and I. When we were younger—"

Bagu GRITS HIS TEETH.

BAGU

"How young?"

Link LOOKS AWAY, and then once again FACES Bagu.

LINK

"Young enough that you don't have to worry about what you're currently worrying about."

BAGU

"The two of you, combined, give a man enough worries to gray every hair on his head—"

LINK

"I always thought that was more a product of your own life experiences."

Link LEANS FORWARD.

LINK

"You're a tracker, Bagu, and like you say, you're a damned good one. You could find this place, if you wanted to—"

Bagu SCOFFS.

BAGU

"I've seen too many sunrises, Link; at least five-thousand too many for this kind of trek. If I were to venture out into the Threadbare Lands on such a hunt I have no doubt that I would never again lay eyes on North Castle—"

LINK

"Not just you, then: a squadron. A whole army, even. Whatever!"

BAGU

"There is no army to take at the moment; the whole of our land is gripped with these phantom fears: talk of shadows moving through the western woods and a foul breath on the wind. Her Highness's illness only intensifies the people's unease; they say that Ganon himself is on the move—"

LINK

"He isn't!"

BAGU

"I know that well. But with the absence of enough soldiers and knights to retain order, Link, the panic caused by such idle rumor could be a far worse thing than this Ganon fellow's presence could ever hope to amount to—"

LINK

"Then send someone else: someone who's seen fewer sunrises!"

Link again LEANS FORWARD, very slowly.

There is a SHORT PAUSE between the men.

BAGU

"Alone? Link: you've never gone more than a hundred miles from this very spot! You mean to say that you would try to slog across the Old Shores and then trek out over to the other side of the Lake? Absurd!"

LINK

"Bagu: this would be easier if I had your permission..."

Bagu NARROWS HIS EYES.

BAGU

"You mean to say you would disobey me if I forbade you from going?"

LINK

"I mean to say that— until Zelda is better— I personally won't be seeing another dawn, let alone another sunrise, and until she wakes up and climbs off that damned pedestal you've got her on I won't be a damn bit of good to you or to anyone else around here. I won't lose her like this, not so senselessly, Bagu: I deserve the chance to help her!"

BAGU

"You won't lose her, Link? You?"

Link LOOKS AWAY from Bagu, SNEERING.

BAGU

"Either way this ends up, Link, you need to remember that you're not just a pair of fancy-free, skinny-dipping children, anymore: you won't lose her because she was never yours to lose in the first place."

Link GRITS HIS TEETH; there is a LONG PAUSE before Link SNATCHES the map off the table and STORMS OFF. Before he reaches the door Bagu SHOUTS AFTER him.

BAGU

"Squire Link!"

Link STOPS and faces the man, SNAPPING TO ATTENTION.

BAGU

(shaking his head)

"I'm sorry, but you cannot have what you want."

Link SEETHES.

LINK

"Am I to understand, then, that I am restricted from leaving North Castle, Marshall, sir?"

Bagu MOTIONS WITH HIS HEAD to a small desk directly beside Link; there is a FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER on the tabletop.

BAGU

"Show my note to Alltfirean; he will let you cross the moat."

Link slowly RETRIEVES the note, READING IT BRIEFLY, before RAISING HIS EYES up to Bagu, skeptical.

LINK

"You said... that I cannot have what I want..."

BAGU

"I know you're not the type to stand on orders, and I knew what you were going to ask me before you even walked down that corridor. You can go to the Threadbare Lands, Link, and may the Goddesses guide you to Her Highness's salvation, if it is there at all. When I said that you cannot have what you want that is not what I was talking about..."

Link SETS HIS TEETH ON EDGE before becoming more STONE FACED.

Bagu NOTICES this change in Link; a SHORT PAUSE becomes UNCOMFORTABLE for him and he CONTINUES speaking.

BAGU

"Take note: a cold wind always creeps along the ocean out there, so dress accordingly. Also keep in mind that the locals out there are very fond of crossbows. Now, I know that you've never been a fan of archery, but—"

LINK

(shaking his head)

"My sword is just fine. Crossbows are a cumbersome weapon; they're... they're unreliable, and—"

BAGU

"And it's rather difficult to use them in a 'less than lethal' manner, isn't it?"

Link SNEERS. He answers after a brief pause.

LINK

"I can kill, Bagu."

BAGU

"Oh, of that I have no doubt. And, out of everything to kill for, well..."

Link LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, evasive.

BAGU

"You may take whatever supplies suit you—"

LINK

"I want Nanona, for starters."

Bagu MOTIONS with one hand.

BAGU

"Well, she's your stock; your choice."

Link appears slightly SURPRISED by Bagu's acquiescence; Link eventually BOWS SLIGHTLY and turns to leave.

BAGU

"And Link..."

Link TURNS once again to face Bagu.

BAGU

"May the way of the hero find its worth in the Goddesses' eyes'."

Link looks back at Bagu UNCERTAINLY; he again PUTS HIS FIST TO HIS CHEST AND BOWS, but more awkwardly.

Bagu CHUCKLES softly.

BAGU

"You've never known what to do with that blessing, have you? Even from a young boy it upset you, so! Why is it, Link? I always thought it was because you were so uncomfortable with the thought of the Three Sisters constantly watching you."

LINK

"They've got better things to do, I'm sure..."

Bagu LEANS FORWARD, his face more serious.

BAGU

"Your destination is cursed land, Link, even if there's nothing to these old legends. And consider that, if there actually is anything to these fables, well, in that case you are being watched, and whatever force now dwells within the Great Palace of the Dawnland Stairs, well... it's lurking, now: it will be waiting for you."

LINK

"I'd better be on my way, then..."

Link TURNS and LEAVES Bagu's chambers.

EXT. COURTYARD OF DHISE SLAIGHRE - EARLY MORNING.

The giant slab of ground that Dhise Slaighre protrudes from is surrounded by many WILLOW TREES; the forest plunges into darkness behind the sword's resting place. An early morning MIST surrounds the place.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the BLADE of Dhise Slaighre. In the background (out of focus and far away) we see a LARGE MARE PAWING at the ground; this is NANONA.

Eventually the SOUND OF SHOES tromping over the stone floor grows louder and louder with each step; LINK'S FOOT comes into the frame, standing right before the sword's blade.

Link LOOKS DOWN at Dhise Slaighre, contemplative.

LINK

"You know, sometimes I obey the letter of the law much more than I do the spirit..."

Link RESTS HIS HAND on the hilt of the sword; eventually he LOOKS AROUND to ensure that he is alone.

Link GRIPS the hilt of the sword.

LINK

"...and when Bagu told me I could take whatever supplies best 'suited' me, well..."

A SWIFT-MOVING FLOCK OF BATS emerges from the willows, moving quickly in the distance beside the stone slab, CHIRPING faintly.

Link gently PULLS UP on the sword; it dutifully COMES LOOSE from the ground with a 'CHIMING' SCRAPE noise.

Link HOLDS THE BLADE UP to his face, looking it UP AND DOWN.

LINK

"It's never been easy for me to worship any of you; 'Goddesses' are an abstract thing, after all. But this sword... well..."

Link takes a quick PRACTICE SWING with the weapon.

LINK

"...this sword is not."

Link HOLDS the sword TIGHTLY in both hands; eventually ANOTHER SWIFT-MOVING FLOCK OF BATS emerge from the willows, although this one moves directly across the center of the stone slab, PARTING around Link as they move.

Link quickly GRUNTS and SWINGS Dhise Slaighre, pausing afterwards in a COMBAT STANCE.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the stone floor far behind Link, with Link's body out-of-focus in the background; a BAT'S SEVERED WING lands on the ground, along with a SPLASH OF GREEN BLOOD.

Link slowly DROPS the combat stance and examines Dhise Slaighre's blade: there is a GREEN BLOODSTAIN on the blade. As Link watches this stain 'MAGICALLY' HARDENS into a permanent, 'rusty' green stain on the sword.

Link RUNS A FINGER along a section of the blade a little higher up from this stain (ie: nearer the hilt).

LINK

"People a lot smarter than me have written about this thing, and they say that it's Your will personified; they say it's the greatest weapon of all weapons, come to bring Your judgment to the world. I guess that makes this thing the letter of Your law, then..."

As LINK'S FINGER moves across the blade a small TRAIN OF LINK'S BLOOD is left on the sword. (NOTE: this blood does NOT 'harden' onto the blade as the bat's blood did).

LINK
(whispering)
"...but it cannot be the spirit..."

Link HOLDS THE SWORD'S TIP over the small hole in the stone floor beneath him.

LINK
"Sometimes... I do obey the spirit of things more than I do the letter. If what they say is true then this sword is the closest thing to Your physical presences that we're ever gonna see in Hyrule. I don't believe that- even though I don't know why, and I don't know why I hate this sword as much as I do. And- by all of hell and creation- I don't know why it lets me... well... you know..."

Link CONSIDERS the sword for a brief moment before DROPPING IT; it violently SINKS BACK into the stone with a MELODIC, 'CHIMING' SCRAPE. The sword rests in the slab just as it did before being pulled.

LINK
"Maybe it is Your will, and maybe it is Your spirit, even, but I have no confidence in this sword."

Link TURNS and moves off for Nanona in the background.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on DHISE SLAIGHRE'S BLADE, on the spot where the hardened bat's blood rests; LINK'S BLOOD continues training down the blade, still a liquid. As Link WALKS AWAY in the background (out of focus) there is a FAINT GLIMMER along the blade's edge; both the BAT'S GREEN BLOOD and LINK'S BLOOD VANISH, leaving the blade radiantly white and blemish free.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (INDETERMINATE)

Cue a THREE-SECOND LONG 'GLITCH'; within this glitch are the ECHOING SOUNDS of Link repeating his previous lines of defiance from Bagu's office ("That can't happen"... "Because it has to"... "won't lose her"...). This glitch ends with the non-echoing (ie: very much CLEAR) line "I can kill"; this last line is said at the very end of the glitch, during a period of SILENCE (ie: none of the

strange, garbled ambient noises that characterize every moment of every other glitch).

Link GASPS, suddenly SCREAMING IN AGONY as he LIFTS HIS BODY off the stone table; he WINCES in pain as he draws his legs apart. He RIPS THE LEGGINS from his right leg, exposing a QUICK-FORMING BRUISE running along his shin; a DEFORMITY IN THE SKIN quickly develops as well, indicating that Link's shin has been BROKEN.

Link SCRUNCHES UP, WINCHING, and CRADLES his broken limb. BLOOD still seeps from the wound along his chest and the DARK BRUISE on his forehead is more pronounced.

We can see THUNDERBIRD briefly flitting about through VAPOR TRAILS rising off Link's body and his breath. Now, as before, Link does not appear to notice the creature.

MARIN is still sitting on a pile of rubble, although she is now MUCH CLOSER to the ceremonial table Link lies on than before. Now, as before, she does not speak.

Link LOOKS OVER at Marin, PANTING HARD and WINCING with pain.

Marin merely STARES BACK at Link, seemingly EMOTIONLESS; the woman GESTURES at the table beneath Link with her head.

Link's breathing becomes more REGULAR; he slowly RECLINES, again becoming supine on the slab, and he CLOSES HIS EYES slowly.

Cue a HALF-SECOND LONG 'GLITCH'. During this glitch we can hear the ECHOING sound of Link saying the phrase "I can..."

INT. FO-LÀRAICH CAVERNS (EASTERN MAW) - EARLY MORNING.

A treacherous path in the caverns; this area is marred with many deep CRATERS in the terrain, many plunging down into utter DARKNESS. There is a RISING LIGHT far beyond all this, signifying the eastern end of the cavern network.

Link and Marin walk cautiously around this moonscape-like environment; the pair reaches the edge of one of these large craters and STARE DOWN into the darkness.

MARIN

"Tha's a bottomless pit 'o despair if ever I saw one..."

LINK

(shaking his head slowly)

"Not quite..."

Marin SMILES playfully.

MARIN

"Suppose it ends at the other end of the world, doesn't it?"

Link gently PUSHES A SMALL STONE WITH HIS FOOT, causing it to careen over the edge of the crater; about six seconds later a FAINT SPLASH is heard.

LINK

"Everything's got a bottom to it, Marin."

Marin GETS DOWN to her KNEES, curious, and BENDS OVER the hole.

MARIN

"Is tha right?"

Link briefly LOOKS DOWN at Marin's REAR, which is facing him directly. He ROLLS HIS EYES.

LINK

(mocking Scottish accent)

"Ne'er you doubt it..."

Marin STANDS UP, walking part-way around the hole and examining the chamber of the cavern they are now in, taking note of the FAINT LIGHT coming from the other end.

MARIN

(smiling)

"No pit so bottomless, and no journey so endless, hmm?
Well, ours is near its end, I do believe..."

Marin PACES BACK to Link, circling behind him as she looks around the very dim cavern.

MARIN

"Urooban is a mere heartbeat away, Squire Link, and I can

just about spare one of those, I think. Ach! I can nearly smell their fallow fields from here! Tha's a challenge worthy of my skill, I should say, and they'd best make way for the best; none of 'em have seen a crop-growing phenom like myself, before, and who's gonna argue that point when they're all eating radishes the size of their own heads?"

LINK

(smiling playfully)

"A radish the size of your head would be much more impressive."

Marin TURNS and faces Link, appearing more EMOTIONAL and HESITANT.

MARIN

"I... would thank you again, Squire Link. This is a fresh start for me, and I could not have made it without you. As each of us needed each other I think the scales are relatively balanced, as it were, but thank you, nonetheless..."

Marin suddenly notices Link's STONE FACE; the man holds one hand on his SWORD'S HILT; he slowly begins DRAWING THE BLADE UP and out of its scabbard.

MARIN

"Did... I speak too soon?"

Link SWALLOWS uncomfortably (this sound is VERY noticeable in the echoing cavern).

Marin realizes that Link is staring ABOVE AND BEHIND her; CLOSE-UP on MARIN'S FACE from the front. The girl becomes VERY UNCOMFORTABLE and SHIFTS HER EYES nervously; suddenly a massive pair of INSECT WINGS 'FLITS' open and closed very quickly a few times behind her.

SLOW CAMERA PAN around Marin's head as the girl remains STILL; a GIGANTIC WATER BUG (literally a 24-foot-long, 9-foot-tall specimen of "Lethocerus americanus") hangs from the ceiling of the cavern behind Marin.

This is the 'SLOW GROWER'.

The creature's PINCERS extend out nearly 12-feet to either side of its head; these 'SWAY' idly in the air to either

side of Marin's body. The creature's gigantic BLACK EYES stare out with a blank, unintelligent gaze.

After a VERY LONG PAUSE (nearly six seconds or so) Link suddenly YELLS at Marin.

LINK
"Down!"

Marin FALLS TO HER KNEES as Link quickly SPRINTS FORWARD, closing the gap between them; the man JUMPS THROUGH THE AIR while TWISTING HIMSELF in a clockwise direction; Link quickly SEVERs one of the Slow Grower's PINCERS with his blade and, after recovering, quickly JAMS HIS BLADE directly into one of the creature's EYES.

The Slow Grower REARS BACK; it emits a STRANGE, PAINED ROARING NOISE (NOTE: this sound should be produced in a way that is loud and unpleasant, but not especially 'threatening', like the sputtering squeal of an injured child).

The Slow Grower tries to ESCAPE from Link's attacks, first FALLING to the cavern floor and then TAKING OFF using its insect wings; the creature THRASHES through the relatively narrow cavern passage with UNGRACEFUL PANIC as it moves, slamming its body into the cavern walls as it goes. When the creature finally does disappear down a side path in the cavern, still ROARING WITH PAIN, the cavern itself begins to BUCKLE and QUAKE.

Link HELPS MARIN to her feet as the quaking of the cavern becomes MORE PRONOUNCED.

Suddenly many SMALL ROCKS AND BOULDERS begin raining down in the cavern before them (ie: near the FAINT LIGHT signifying the cavern exit).

Link LOOKS AROUND the cavern at the many SIDE PASSAGES.

Marin quickly notices him doing this and SHAKES HER HEAD.

MARIN
(shouting over the loud quake)
"No good, any of those. There's but one Eastern exit from Fo-Làraich; there's only one way to the Southland, Squire!

It's forward to Urooban, or it's back to the Sporrán, but there is no other way."

LINK

"Then it's forward!"

The pair RACE through the uneven terrain of the cavern HAND IN HAND, dodging rocks and debris as they make their way between sheer drop-offs and craters.

Suddenly the ground beneath them CRUMBLES and falls partly away; Link and Marin go TUMBLING across the ground with Link coming to rest against the cavern wall and Marin continuing to TUMBLE closer to a crater edge; the girl nearly falls off before CLUTCHING a piece of limestone rock protruding from the soil.

MARIN'S HANDS begin to SLIP off the rock; we see her suddenly LOSE HER GRIP, however LINK'S LEFT HAND suddenly catches MARIN'S RIGHT WRIST, holding her up.

Link GRUNTS as he stares down at the girl; MARIN'S LEGS SCRAMBLE on the edge of the crater, struggling to maintain footholds. Just as Link uses his right hand to PUSH BACK off the rock and pull Marin up the soil beneath the girl's legs CRUMBLES, causing Marin's full weight to be put upon Link; LINK'S RIGHT HAND slips on the rock he is using as a brace and then the man FALLS FORWARD; his right arm is TANGLED-UP against another protruding rock in such a way that it is under enormous pressure and put at the point of breaking (ie: he is unable to use it, and just about to 'lose' it).

ROCKS continue careening down around the pair and especially near the CAVERN'S MAW, which is now barely visible from Link and Marin's vantage point; it is clear that this cavern exit is in imminent danger of being SEALED entirely.

Link SCREAMS in PAIN as he struggles to hold Marin up; he puts in ENORMOUS EFFORT trying to pull the girl up, but in his current position he is unable to.

Link and Marin STARE AT EACH OTHER with identically URGENT looks.

Eventually Link LOOKS OVER at the collapsing cavern entrance with PANICKED DESPAIR; when he looks back down at Marin his face is far more 'COLD'.

Marin suddenly notices this look; her face becomes STONY, with a VERY 'INJURED' expression to it. The girl CLOSES HER MOUTH and then LICKS HER LIPS.

MARIN

"Go then, 'Squire'; go for your girl. Gotta be a decent knight, do you not? I won't live on another's charity, you know..."

Marin rolls off this line SLOWLY, with DEATHLY CALM, imparting a SARCASTIC EDGE to many of the words.

Link again LOOKS at the cavern maw, DESPERATE, and then BACK DOWN at Marin; the man suddenly ROARS WITH EFFORT, PULLING BACK with all his might. He manages to pull up enough to DIG HIS FEET into the ground.

CUE A THREE-SECOND LONG 'GLITCH'. This glitch, unlike the others, takes the appearance of an 'error' in the actual spooling of the film reel (ie: it appears that the projectionist screwed-up the actual reel, somehow). During snippets of this glitch we can actually see the 'EDGES OF THE FILM REEL' at several brief intervals. The sounds accompanying this glitch are, among other things, the tell-tale 'flippa-flippa-flippa' of a malfunctioning projector).

This glitch CUTS-OUT to reveal Marin and Link FALLING DOWN on the ground outside Fo-Láraich; the pair are covered in DIRT AND DUST, and behind them the eastern maw of the cavern continues to CRUMBLE as rock and debris rain down inside the cave.

They GET TO THEIR HAUNCHES, COUGHING; Marin is STARING DOWN at the ground and her face is not visible. Link eventually STANDS, BRUSHING DUST off his body. He LOOKS DOWN at Marin.

LINK

"A hero doesn't leave a damsel behind, Marin..."

Marin, still STARING AT THE GROUND, answers SLOWLY.

MARIN

"They don't, do they?"

Marin slowly LOOKS UP at Link.

(NOTE: For the rest of this film's chronological order Marin's eyes are NO LONGER COMPLETELY HAZEL as they were before; instead the girl's eyes have a STRANGE, 'ELECTRIC-YELLOW' DISCOLORATION running through them. This effect is not entirely obvious, but it is noticeable to someone paying a great deal of attention. In addition to this Marin now acts and speaks in a slightly more 'SUBDUED' manner than before; where at first she was more 'overconfidently annoying' she is now 'silently creepy'.)

MARIN

"Are you such a good knight, now?"

Link again COUGHS up some dust; he DUSTS HIMSELF OFF as he stares down a TRAIL leading away from the cavern network behind him.

LINK

(shaking his head)

"Nope: just an ordinary hero, that's all..."

PAN INTO A CLOSE-UP on LINK'S FACE as he continues STARING down the trail; faint tails of SMOKE rise peacefully in the distance, as if ejected from the fire-pits of nearby homes.

PAN OUT reveals MARIN is standing beside him, quite close, also staring down the trail; Link is moderately STARTLED to see her standing so close.

Marin slowly DESCENDS the trail.

MARIN

"Pity, that: from here on in this land is a most extraordinary thing..."

Link HESITATES on the trail.

LINK

"That a fact, is it?"

MARIN

(enunciating very slowly, with a staccato tone)
"Ne'er... you... doubt it."

Link again GAZES towards the horizon.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF UROOBAN VILLAGE - LATE AFTERNOON.

PAN DOWN from an overcast sky onto a cleared section of ground following a path through grassland; many WOODEN BUILDINGS dot this area, surrounding a spacious town center containing a massive GAZEBO covered in COLORED STREAMERS. These streamers connect around various large TENTPOLES set into the ground around the square. Besides a very small number of townsfolk milling around the area the place is deserted. During this slow pan TEXT appears (fade-in) at LOWER CENTER:

"Urooban Village"

This line of text DISAPPEARS (fade-out) within a few seconds.

LINK AND MARIN walk across the dirt path leading towards the town center, moving through a field of fine grassland right on the outskirts; Link CONSIDERS the town before him with a COCKED BROW.

MARIN walks behind him.

MARIN

"Lonely, is it not?"

Link slowly STOPS WALKING; Marin does likewise (exactly as Link does, in a mimicking, 'robotic' fashion).

Link PUTS ONE HAND ON HIS SWORD.

LINK

(whispering while shaking his head slowly)

"No... we're not alone..."

Some of the GRASS along the trail RUFFLES unnaturally; the very TIP OF A CROSSBOW slowly pokes out from a concealed vantage point beside the trail.

Link LOOKS AROUND the grassland, SUSPICIOUS.

Suddenly a FAINT TWANG sounds; Link instinctively RIPS HIS SWORD from its sheath and SLASHES it through the air. He recovers from this motion and lands in a DEFENSIVE

POSITION; his sword is extended protectively in front on his body.

There is a SMALL RED NUB on the flat-end of Link's blade; Link eventually NOTICES this and examines the item: it is a crudely made WAX-TIPPED 'SUCTION CUP' CROSSBOW BOLT.

Link STARES AT THIS in surprise, but then suddenly SMILES; he again looks into the grassland with a FAR MORE SINISTER GRIN. He half-turns to look at MARIN.

LINK
"Wait here..."

Marin NODS, showing little emotion.

TWO SMALL CHILDREN (appx. 8 years old) lay prone in the grass across from Link and Marin's position; one is a boy with scraggily red hair and an UNDERSIZED CROSSBOW steadied in his hands; this boy is KENNETH. The other is a girl, also redheaded, lying slightly behind the boy and wearing a FUZZY CAP with a large tassel on the top; this girl is ADAN.

SLOW ZOOM on the children during the following dialogue; the children WHISPER QUIETLY to each other.

ADAN
"Pegged 'im! Ya peg 'im?"

The boy ROLLS TO HIS SIDE, looking over at the girl with a SHOCKED FROWN.

KENNETH
"You... got another?"

ADAN
"Another? You need another? You never need another. Hang it: I never miss, so lemme—"

KENNETH
"I did not miss, Adan! I..."

ADAN
"What: if you didn't miss—"

KENNETH
"I... he..."

The boy GESTURES with his hands.

The girl POUTS ANGRILY and rests her head in the grass.

ADAN
"Doesn't matter: I haven't another."

The boy SCOWLS.

KENNETH
"Hang it! Leave it to a lass to—"

ADAN
"Don't you slag me off, Kenneth! We never carry another. We never need another..."

The pair LOUNGE in this position for a short time, not speaking to each other.

SLOW PAN OUT reveals LINK lying on his side in the grass directly behind the girl; he absently TOUSLES the tassel on Adan's fuzzy cap.

KENNETH
"We well-enough should have another, shouldn't we?"

Link gently TOSSES the wax-tipped bolt in front of Kenneth. The boy NOTICES this and picks it up.

KENNETH
"Oh, handy. Thanks."

Adan RAISES HER HEAD out of the grass, appearing CONFUSED.

ADAN
"Thanks? For what, exactly, then, Kenneth?"

Kenneth LOOKS at the girl, CURIOUS. He HOLDS UP the wax crossbow bolt.

FAR DISTANCE SHOT, showing the short grassland behind the trail. After a few second's pause both Kenneth and Adan can be heard SCREAMING LOUDLY; the pair emerges from the grass,

RUNNING as fast as they can out of the brush and towards town.

LINK emerges from the grass and walks back up next to MARIN. He is GRINNING openly.

MARIN
"You're gonna get hell for that..."

Link COCKS HIS BROW, mischievous.

LINK
"Ever so worth it."

The pair MOVES OFF toward town, slowly following the children.

LINK
"They can be our little 'advanced notice' for the townsfolk; nobody will think we're sneaking up on them now, will they? Tch! Little children don't have to be useless, after all."

MARIN
"Could you not have left them to their own devices?"

LINK
(grinning and shaking his head)
"Oh, Marin! The Goddesses know: no! Little children left to their own devices can stir up more trouble than a nest of newborn..."

Link slowly STOPS WALKING, appearing BEWILDERED.

Marin similarly STOPS, although she remains EMOTIONLESS.

LINK
(whispering)
"...dodongos?"

Link BLINKS in confusion; Marin merely STARES AT HIM as the pair stand on the trail. Eventually Link WAGS HIS HEAD, recovering, and again SETS OFF for the village center; Marin FOLLOWS close behind.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE OF UROOBAN VILLAGE - LATE AFTERNOON.

Link and Marin walk past the central gazebo in the town square; a BURLY, BEARDED MAN in workman's overalls descends the steps of a log house to greet the pair. He EXTENDS A HAND to Link as he approaches the man.

CUE A HALF-SECOND LONG 'GLITCH' as Link and the man extend their hands; this glitch is more 'audio' in nature than 'visual', and other than some flitting DISTORTIONS to the scene there are no other actual 'image inserts' in this glitch.

TOWNSPERSON

"Well met, traveler. I am—"

CUE A ONE SECOND-LONG 'GLITCH'; during this glitch we immediately see the full face of THUNDERBIRD (facing forward) flickering on and off the screen in rapid succession, distorted by 'psychedelic' imagery. At the same time the word 'Error' is emitted in a guttural, unnatural cadence. The glitch cuts out IMMEDIATELY after this word is spoken.

ERROR

"—the Chief Administrator here in Urooban."

Link and Error SHAKE HANDS.

LINK

"My name is Link of North Castle. Well met, sir. May peace fall upon your village."

Error SCRATCHES HIS CHIN.

ERROR

"Your sword might say otherwise..."

Link LOOKS DOWN at his sheathed sword. He LOOKS BACK UP at Error.

LINK

"My sword says that I am a squire of the New Hylian Guard. I can assure you: peace is my profession."

Error SMILES and NODS gently.

ERROR

"Mmm. Never mind the hellfire in your eyes..."

Link LOOKS TO ONE SIDE.

ERROR

"Ah, don't misunderstand: I didn't mean that at all."

Link LOOKS BACK at Error.

ERROR

"Hellfire, my son: the overconfidence of youth, you might call it. 'Cocksurenness'."

Link COCKS ONE EYEBROW.

LINK

"'Cocksurenness'?"

ERROR

"Not the best word maybe. And perhaps I've overreached? Usually I do pride myself on being an excellent judge of character, though..."

Link SMILES.

LINK

"Well, you could be right. I could be... cocksure. So, what: should I drop trou so we can all find out?"

There is a BRIEF PAUSE, and then both men LAUGH; Error laughs heartily, while Link chuckles quietly. Error MOTIONS for Link to enter the large cabin.

INT. UROOBAN TOWN HALL - (CONTINUOUS)

A spacious, rustic cabin interior decked out with animal skins and animal heads on the walls. Some townsfolk go about their business in other parts of the cabin rooms.

KENNETH and ADAN both stand near the entrance to the main room along with a small group of OTHER CHILDREN. They look on as Error and Link sit at a long table near a window of the cabin, each drinking a STEAMING BEVERAGE. Marin sits closer to the opposite wall, partially in the shadows. She has no drink in front of her.

ERROR

"Ah, you made good time through Fo-Láraich; none have ever crossed it faster than you, as I recall."

Link LOOKS AT MARIN with a half-smile.

LINK

"Well: I had a good guide for that..."

ERROR

"Oh, really? Is that so?"

LINK

"Mmmm. Ran into a bit of trouble at the Eastern Maw: got attacked by some... I don't know, giant insect monster--"

ERROR

"Giant insect monster?"

The man SCRATCHES HIS CHIN, perplexed. All of a sudden he LOOKS UP with realization.

ERROR

"Ah, what: bug-eyed brute of a cockroach, huh?"

LINK

"Something like that."

ERROR

(laughing heartily)

"'Monster', indeed. The Slow Grower: that's what you saw!"

LINK

"What: you know it?"

Error CONTINUES CHUCKLING.

ERROR

"Naturally! Ha! It's something of a 'patron saint' to the little ones around here..."

Error NOTICES the children lurking near the doorway.

ERROR

"Ah, speaking of which..."

Link TURNS in his seat and notices the children. He DIGS THROUGH HIS CLOAK and retrieves Kenneth's UNDERSIZED CROSSBOW. He HOLDS IT OUT to the child.

The boy slowly APPROACHES the table and TAKES the crossbow from Link; Kenneth STARES DOWN at Link's SWORD in apparent AWE before slowly walking off to rejoin his compatriots.

ERROR

"You've already met our little 'defense team': 'The Slow Growers'."

LINK

(motioning to the children with his head)
"That kiddie committee?"

ERROR

(nodding)

"Mmmm. The beast is something of a role-model for them: it takes untold years for a Slow Grower to reach the size of the one in Fo-Láraich. With time, my good squire, anything is possible. And the wee ones out here are such impatient little things: the Slow Grower reminds them that someday they, too, will be big and strong."

LINK

"That kind of monster seems unsuitable as a mascot."

ERROR

"What monster? And you don't mean to say you were attacked?"

LINK

"I just told you--"

ERROR

"You were physically attacked by that overgrown pup of a thing? Nonsense: the damn thing eats hayseed out of an ungloved hand! It comes down to our fields and cuddles-up with the livestock when it is cold. It's a damn baby of a thing! Certain it did not attack you?"

Link STARES DOWN at his drink, CONFUSED.

LINK

"I... well... no: it... I guess it didn't, really..."

ERROR

"Well, anyway, here's hoping you didn't at all injure the thing: for the children's sakes, at least..."

Link LEANS FORWARD.

LINK

"Listen, Error: I have a few questions to ask. I'm not planning on staying in your village for very long—"

ERROR

"That's another thing I was hoping on. No offense, my good squire, but a trained swordsman journeying to us from the Old Shores is a most unusual thing; we survive this land well-enough as it is, but we can scarce afford an extra ounce of 'excitement' around these parts."

LINK

"No offense taken. My business is further south."

ERROR

"What: in the fallow fields?"

LINK

(shaking his head)

"On the other side of the Adhavore."

ERROR

(laughing)

"You're joking! Ah, ha!"

LINK

"You're a good judge of character, aren't you?"

Error NOTES the seriousness in Link's face.

ERROR

"No: you're not joking. Of course you're not: it's not in the character of the New Hylia Guard to do so, is it? So, your business down there is...?"

LINK

"My own. But I need to know anything you might know about the land there; all the maps I've studied are centuries old."

Error NODS.

ERROR

"Likely accurate, too: nothing has changed in the far Southland for longer than that. It's all land given back over to the Goddesses—"

LINK

"From which this world came into being'. I already know that."

Error SHAKES HIS HEAD.

ERROR

"Much of the land is dying, or deceased, as land goes. 'Stale' is the best descriptor, perhaps. That lonely place is the 'threadbarest' of the Threadbare Lands, as it were.

The Aged Veil runs along endless swampland to the Southeast— it's a mire of infinite emptiness, that— but further south there is Kasuto."

LINK

"Kasuto? What is that: a region?"

ERROR

(shaking his head)

"A town. T'was, at least: we've been separated ere these generations. My great-grandfather was a babe in swaddling cloth when last we had contact with Kasuto. Those were days when men dared cross the Adhavore; no one would even think of setting out across the Kelpie's Brae, now."

LINK

"The 'Kelpie'? What is that?"

ERROR

(scoffing bitterly)

"Ah... a remnant, as it were. There are fairies in the Fairy Knowe south of here, to be sure, just as there is the Kelpie in the Kelpie's Brae along the river. Back when the Goddesses walked the earth they made all manner of fantastic critters. Where many have long since died the Kelpie still lingers. Why, we do not know. Kelpies do best in pairs..."

(NOTE: during this next line of dialogue we see a CLOSE-UP of Marin's emotionless face)

ERROR

"...but its mate has long since left the Adhavore, through either death or desertion, as it were, and we know not which."

RETURN CAMERA FOCUS to Link and Error.

ERROR

"But we do know one thing, clear as the plumage on Farore's Own tail."

LINK

"What's that?"

Error STANDS UP slowly, uncomfortable. He speaks SLOWLY.

ERROR

"The Kelpie is a monster. And the Kelpie eats those who are weak. Us mortals haven't the magical benefits of fairies or wizzrobes; we cannot be reincarnated, you know. Now, you're a noble squire, to be sure, and you certainly aren't weak. Maybe you've less to fear than most in that regard, but still..."

Error LEANS against the table purposefully.

ERROR

"...were I you I would certainly have more fear in me than you do now."

Error NODS RESPECTFULLY at Link and walks away.

Link again STARES INTO HIS DRINK. He looks over at Marin, who merely stares back at him, emotionless. Link LOOKS OUT the window at the gazebo in the town square.

SLOW ZOOM on the GAZEBO. FADE INTO the next scene.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE OF UROOBAN VILLAGE - EVENING.

The townsfolk of Urooban Village are gathered in and around the central gazebo for a small festival, DANCING and REVELING as a small band (complete with a BAGPIPER) plays along.

Link WALKS away from this scene of merriment and into the shadows along the town square's edge.

A WOMAN stumbles out the door of one cabin holding a BOTTLE of liquid. She walks UNSTEADILY. When she sees Link she GRINS widely and HOLDS UP the bottle. Her speech is DEEPLY SLURRED.

TOWNSWOMAN

"How about that? It's my special medicine!"

Link IGNORES the woman, walking past her.

TOWNSWOMAN

"Oh, c'mere! Stop an' 'rest' here, blondie!"

Link eventually SITS DOWN on the steps outside the door of one cabin. MARIN is revealed to be sitting a little further away from him, even more swamped in shadows than Link is.

LINK

"I've honestly never seen a 'yearling slaughter' festival before."

MARIN

"You're not one to partake in such merriment?"

LINK

"The 'merriment' doesn't bother me. I'm just glad they 'restrained' themselves with the decorating; they could have quite literally 'painted the town red', you know..."

MARIN

"You are hardly a vegetarian yourself. So: have you not learned anything more from these people?"

Link GRINS sardonically.

LINK

"Oh, plenty. It seems that little Kenneth really fancies little Adan, but he's far too shy to ask her for a dance. Also, apparently Adan thinks that Kenneth 'slagged her off' recently, so she's a bit out of sorts..."

MARIN

"About the Southland, I mean?"

LINK

"Nobody knows, and nobody wants to know..."

Link RECLINES on the step, resting his hands behind his head.

LINK

"Some of the old timers around here say that the Kelpie 'dislikes noise', for what that's worth. Tch! Ninety-percent of their fears have got to be idle superstition, but still: I'm not ready to discount the other ten-percent. I'll damn-well know what's out there when I know what's out there, though, and when the time comes I'll just have to play things by ear."

MARIN

"You are not entirely unsuccessful in that regard..."

Marin TURNS HER HEAD to look at Link; the 'ELECTRIC-YELLOW' glint of her eyes is slightly more noticeable in the moonlight.

MARIN

"...and at least it should be a sight to see, should it not?"

Link CHUCKLES.

LINK

"You'll never know that for sure, will you, Marin?"

Link HOLDS OUT his hand to one side; Marin's LARGE CELTIC CROSS dangles between his fingers. He EXTENDS his arm, dangling the trinket for Marin to take.

MARIN

"Until I see for myself? No. But when I do, I will."

There is a PAUSE. Link LOOKS OVER at Marin, CONFUSED.

LINK

"For yourself? You're not serious?"

MARIN

"Curious, though--"

Link LOWERS his hand slightly.

LINK

"I thought you said that trait's gotten 'many a little girl into trouble'. You're in Urooban, Marin! This place is supposed to be your big 'second chance', isn't it? Why in the Goddesses' names would you want to cross into the Southland with me? I could damn-well be marching to my own death, you know--"

MARIN

"Perhaps. But it would do me just fine, Squire Link, to see whether you will sink or you will swim..."

Link appears as if he is going to say more, but then CLOSES HIS MOUTH; he faces forward, looking away from Marin.

MARIN

"Am I so unwelcome? Dismiss me, then, if you would."

There is a LONG PAUSE. Eventually Link RETURNS his hand holding Marin's cross to his lap. He SIGHS.

LINK

"I'm leaving for the Adhavore at daybreak, Marin."

MARIN

"I shall be ready at dawn."

Marin SLOWLY RISES; she looks at Link again.

MARIN

"I doubt very much that you are marching off to your own death, Squire; after all: you are capable of doing anything and everything imaginable. Is that not so?"

Marin slowly WALKS OFF into the shadows of the town proper.

Link idly stares at the lighted gazebo across the way in the town square. He removes the RED FLOWER from his cloak and STARES AT IT; holding it up to the light of the festival in the distance.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ADHAVORE RIVER - EARLY AFTERNOON.

An exceedingly beautiful river, approximately 25-meters in width, cutting between two green fields to the north and south. The area is TOTALLY QUIET, to the point of 'unease'.

SLOW PAN UP from the still waters of the river, revealing lush, tree-lined fields in the distance behind the river. During this slow pan TEXT appears (fade-in) at LOWER CENTER:

"Adhavore River"

This line of text DISAPPEARS (fade-out) within a few seconds.

A series of slow FADE CUTS reveals Link walking through dense foliage further north from the river; many STATELY OAKS dominate the terrain. ONE OAK, in particular, is much larger than all the rest.

BRIGHT PINPOINTS of light flit about in this tree's canopy; some are BLUE and others PINK. These are all FARIES.

Link LOOKS UP at the flying creatures with a mixture of WONDER and PUZZLEMENT. He stands directly beside the massive oak tree, watching as several of the pinpoints begin slowly DESCENDING from the sky; hovering curiously over Link's head.

One BLUE PINPOINT, in particular, hovers closer-still to Link; Link slowly EXTENDS A HAND in front of his face, holding up a FINGER near his eye.

The blue pinpoint of light very slowly (hesitantly) comes to rest on Link's finger after several 'false-landings' and retreats. When it finally does come to rest we see a very small (appx. $\frac{3}{4}$ inch high) lithe-bodied female creature with large wings; the fairy STARES UP at Link with the same general mixture of PUZZLEMENT and CURIOSITY.

We notice that this fairy's LEFT LEG is significantly 'deformed', as if through some trauma from its past or a congenital birth defect.

The fairy soon gently SHUTTLES OFF Link's finger, flitting closer to LINK'S NOSE, where the fairy briefly considers perching; Link and the fairy STARE AT EACH OTHER for a considerable moment before several of the other LOW-FLYING

PINPOINTS OF LIGHT begin SWIRLING with extra urgency; the fairy NOTICES this and quickly SHUTTLES AWAY from Link, retreating to the giant oak's canopy and again disappearing into the mix of colors, becoming another indiscriminant pinpoint of light.

CLOSE-UP on LINK'S FACE; the man stares forward with a puzzled, but sorrowful countenance. SLOW CAMERA PAN reveals Marin standing behind him.

MARIN

"The fairies: it is not in their nature to be so trusting; they know what kind of creature man is. Strange, then, for one to be so forward..."

Link SWALLOWS uncomfortably; he notices a SMALL TEAR forming on his right eye and WIPES AT IT quickly.

LINK

"Yeah: I could've bottled her up and made myself a fortune with the right people back home. Should've thought of that..."

Link LOOKS BACK at Marin, briefly, before WALKING OFF, uncomfortable. He emerges from the tree line, standing near the edge of the river.

NOTE: the following scene is ENTIRELY DEVOID of ANY ambient sounds except those directly noted. Other than the 'obvious noises' (footsteps, etc...) there are NO OTHER background sounds.

Link WALKS ALONG the water's edge, looking across the way and into the water, as well.

Link walks along the water's edge, to a point where there are rolling fields behind him; CLOSE-UP on Link as he KNEELS at the side of the river, STARING INTO the pool intently. We can see NOTHING of consequence in the water itself (no fish, either).

Link STANDS, again contemplating the scene before him; SLOW PAN around Link's body reveals a STARK WHITE HORSE standing in the background, about ten yards away from Link's body. It is idling, eating scrub, and when it gently PAWS the ground Link TURNS, hearing the sound.

Link STARES at the horse, and then LOOKS AROUND the scene behind him; finding no owner Link COCKS HIS HEAD and returns his gaze to the water before him.

Link STARES INTO THE WATER again, and again LOOKS UP at the other side of the river; we suddenly see the WHITE HORSE'S HEAD come up beside Link's own head. The creature gently NUZZLES against Link, and Link reflexively STROKES the horse's nose.

Link FACES the horse, looking the creature up and down. When Link again tries to survey the Adhavore River before him the horse NEIGHS gently, prompting Link to again turn his attention to the animal.

Link WALKS alongside the creature, gently stroking its body and appearing greatly IMPRESSED with the large animal.

(NOTE: There is a small but noticeable DAMPNESS around the white horse's MANE; a few stray droplets of water DRIP from its neck however these droplets are not entirely obvious).

After much hesitation Link finally MOUNTS the animal and sits atop its bare back. Link GRINS pleurably and STROKES the creature's head near its ears; Link suddenly LOOKS AT THE WATER of the river again, although this time with PUZZLEMENT, as if he cannot remember what he was previously doing.

Link is UNCOMFORTABLE on the horse's back until he SHEDS HIS CLOAK, letting the garment fall onto the ground. He does the same with his ARMING SWORD, allowing it to fall with a CLANG.

Link suddenly GRIPS the horse's full mane on either side of its head and TUGS it in a direction away from the water, out towards the rolling FIELDS behind him.

The horse NEIGHS and sets off at a FAST GALLOP; Link SPURS IT ON with his shoes and the pair go careening off across the hills at breakneck speed.

As he rides both the SILK HEADSCARF and the RED FLOWER in his pockets are slowly dislodged; each DANGLES out of his vest before Link SHAKES THEM OFF HIS BODY in annoyance. Both articles go FLUTTERING BY THE WAYSIDE as Link rides.

Link SINKS DOWN LOW on the horse's back, GRINNING DEVILISHLY as he spurs the creature on; they race further and faster across the land. Link steers the creature through pleasant, rolling country, EXHILARATED.

SLOW PAN around Link's body, starting at the front; PRINCESS ZELDA is revealed to be riding on the white horse, sitting behind Link and clutching at his stomach as the horse moves. Link LOOKS BACK at Zelda, who SMILES WIDELY; the woman's smile turns more SEDUCTIVE and she slowly PECKS at Link's cheek with a chaste kiss.

After another moment of this hard riding there is a BRIEF 'GLITCH' of an EMACIATED, SICKLY ZELDA sitting in her bed, facing forward; this REPEATS ITSELF several times, each time causes Link to WINCE with discomfort. The final GLITCH in this series is an EXTREMELY BRIEF snippet of Link holding Marin by the wrist back in the caverns at Fo-Láraich (the speed of this latter glitch borders on subliminal).

Link SPASMS with discomfort; he is once again ALONE on the white horse. He YANKS on the horse's mane, attempting to get it to stop. The creature does not stop, however, but moves even FASTER. Link SCREAMS at the creature, THRASHING on its back; we see that the HAIRS on the horse's back are somehow 'stuck' to Link's clothing and flesh.

Link SCREAMS AGAIN, this time producing a DAGGER from his vest.

DISJOINTED COLORS immediately 'explode' across the screen, quickly dissolving into WATER BUBBLES; when they part we see the DEPTHS OF THE ADHAVORE take the place of the rolling fields.

In the FAR DISTANCE we see the white horse (now almost black in the shadow of the deep water) with Link THRASHING on its back (the pair appear to be moving in slow-motion as they sink down through the water).

AIR BUBBLES explode from LINK'S FACE as he struggles; the HORSE'S MANE below Link begins TURNING slowly. The entire horse's head rotates an impossible 180-degrees to face Link; the creature's eyes glow with a FIERCE YELLOW LIGHT and its mouth parts, revealing several rows of RAZOR-SHARP

TEETH; it makes a TERRIBLE GROWLING noise through the water.

This is the river monster GAUCHEEIS.

The HAIR ON THE CREATURE'S BACK begins 'parting' on either side of Link, as if TWO ADDITIONAL APPENDAGES are slowly emerging from the creature's back (ie: in addition to its four hooves facing the other way, the creature has 'hands' rising up in the other direction). The creature's body is 'morphing' in such a way that, instead of a horse facing forward and away from Link, it is becoming a hideous abomination that is facing Link HEAD-ON.

Link STRUGGLES to orient himself, eventually managing to SWIPE HIS DAGGER across the creature's RIGHT UPPER BODY.

Again in the FAR DISTANCE we see the black creature and Link; the pair are PUSHED APART as a HORRIBLE SCREAM erupts through the water; STRANGE COLORED FLUID fills the space between Link and the creature. Link FLAILS through the water, moving for the surface as the shadowy visage of the creature begins MORPHING in a way that makes it less visible; the last glimpse we see of it reveals that it is PROPELLING ITSELF DOWNWARD through the water, heading for the bottom of the river.

Link's head suddenly BREECHES the surface of the river; Link THRASHES through the water, COUGHING and SPUTTERING. He struggles to reach the far bank (ie: the south bank) of the river.

MARIN is waiting for him, standing well-away from the water.

(NOTE: Marin is not at all wet, despite the fact that she is now standing on the opposite shoreline of the river. This is not commented on in any way.)

Link DRAGS HIMSELF onto the bank of the river; he is still wearing his cloak and his sword is in its scabbard.

Link COUGHS as he LIES ON HIS BACK.

Marin STANDS OVER the man, looking down at him.

MARIN

"So you are driven, are you not?"

LINK

(sputtering and panting)

"More than most, maybe..."

Marin STANDS UP slowly. She waits for Link to get to one knee.

MARIN

"The Southland awaits, Squire Link."

Link, STILL PANTING, watches as Marin WALKS OFF in the direction of a mountain pass leading to the far southern section of the Threadbare Lands.

Link slowly GETS TO HIS FEET, SHIVERING, and LOOKS BACK at the Adhavore River one last time before walking off, REMOVING HIS WET CLOAK and placing it over his arm as he walks.

CUE A ONE-SECOND-LONG 'GLITCH'.

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (INDETERMINATE)

Link again SCREAMS IN AGONY as he lies on the stone slab; he ARCHES HIS BACK to an unnaturally flexible degree. TEARS form along the flesh of his back in several places around his spine, causing more BLOOD to ooze from his body.

Link's body is now in significantly dire circumstances; the bruise over his forehead is grotesquely bulbous; blood oozes from his broken shin, and the SHINBONE is now clearly visible peeking out of the flesh. The WOUND along his chest is open even further, and it bleeds more heartily. The man ROLLS TO HIS SIDE, WRITHING in agony. He can barely open his RIGHT EYE due to swelling from the bruise on his forehead.

MARIN is revealed to be sitting on a pile of rubble less than five feet from the stone slab (ie: much closer than before). The woman merely LEANS FORWARD, staring at Link 'clinically'.

Link grows slightly CALMER upon sight of her; he looks at her with his left red eye, still PANTING.

LINK
"I... am thirsty..."

Link EXHALES a 'stuttering' breath; a faint trail of BLOODY SPIT curls out one corner of his mouth as he does so. He slowly ROLLS ONTO HIS BACK, GROANING in pain; Link again lies prone.

Link's body suddenly STIFFENS and he draws a PAINED BREATH, simultaneously with the start of the next 'GLITCH'.

CUE A HALF-SECOND-LONG 'GLITCH'.

EXT. AGED VEIL - VERY LATE AFTERNOON.

An unremarkable trail following the Eastern edge of the Dawnland Stairs mountain range; the mountains to the West are clearly impassable at this point; further east the sunlight sparkles on the beginning of a MASSIVE HORIZON OF SWAMPLAND.

Link and Marin sit around a PATHETIC CAMPFIRE which barely burns; Link examines several small sticks of collected wood, GROWLING.

He DISCARDS these pieces of wood.

LINK
"All these are given over to stone. Almost everything here is!"

Link LOOKS OUT across the swampland; many DISEASED-LOOKING TREES peak through the swamp-water at regular intervals.

MARIN
"Tell me, Squire: why do you think it is that you love her, so?"

Link LOOKS at Marin with a DANGEROUS EXPRESSION.

Eventually Marin changes the subject, MOTIONING to the swamp with her head.

MARIN
"Now, there's the great façade."

Link FOLLOWS Marin's gaze; he then LOOKS AT HER quizzically.

MARIN

"The land up here looks decent enough— it is a little empty, maybe, but it looks alright— in truth it is completely dead. Down there, in that ocean of green sludge? Well: that's the last bastion of life. Even the dead can help the living, down there..."

Marin idly TOYS with a piece of petrified wood in her hands. She LOOKS at Link intently.

MARIN

"...rather than hinder them, at least..."

Link SMILES impishly.

LINK

"It's a swamp, Marin."

MARIN

"And not so easy a thing to swim in at all."

LINK

"No: I wouldn't imagine it is. Anyway, just when did your 'environmental expertise' extend to swampland, huh?"

Link EYES the murky swampland, SHIVERING.

LINK

"I could live a whole lifetime and never get my feet wet again. That... that creature back there: it made me see things... things that weren't there..."

MARIN

"And you saw through it, did you not? It is an impressive thing: the drive to break Gaucheeis' spell..."

LINK

"What? 'Gaucheeis'? What is that?"

Marin COCKS HER HEAD.

MARIN

"The river monster: its name is Gaucheeis. It is so very lonely for lack of a mate; its own beloved was far too

fickle and foolish a thing to remain in the Adhavore. Gaucheeis' mate had the drive to break its spells, too, and break them they did. The pair had their falling out so long ago; Gaucheeis' fool of a mate struck off for 'greener' pastures..."

LINK

"Its... its mate? Its beloved? And that thing's name is 'Gaucheeis'? How the hell could you possibly know all that?"

There is a short pause; Marin's facial expression does not change at all during this time.

MARIN

"Error told us all of that. Do you not remember?"

There is an even LONGER PAUSE; Link looks DEEPLY CONFUSED. Marin stares at him in the camera background; the YELLOW of her eyes (though still difficult to see) is more pronounced.

LINK

"He... did? Yes... of course he did. He told us all about that, didn't he?"

MARIN

"If I may ask again, Squire: why do you think it is that you love her, so?"

Link SITS UP; he appears SURPRISED by this question.

LINK

"What the hell are you talking about?"

MARIN

"You are deeply and passionately in love with the Princess of Hyrule. That is fairly obvious."

LINK

"Where the hell is this coming from? You're—"

Marin quickly COCKS HER HEAD (in a 'birdlike' fashion).

MARIN

"Incorrect? You'd argue that?"

LINK
(snarling)
"Overreaching."

Marin quickly COCKS HER HEAD in the opposite direction before slowly returning it to LEVEL.

MARIN
"You are... obsessed with the Princess of Hyrule, then. Why do you think that is?"

Link LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, uncomfortable.

LINK
"Zelda has always fascinated me. I don't know why. She... she's my first memory, for one thing."

Link LOOKS BACK at Marin.

LINK
"I have no memory of my life before I was about 8-years-old, or so; I don't really know how old I am. The first thing I do remember about my life is seeing Zelda. It was in Castletown, back in the New Kingdom; we barely crossed paths. She... she dropped something out of her litter, I think, and I picked it up for her."

MARIN
"What was it she dropped?"

LINK
(shaking his head)
"Something inconsequential; a child's toy, I think. That brief encounter isn't the kind of thing she'd remember, of course, but I did; from the moment I saw Zelda years later in North Castle I- I..."

MARIN
"You were... 'under her spell', is that it?"

Link SWALLOWS.

LINK
"I went to seed after I left the New Kingdom. There was so much freedom out there on the Old Shores. I drank it up. Hell, I guzzled it like it was water. I... wanted to be wild..."

Link LOOKS DOWN at his cloak and sword, MOTIONING to it.

LINK

"This— all of this— it wouldn't have worked; there's no way I could ever be a squire, let alone a knight. Bagu is a good teacher, but his instruction was never enough. Zelda... she was always—"

MARIN

"A tamer. And were you not the opposite for her?"

Link SMILES, staring down at the paltry fire. He appears ENTRANCED by his own words.

LINK

"A 'wild influence'. We've always been pretty good at meeting each other halfway. 'Mutual compromise'; I've never really understood why it worked so well. I've never even bowed to her— did you know that?— not even once. Bagu's given me hell for it, but I take that abuse. It never seemed 'proper' for me to do that: to bow to her like some unthinking soldier ritualistically demonstrating his devotion. She's Hyrule's princess, yes, but she's also just this kid I've known... this woman that I know... and I've never had to get on one knee to prove myself to her; I think she's always known that: deep down, she knows I'm hers..."

MARIN

"Is that destiny, do you think?"

Link LOOKS UP, his demeanor changing to a HARsher look.

LINK

"I think that it isn't Zelda's destiny to die the way she is dying. That's what I think. And I think that, right now, that's all there is to it. It's a very simple thing, Marin—
"

MARIN

"Deathly simple, at that..."

LINK

"—and when I find the Throne of Farore's Wisdom it'll still be a simple thing: either there is or there isn't some way

to save Zelda, and either the answer is or it isn't inside that wretched shell of a Palace."

MARIN
"And if it is not?"

Link SNARLS.

LINK
"Well, that's not really even an option, is it? So you see, it's all twice as simple for me, isn't it?"

Link WRAPS HIMSELF UP in his cloak and RECLINES as if to sleep.

MARIN
"And if there is a price to be paid for this cure?"

LINK
"Never mind that; I'm good for the money..."

MARIN
(whispering)
"If you are not the one to pay it, Squire?"

Link SMILES.

LINK
"Even better, isn't it? Unlike your proud little self I'm quite content to be someone else's 'charity case'."

Link CLOSES HIS EYES; he LIES ON HIS SIDE, RESTING HIS HEAD on the ground.

LINK
"I can do whatever's necessary, Marin. No word of a lie..."

There is a PAUSE; Link eventually OPENS HIS EYES and is startled to find MARIN'S FACE right up against his. The woman is lying opposite Link, facing him with mirrored body posture.

Marin SNIFFS the air, long and hard; she remains EMOTIONLESS.

MARIN
"But the scent of one, perhaps..."

Link ROLLS OVER, SNEERING.

LINK

"Never smelled a 'wild beast' before, have you? Maybe you're spending too much time around your turnips..."

LONG DISTANCE SHOT of the pair bedded down beside their paltry fire. LINK'S VOICE can be heard ECHOING against the mountain wall beside them.

LINK

"...I hate turnips..."

EXT. OLD KASUTO TOWN - MIDDAY.

A small town, clinging to the edge of an extremely hardscrabble wasteland. The entire town is decrepit ruins; almost every building is in disrepair and there is no person to be seen. The sky is bleak and heavily overcast, such that the time of day cannot be obviously deduced.

A GIANT, PURPLE, TADPOLE-LIKE CREATURE with a massive white eyeball at its front peeks out from a TRASH PILE behind one of the houses; this is a MOA. It LOOKS AROUND, suspicious, and then it DIVES BACK into the refuse as quickly as it appears.

LINK and MARIN walk down a makeshift path that bisects the town. A SMALL SIGN rests on a fencepost near the outskirts with text in 'Ancient Hylian' (Scots-Gaelic). It reads:

"Welcome to Kasuto Town".

(NOTE: This text is NOT subtitled for the audience)

Link RUNS HIS HAND along the sign, STARING at the town before him with SUSPICION. He UNSHEATHES his arming sword.

Marin stands behind him, EMOTIONLESS.

LINK

"Kasuto. Strange... it is deserted..."

The pair MOVES through the town, walking SLOWLY.

Eventually Link notices ONE RUINED HOUSE that, unlike all the others, has a SICKLY TRAIN OF SMOKE billowing out the back of it.

LINK

"Maybe less than deserted..."

He and Marin CIRCLE the house, both noticing that the source of the smoke is a BASEMENT WINDOW SLAT, far too small to crawl through and impossible to see through; Link GESTURES with Marin to again circle to the front of the house, and they both do so.

Link gently tries the front door; it does not open easily.

(NOTE: Beside the front door, in EXTREMELY faded lettering, there is a calligraphy-engraved plate that is particularly difficult to make-out. The letters read "GRADEMIR", written in all-caps. Again, this is VERY DIFFICULT to see.)

Link LOOKS UP at the house's ruined chimney (which is not being used) and gently CLIMBS the structure. He EXAMINES the chimney and then slowly (and quietly) crawls back down the house; he LOOKS at Marin.

LINK

(whispering)

"Looks like I can get in through the chimney. Wait here..."

Link again ASCENDS the house and stealthily CLAMBERS up the chimney; he DESCENDS into the small space and gingerly SHIMMIES down the inside.

INT. GRADEMIR HOUSEHOLD - (CONTINUOUS)

The inside of this small house is a dilapidated ruin.

Link slowly walks from one empty room to another, ONE HAND ON HIS SWORD'S HILT as he walks. Eventually, having explored every facet of the tiny house Link notices the entrance to the BASEMENT; FLICKERING LIGHT struggles beneath the doorway here.

Link SLOWLY (and almost SILENTLY) UNSHEATHES his sword. He OPENS the basement door slowly and DESCENDS down a stone stairway.

Link ROUNDS A CORER, finding a dank and dingy stone basement room; a small FIRE crackles in a makeshift pit near the room's center.

An OLD MAN, unkempt and bearing a scraggily beard, sits against one wall of the basement; he wears a ratty brown cloak with a semi-pointed hood, wrapped tight over his head for warmth.

Link NOTES the man with suspicion, but eventually LOWERS HIS GUARD; Link slowly APPROACHES the man, eventually SITTING DOWN on the opposite side of the fire pit.

LINK

"Might a poor traveler bask in your warmth, here?"

The Old Man SAYS NOTHING. He does not look at Link.

Link COUGHS politely.

LINK

"My name is Link, of North Castle, Mister...?"

The old man finally SPEAKS after a pause.

OLD MAN

"The town is dead; look east... in woods..."

Link LOOKS FROM SIDE TO SIDE, uncomfortable.

LINK

"What? The swamp, old man?"

OLD MAN

"We... had to flee Kasuto..."

LINK

"And the others went east?"

The OLD MAN finally LOOKS UP at Link's face.

OLD MAN

"The air here... is heavy. So heavy..."

Link has been BREATHING HARD during this time; Link STOPS BREATHING, reflecting on the LOUD SOUND of each of his breaths.

LINK

"Why is that? Is it something to do with the mountains?
Something coming off the Dawnland Stairs? Does it have
anything to do with the Palace?"

At these words the Old Man's face CONTORTS with DISPLEASURE
and PAIN; he DRAWS A LONG BREATH, staring back at the fire.

OLD MAN

"The Palace: no one is there..."

He again LOOKS UP at Link.

OLD MAN

(whispering frantically)

"...but a funeral bell will ring!"

LINK

"Can you tell me anything about the way through Her Divine
Footsteps?"

The Old Man SPEAKS SLOWLY, as if deeply CONFUSED.

OLD MAN

"Farore? To see Farore, set one foot in the grave..."

LINK

(smiling with condescension)

"I'd prefer to be more... corporeal when I meet her,
though..."

OLD MAN

"...the northwest: the cemetery, Dhise Cairn..."

Link's BROW ARCHES in surprise.

LINK

"Did- did you just say 'Dhise'?"

OLD MAN

"The lonely graves..."

The Old Man LOOKS AT LINK with a SINISTER grimace.

OLD MAN

"...not so very lonely in Her shadow!"

Link LOOKS AT the man with discomfort; there is a LONG PAUSE.

LINK

"Tell me, why is it you remain here? Why didn't you flee with the others?"

OLD MAN

"Where they've gone... I cannot follow. Oh: no, no! What changes in the world, entire, but for just one thing that would not; this is my home. This is my one thing, everlasting. And what lasts, in a world such as this?"

The Old Man SINKS DOWN against the wall, resting on a TATTERED BLANKET beside him.

OLD MAN

"Oh: and how has my dark-skinned beauty left me, now, ere these fifty years. Gone to Utter West, have you, desert blossom? Gone... with... with... him..."

The Old Man LOOKS AT LINK once again, as if seeing him for the first time. He SMILES with extremely pleasant WARMTH.

OLD MAN

"...my boy!"

The Old Man LEANS FORWARD, conspiratorially, and WHISPERS across the fire.

OLD MAN

"I can give you... most powerful magic!"

Link stares at the man QUIZZICALLY.

OLD MAN

"I can give you... a parent's love..."

Link again COUGHS, uncomfortable, and LOOKS TO ONE SIDE with embarrassment.

OLD MAN

(tearfully)

"Let's... live here, together..."

The Old Man eventually STARES DOWN at the fire between himself and Link.

OLD MAN

"Oooh... oh: the light: it is fading, fast..."

Link SIGHS quietly and STARES INTO HIS LAP. He LOOKS UP at the man with PITY.

LINK

(whispering respectfully)

"No. No, it's already gone out..."

EXT. OLD KASUTO TOWN - AFTERNOON.

Link CHOPS several diseased-looking pieces of wood on a small chopping block some distance from the Grademir house, wielding a very old, RUSTY AXE.

MARIN sits against the ruined wall of a collapsed cabin, emotionless, but with her ARMS CROSSED.

MARIN

"This is unnecessary, is it not?"

LINK

(breathing hard as he chops)

"Suitably heroic, though, right?"

Link gathers together a LARGE BUNDLE of wood chunks he has cut.

LINK

"We'll be on our way immediately. And anyway, an old man deserves a warm fire to sleep beside, doesn't he?"

As Link WALKS BACK towards the house Marin CALLS AFTER him.

MARIN

"And just what, exactly, does 'deserve' have to do with anything, Squire?"

Link STOPS WALKING; he TURNS HIS HEAD to look at Marin, briefly, before again WALKING OFF.

INT. GRADEMIR HOUSEHOLD - (CONTINUOUS)

The Old Man appears to be SLEEPING on his tattered blanket beneath the tiny basement window; Link gently deposits a great armload of firewood beside the fire pit and sets a few logs onto the fire; they SIZZLE AND POP as Link turns to leave the basement.

The Old Man MUTTERES incoherently in his sleep.

OLD MAN

"Whole... of Palace... is endless trap! Call... for help at the Three Eye Rocks..."

Link appears EMBARRASSED by the man's ranting; he SHAKES HIS HEAD as he leaves.

LINK

(whispering)

"No need for that, old man: I walk alone..."

Link EXITS the basement of the house.

EXT. DHISE CAIRN CEMETARY - AFTERNOON.

A very large, unkempt cemetery on an earthy mesa outside of Old Kasuto Town; the town itself is barely visible in the far distance. Many STONE MARKERS and PETRIFIED WOOD CROSSES dot the landscape, although many of these are long since RUINED by time and the elements. The sky is still very overcast, making accurate prediction of the time of day difficult.

Link and Marin walk through the cemetery, Link in the lead. Link MOTIONS AHEAD with his head.

LINK

"The mountain pass opens up just beyond this cemetery; the Palace can't be more than a dozen miles inside the range.

Back in its heyday it must have extended nearly out to here. This place— this 'Dhise Cairn'— it place must be the oldest cemetery in all of Hyrule..."

The pair CONTINUES ONWARD in silence.

A PURPLE MOA PEEKS AROUND the corner of one of the larger stone monuments in the cemetery; it WATCHES as Link and Marin cross the land. We see that part of the CREATURE'S TAIL suddenly becomes translucent, and then nearly

invisible. The creature makes a very faint 'COOING' NOISE (despite not possessing a mouth).

In the FAR DISTANCE behind this moa we see ANOTHER MOA peek its head out from behind a petrified wooden cross.

Link and Marin continue walking, with Marin about ten-feet behind Link. Suddenly, without warning, a TRANSLUCENT BLUR whips past Link, GRAZING his left arm.

Link CRIES OUT in pain and falters to one knee. As the 'blur' passes him we can briefly see the unmistakable outline of the MOA; this soon DISAPPEARS, though.

Link quickly GETS TO HIS FEET and DRAWS HIS SWORD from its sheath. He TURNS AROUND, looking in all direction.

Link FACES Marin, who stares back at Link with little emotion; Link BREATHES HARD, still WINCING with pain.

Suddenly ANOTHER BLUR comes at Link from the side, GRAZING Link's leg; Link SCREAMS and falls to his other knee. As he continues SCREAMING IN PAIN he LOOKS UP with an expression of RAGE.

Link SLASHES HIS SWORD through the air, suddenly revealing one of the purple moas; Link's blade SEVERES part of the creature's tail and the now-visible creature FLIES AWAY with incredible speed, letting loose a very unpleasant 'SCREAM'.

Link notices over a half-a-dozen more 'blurs' moving through the cemetery all around him; he LOOKS towards the other end of the cemetery, and then back at Marin. He CRADLES HIS WOUNDS and SNARLS.

LINK

"We don't stop!"

MARIN

(shaking her head)

"It wouldn't do one to go back; not now. It is far too late for that, Squire..."

Link begins SPRINTING through the cemetery; Marin follows close behind him.

SLOW CAMERA PAN OUT, rising into the air; we see a TREACHEROUS, SMOKY, LAVA-FLOW-FILLED pathway through the Dawnland Stairs. This area is HER DIVINE FOOTSTEPS.

EXT. OVERHANG ENTRANCE TO THE GREAT PALACE - LATE AFTERNOON.

The sound of DISTANT LAVA FLOWS, accompanied by the rising sound of HEAVY BOOTS scuffling unsteadily over rough terrain. These footsteps grow LOUDER over time.

Link stumbles into this overhang area. He moves through the clutter, appearing EXHAUSTED. Marin follows behind Link, stepping CASUALLY through the clutter of the palace; unlike Link she does not appear to be fatigued at all.

Link's clothing is SCORCHED and TORN in several places and he bears several DRIED, BLOODY WOUNDS along his body. He BLEEDS from several fresh, superficial cuts to his body and his face and he LIMPS due to a deep wound on his right leg.

Link stumbles past a mess of broken columns, most of them bearing fierce BIRD-LIKE carvings on their tops. BROKEN STATUES line the corridor he moves through; many are FACELESS and bear gigantic BIRD'S WINGS. LINK'S BOOTS brush against a busted MUSIC BOX lying in pieces on the floor; this causes the device to sputter and then it erratically plays a short mess of disjointed notes (these are the FIRST 10 NOTES OF THE 'GREAT PALACE THEME').

Link STARES DOWN at the box, emotionless, as it sputters out and goes quiet. When it finishes Link LOOKS FORWARD, drawing a breath, and he WALKS FORWARD. Marin watches him do this, her face EMOTIONLESS.

Link slowly DRAWS HIS ARMING SWORD from its scabbard and descends a debris-filled staircase.

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (CONTINUOUS).

Link reaches the bottom of a staircase on the far side of the room; Marin follows close behind.

Link crosses around the black water at the room's center, looking down the various pitch-black corridors as he moves. Several STRANGE, UNINTERPRETABLE NOISES sound from throughout the structure. Link NOTES these with unease.

Link reaches the MASSIVE STONE TABLE and circles it slowly.

SLOW ZOOM on Link's face as he stares at the table; his BREATH soon becomes visible in the air. Link JAMS HIS SWORD into a pile of debris, leaving the hilt protruding from the rubble. Marin WATCHES as Link approaches the table and CLIMBS UP ON TOP OF IT. He LOOKS AROUND the dank chamber again, uneasily, before slowly RECLINING and resting his head against the table, lying fully supine.

CLOSE-UP on Link's head; Link BREATHES uneasily, although his breathing soon becomes more relaxed. Link CLOSES HIS EYES and breathes more quietly.

SLOW ZOOM, from above, on Link's head. As the camera closes on Link's face the STRANGE, UNINTERPRETABLE NOISES from afar become slightly more pronounced. Link (eyes still closed) suddenly 'catches' a breath as the camera reaches his face.

Cue a TWO-SECOND-LONG 'GLITCH'.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES: they OPEN with a start and Link stares ahead, WIDE-EYED. The sound of LEAVES RUSTING in a gentle breeze and BIRDS TWEETING replaces the lonely sounds of the palace.

Link is standing in a field of PINK FLOWERS; many brilliant white trees sway in the distance. Across from Link (about fifty feet ahead) Princess Zelda stands with her hands folded neatly in front of her- SMILING demurely.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES: Link's eyes WIDEN. In the reflection of his eyes we see the hint of a DIFFERENT FIGURE standing before Link: someone wearing BRIGHT WHITE instead of purple.

Link's breathing QUICKENS; the man appears extremely ILL AT EASE. Suddenly, without warning, Link DOUBLES OVER in pain; all around him the PINK FLOWERS begins CHANGING COLOR, turning to a more ASHEN HUE as they quickly begin dying.

CUE A SEVEN-SECOND LONG 'GLITCH'; during this glitch we can hear, in order, Link's previous lines "...suitable heroics...", "...do anything for that smile...", and then the phrase "I can..." repeated over and over again, on top

of itself as the lines jumble into a mess of sound. The VISUALS included in this glitch all feature random scenes of MARIN from throughout the film (ie: her 'highlight reel' from the preceding events in the film).

Link (still kneeling in the field of flowers) GRIPS HIS BODY, SCREAMING in pain while STARING DOWN; we see a FIGURE DRESSED IN WHITE walk forward and stand before him, although we cannot see this person's face. We hear MARIN'S VOICE.

MARIN

"Hope to heaven I hit your heart, 'Squire'. Ease your passing, huh? I suppose— otherwise— you'd suffer..."

LINK

"N- no... this isn't right... this isn't... it can't be... I... I..."

Link CRADLES HIMSELF even tighter, SCREAMING IN AGONY.

CUE A TWENTY-SECOND LONG 'GLITCH'; this glitch is filled with scenes from AFTER the events in Fo-Láraich Cavern, however they are ALTERED from their original form. In ONE SCENE Link WALKS THROUGH the grassland outside Urooban Village, but he walks ALONE, without Marin behind him; when he DEFLECTS the toy crossbow bolt we see (in a JUMP CUT) Link VIOLENTLY DRAGGING the boy KENNETH from the grass and SNARLING at him (as opposed to his more 'playful' manner of dealing with the children as previously shown). ANOTHER SCENE shows Link SITTING ON THE CABIN STEPS, watching the festivities in the distance at the Urooban Gazebo, however Marin is NOT sitting behind him as she was in the scene as previously shown. ANOTHER SCENE shows Link SITTING BEFORE HIS FIRE on the Aged Veil trail, however Marin is NOT sitting across from him as she was in the scene as previously shown. ANOTHER SCENE shows Link entering the overhang entrance to the Great Palace as he did in the very beginning of the film (ie: by HIMSELF and NOT with Marin following him). Throughout this glitch we hear an INDISTINCT, DISTORTED VOICE continually repeating the same unintelligible phrase; this phrase becomes louder and slightly more understandable as the glitch progresses until finally, at the very end of the glitch, the phrase is revealed to be Link's previously spoken line "I can kill..."

This glitch CUTS-OUT to reveal Link, still kneeling in the dying flowers around him. He slowly LOOKS UP. CLOSE-UP on Link's face: it is filled with a look of HORROR.

Link EXHALES very slow and loud.

INT. FO-LÀRAICH CAVERNS (EASTERN MAW) - EARLY MORNING.

Link and Marin RACE through the uneven terrain of the cavern HAND IN HAND, dodging rocks and debris as they make their way between sheer drop-offs and craters.

Suddenly the ground beneath them CRUMBLES and falls partly away; Link and Marin go TUMBLING across the ground with Link coming to rest against the cavern wall and Marin continuing to TUMBLE closer to a crater edge; the girl nearly falls off before CLUTCHING a piece of limestone rock protruding from the soil.

MARIN'S HANDS begin to SLIP off the rock; we see her suddenly LOSE HER GRIP, however LINK'S LEFT HAND suddenly catches MARIN'S RIGHT WRIST, holding her up.

Link GRUNTS as he stares down at the girl; MARIN'S LEGS SCRAMBLE on the edge of the crater, struggling to maintain footholds. Just as Link uses his right hand to PUSH BACK off the rock and pull Marin up the soil beneath the girl's legs CRUMBLES, causing Marin's full weight to be put upon Link; LINK'S RIGHT HAND slips on the rock he is using as a brace and then the man FALLS FORWARD; his right arm is TANGLED-UP against another protruding rock in such a way that it is under enormous pressure and put at the point of breaking (ie: he is unable to use it, and just about to 'lose' it).

ROCKS continue careening down around the pair and especially near the CAVERN'S MAW, which is now barely visible from Link and Marin's vantage point; it is clear that this cavern exit is in imminent danger of being SEALED entirely.

Link SCREAMS in PAIN as he struggles to hold Marin up; he puts in ENORMOUS EFFORT trying to pull the girl up, but in his current position he is unable to. Link and Marin STARE AT EACH OTHER with identically URGENT looks.

Eventually Link LOOKS OVER at the collapsing cavern entrance with PANICKED DESPAIR; when he looks back down at Marin his face is far more 'COLD'.

Marin suddenly notices this look; her face becomes STONY, with a VERY 'INJURED' expression to it. The girl CLOSES HER MOUTH and then LICKS HER LIPS.

MARIN

"Go then, 'Squire'; go for your girl. Gotta be a decent knight, do you not? I won't live on another's charity, you know..."

Marin rolls off this line SLOWLY, with DEATHLY CALM, imparting a SARCASTIC EDGE to many of the words.

Link again LOOKS at the cavern maw, DESPERATE, and then BACK DOWN at Marin; the man suddenly ROARS WITH EFFORT, PULLING BACK with all his might. He manages to pull up enough to DIG HIS FEET into the ground.

(NOTE: at this point the same 'GLITCH' that was performed earlier during this scene starts-up again, however after a very brief moment the glitch is 'FIXED' (ie: it CUTS-OUT very quickly with a DISTINCT TONE and allows the rest of the scene to continue, uninterrupted)

(FURTHER NOTE: There are NO MORE 'GLITCHES' for the duration of the film)

Link's feet suddenly SLIDE OUT from under him; Link LANDS HARD on his face with Marin still DANGLING over the edge of the precipice.

Link again STARES at the collapsing cavern before him, looking down at Marin one last time.

Marin LOOKS UP at Link without significant emotion on her face.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S HAND HOLDING MARIN'S WRIST; Link suddenly RELEASES HIS GRIP.

Marin FALLS through the darkness of the cavern crater.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on Link's LEFT EYE.

Marin TUMBLES through the darkness of the pit, first STRIKING HER FOREHEAD against an outcropping of stone, which propels her body into the opposite wall of the pit, where her CHEST is torn by a sharp stone outcropping.

Marin's body LANDS HARD on the watery stone floor of the pit; her RIGHT SHIN is revealed to be horribly fractured, poking clean through her skin.

The woman STARES UP from the bottom of the pit, apparently LIFELESS.

Link STARES DOWN at Marin in HORROR; he suddenly LOOKS UP, remembering the collapsing cavern.

Link SPRINTS for the cavern exit, disappearing into the light outside before the exit is sealed.

INT. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER IN THE GREAT PALACE (INDETERMINATE)

Link, still kneeling in the field of dying flowers, slowly REMOVES his hands from his body; he STARES UP at the figure before him.

MARIN stands before Link, looking down at the man with SCORN; there is an 'UNDERCURRENT' to her voice, a 'second voice' beneath it which, though strangely beautiful, 'clashes' with Marin's tone, producing an ODD EFFECT.

THUNDERBIRD

"Just what kind of knight is this, then?"

Link SNARLS.

LINK

"Y- you're not Marin! Marin is dead; I couldn't help her..."

THUNDERBIRD

"You couldn't... be... held... up!"

Link WINCES in pain; we see all the wounds Marin suffered in her fall (the forehead bruising, slashed chest and fractured shin) all slowly begin to APPEAR on Link's body.

LINK
"N- no..."

TUNDERBIRD
"Couldn't... go... back..."

The figure of Marin KNEELS before Link, seductively RUNNING A HAND beneath Link's chin.

THUNDERBIRD
"And now? It's far too late for that, Squire!"

Link BOWS HIS HEAD, TEARFUL, as he STRUGGLES with pain.

THUNDERBIRD
"Killer..."

LINK
"Yes..."

Link CONVULSES on his knees; we see that the figure before Link is no longer Marin, but PRINCESS ZELDA. This time, however, she does not appear healthily, but rather GREATLY ILL and EMACIATED. The figure SMILES DEMONICALLY. When it speaks we hear Zelda's voice, but with the same strange 'UNDERCURRENT' that the Marin-figure bore.

THUNDERBIRD
"Murderer..."

LINK
"Y- yes..."

Link LOOKS UP at the figure; the BRUISE on his forehead is growing more and more SEVERE. He suddenly appears SHOCKED to see Zelda in place of Marin.

There is a SHORT PAUSE.

THUNDERBIRD
"You cannot face death when it's in the eyes of a loved one, but you can deliver it upon an innocent without remorse..."

Link GRITS HIS TEETH.

THUNDERBIRD

"...out of selfish desire! Just to save your beloved. This
is a weight you cannot outrun!"

Link LOOKS DOWN again; when he RETURNS HIS HEAD TO LEVEL we see him SNARLING with a DEFIANT LOOK.

LINK

"This... is my weight..."

THUNDERBIRD

"Too late, you learn that..."

LINK

(whispering)

"I... have to face that weight..."

MARIN is again revealed to be standing before Link, not Zelda; the figure begins BOWING CLOSER to Link's body.

LINK

"I have to carry that weight!"

Link ROARS with anger and PUSHES the Marin figure away from him; he STRUGGLES TO HIS FEET, UNSHEATHING HIS SWORD.

LINK

"This is my own responsibility! You can't punish me for that. Goddesses condemn me: If I'm damned, then I'm damned—and I accept that— but whatever you are, you have no right to punish me! I might just get it from Them, but you cannot give me hell for this!"

The Marin figure's eyes 'DISSOLVE' into strange, bird-like orbs and it suddenly OPENS ITS MOUTH and 'ROARS' with a LOUD, 'BIRDLIKE' SCREAM.

Link SCREAMS as well, EXTENDING HIS SWORD defiantly.

Link suddenly AWAKENS on the stone table in the ceremonial chamber; MARIN is lying beside him, STROKING his body seductively.

Instantly Marin's figure DISAPPEARS into a mess of fog and mist; THUNDERBIRD'S SILHOUETTE is clearly visible in this thick soup.

Link OPENS HIS EYES, DRAWING A BREATH; he begins ROLLING OFF THE TABLE quickly. All the damage to his FOREHEAD, CHEST, SHIN and BACK (ie: the 'Thunderbird-inflicted injuries') rapidly FADE AWAY, leaving Link in the same shape he was in when he first entered the Palace.

The 'BIRDLIKE' ROAR sounds loud enough to SHAKE the entire chamber.

Link SCRAMBLES over to the SEALED DOOR beside the ceremonial table; he quickly PULLS HIS ARMING SWORD out of the debris it is stuck in and TURNS, SQUARING HIMSELF defensively.

The ghostly visage of THUNDERBIRD circles through the room, producing its birdlike SCREAM as it moves; Link PREPARES for combat, although eventually his face becomes CALMER.

LINK
(whispering)

"I... do know who you are. How... how can I know that? Is it... a two-way street?"

Link WATCHES as Thunderbird moves through the chamber in LIVID ARCS.

LINK
"Is a watcher also watched? Or did I just hit a nerve in you: something that's a little too close to home? Have I... have I so pierced you... Aguichees?"

At this last word (Thunderbird's proper name) the Thunderbird produces a PIERCING SCREAM of RAGE.

Link LOWERS HIS SWORD.

LINK
"A lover is a coward, you know, when it comes to losing what they have... or having to give it up. Ever known a 'spell' that was so difficult to break, huh? Ever known someone you damn-well needed to be with but couldn't, not in the long run, anyway? What would you do? What could you do? And just what did you do, Aguichees?"

The ghostly specter of Thunderbird FLIES STRAIGHT through the air on a collision course with Link.

Link STANDS IN PLACE as the creature prepares to strike him.

LINK
(whispering)
"It's not so easy a thing, is it?"

Link does nothing as Thunderbird COLLIDES with Link head on; the creature PASSES through Link's body, SCREAMING as it moves, and after doing so it DISAPPEARS down a dark side corridor in the chamber.

Link DROPS HIS SWORD and SLUMPS TO HIS KNEES with his HEAD BOWED. He remains like this for about five seconds.

Eventually Link LOOKS UP, staring forward at the ceremonial table. His eyes are PUFFY and RED. A SINGLE TEAR trains down his left cheek.

LINK
(whispering)
"Marin... I- I'm so sorry..."

Several 'BLOCKY', CLICKING NOISES explode from the MASSIVE CLOSED DOOR behind Link; Link GETS TO HIS FEET quickly, facing the door. He watches as the entire door DROPS about an inch downward. After a short pause the entire massive door lazily FALLS FORWARD, landing in front of Link with a deafening CRASH and kicking up copious amounts of DUST.

Link STARES down the darkened corridor beyond as the dust clears; the man RETRIEVES HIS SWORD from the ground, takes his SHIRT from the rubble beside the ceremonial table and STEPS FORWARD into the darkness.

INT. HALL OF GLASS (CONTINUOUS)

A massive corridor with multi-leveled balconies and walkways perched above it on either side; the many levels above disappear into darkness. All through the corridor many MIRRORS, SILVER PLATES and other reflective objects rest in decorative arrangements; almost all of them are so tarnished or covered in dust that they reflect nothing. Only a very few number of mirrors remain that can reflect anything of consequence.

Link WALKS through this great corridor, SWORD DRAWN and again WEARING HIS SHIRT, his eyes SKEWED suspiciously. Eventually we hear a faint sound: a SMALL CHILD'S HUMMING. This sound grows LOUDER as Link moves through the corridor.

Eventually Link rounds a bend: a small girl (appx. 10-years-old) kneels on the stone floor in front of Link; she wears a GREEN TOP and SKIRT. This clothing is KOKIRI DRESS, and the girl is a KOKIRI FOREST CHILD.

The girl is squatting over a very large FIRE ANT MOUND. Hundreds of fire ants mill around the mound and the floor around it; they crawl all over the girl's legs, nearly up to her knees.

The girl LOOKS UP at Link with a BRIGHT SMILE.

FOREST CHILD

"Hey, Mister. You been traveling much?"

Link SQUINTS at the girl in disbelief.

LINK

"Of all the things I expected to find on the other side of the door this might be the most unlikely. And that's saying a lot..."

The girl STANDS UP, TITTING playfully.

LINK

"Oh, the Goddesses' sakes, sweetheart: your legs!"

The girl LOOKS down at her legs, which show several WELTS from fire ant bites. She looks back up at Link.

FOREST CHILD

"Serves me right for playing with them: it's just desserts, don't you think?"

LINK

"I think you should get away from that mound."

FOREST CHILD

"But I helped them build it!"

LINK

"They're tearing you up, little one: pretty soon they'll eat you whole."

The Forest Child CONSIDERS the mound.

FOREST CHILD

"I know that's true. But I love playing with these little guys so much, though! But... now the mound has been built, you know..."

The girl LOOKS UP at Link with a SERIOUS face.

FOREST CHILD

"...maybe me sticking around is just gonna mess things up for them, do you think? It's been built, so the coolest thing to do is just watch what they do with it, huh?"

The girl STARES AROUND the fire ant mound; she appears to be unable to walk out of the mound without damaging parts of it.

Link walks over to the girl, standing just outside the mound, and BENDS DOWN, PICKING HER UP and moving her a few feet away.

LINK

(whispering)

"Goddesses' Sakes: you'd let those damn things eat you alive just because you're afraid of kicking up a little dust?"

Link DEPOSITS the Forest Child well-away from the gigantic mound. He then KNEELS DOWN and prepares to brush the ants off her legs; the girl PULLS AWAY from him.

FOREST CHILD

"No: it's okay. I can take the stings; they can't take the swatting..."

Link CONSIDERS the girl QUIZZICALLY. He LOOKS DOWN the corridor, noting all the branching paths that stretch endlessly around the corridor.

The Forest Child LOOKS UP at Link.

FOREST CHILD

"You're not late you know; not yet. You're right on time..."

Link LOOKS DOWN at the girl SUSPICIOUSLY.

The girl EXTENDS ONE HAND up to Link.

FOREST CHILD

"I really wish we could play together some more, but you've got an appointment, now..."

Link slowly TAKES THE GIRL'S HAND; the Forest Child SMILES good-naturedly and begins walking off down the corridor, hand-in-hand with Link.

As the pair moves through the corridor we can briefly see small REFLECTIONS of this scene in the few mirrors that are not completely covered in dust and debris. In these brief reflections we see that Link is not holding hands with a small child but, instead, is holding hands with a LITHE-BODIED BLUE HUMANOID— female in appearance and adult in size— who vaguely resembles a human-sized fairy without wings, but with additional embellishments to her body.

This is the GOLDEN GODDESS NAYRU.

(NOTE: This reflection is NOT entirely obvious to see.)

The Kokiri Forest Child LEADS Link down a certain series of connecting hallways in the Palace; SKIPPING and HUMMING to herself as she leads him by the hand.

INT. THE THRONE OF FARORE'S WISDOM (CONTINUOUS)

Eventually the pair STOPS at the entrance to a DARK CORRIDOR; it is a two-tiered hall and 'COMPLICATED-LOOKING' STAIRS lead down to the ground floor; an inaccessible SECOND-FLOOR WALKWAY spans this area to either side. The massive room is very EMPTY-LOOKING, although a very small, UNIMPRESSIVE DIAS sits near the end of the ground floor bearing a COBWEBBED PEDESTAL. A set of DUSTY, ORNATE DOORS rest against the wall behind this.

Link LOOKS into this gloom; the FOREST CHILD TUGS at Link's hand and LOOKS UP at him, her face SERIOUS. She LEANS UP

towards Link's face, WHISPERING loudly while SHAKING HER HEAD.

FOREST CHILD

"Don't be afraid of why you are, okay?"

Link STARES DOWN at the child QUIZZICALLY.

The Forest Child RELEASES her grip from Link's hand. She TURNS down a different corridor and begins SKIPPING off, HUMMING to herself once again.

Link GESTURES for her to stay, but he stops short of calling after the girl; eventually Link gives up on attracting the child's attention and focuses his attention on the room before him.

Link slowly begins DESCENDING the stairs.

As Link walks we can barely hear the PIERCING SCREAM of Thunderbird coming from behind Link, training down some infinitely distant part of the Palace; Link STARTS in surprise at this, but then realizes the sound's extreme distance from him. He CONTINUES down the stairs.

A MAN'S VOICE sounds from one side of the room, coming from one of the inaccessible SECOND-FLOOR WALKWAYS.

MAN

"Boobrie. Poor, poor boobrie..."

Link again STARTS at this new sound; he LOOKS around the gloom of the massive room, but cannot find the speaker.

MAN

"The Thunderbird is such a persistent thing. Misery loves company, they say, and Thunderbird is a most miserable creature. Strange that you passed through its talons unharmed. Whatever great sin lurking within you must be a most trivial thing. Either that or you're a cold-hearted bastard, indeed..."

Suddenly, without warning, several rows of LARGE BRAZIERS spring to life with a roaring BLAZE; braziers on each side of the room appear to light themselves, synchronized and in pairs, from one side of the room to the other.

Link instantly DRAWS HIS SWORD.

MAN

"The brain is not a muscle, you know..."

Link quickly LOOKS OVER at the balconied walkway and spots the speaker: a brown-robed man of about 50, BALD, with a very short, very well-manicured gray beard.

MAN

"...so would you please not use it like it is?"

LINK

(scowling)

"Who are you?"

The Man SMILES knowingly.

MAN

"Who are you?"

LINK

"I asked first!"

MAN

"Mmm. Yes: and out of the two of us, here, I'm the only one who actually knows the answer to that question, I think..."

Link's scowl DEEPENS.

MAN

"...unless you think... differently?"

LINK

"My name is Link, of North Castle."

The Man's smile WIDENS.

MAN

"My name is Sagart..."

Sagart HOLDS UP one finger, TAUNTING.

SAGART

"...and one of us has just told a very naughty lie!"

LINK

"Why are you here, old man?"

SAGART

"Why are you, little whelp?"

Link STARES DOWN at the ground beneath the stairs, ROILING with anger.

LINK

"I'm kinda sensing a pattern, here: if you were down here with me, old man—"

Sagart SPREADS HIS HANDS, SMILING, and he NODS.

SAGART

"One of several reasons that I'm not. But tell me: why are you down there in the first place, hmm?"

LINK

"This Palace contains the wisdom of the Golden Goddess Farore."

SAGART

(scoffing)

"So it's 'wisdom' you've come to seek?"

LINK

"That's right. Am I gonna have some kind of problem with you?"

SAGART

"On the contrary! If it's 'wisdom' you want..."

Sagart GESTURES to the ground-floor of the chamber and the UNIMPRESSIVE DIAS near the far wall.

SAGART

"...you'll find me most accommodating!"

Link FOLLOWS the man's gesture with his eyes. He LOOKS BACK UP at Sagart.

LINK

"What is that, down there?"

SAGART

(leaning forward over the balcony and GRINNING eerily)
"That? That is your destiny, down there. You can still turn around, little whelp: go back 'home' to North Castle and be miserable, rather than go down there and be laid low. You won't be happy with the 'wisdom' that awaits you, here..."

Link CONSIDERS the man with DEFIACE.

SAGART

"...but since we both know exactly what you're going to do..."

Sagart PULLS HIMSELF back from the balcony and begins SLOWLY WALKING down the walkway.

Link FOLLOWS HIM, descending the stairs and WATCHING the man with his eyes. Eventually he stops at the foot of the stairs (on the ground floor) as Sagart continues walking the length of the room from above. He CALLS BACK to Link.

SAGART

"I'll unlock that door down there for you when you're ready..."

LINK

"When is that, exactly?"

Sagart CHUCKLES as he disappears from view, continuing along the walkway above.

SAGAR

"When you've damn-well wised up, little whelp!"

After a SHORT PAUSE Link SHEATHES HIS SWORD, still looking up at the balcony with ANGER; eventually Link turns his attention to the UNIMPRESSIVE DIAS on the other side of the room.

Link SLOWLY APPROACHES the COBWEBBED PEDESTAL at its center.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the PEDESTAL TOP, with Link greatly out of focus in the background, still slowly approaching it: we see an INTRICATE-LOOKING MOUTHPIECE belonging to some type of woodwind instrument. It is clear that this mouthpiece

has been REASSEMBLED from many disparate pieces after having been SHATTERED at some point in the past.

This is the MOUTHPIECE TO THE OCARINA OF TIME.

Link STARES DOWN at this mouthpiece quizzically; he slowly REACHES OUT to touch the object, HESITANTLY FINGERING it, as one might test a hot stove top. Finding it 'touchable' Link then TAKES IT IN HIS HAND and HOLDS IT UP to his face; he EXAMINES the thing closely, ROTATING it in his hand, still bearing a greatly quizzical look.

After several seconds of examining it Link begins to consider the object with more FAMILIARITY; he slowly BRINGS THE MOUTHPIECE up to his own lips, resting it against his mouth. After a short pause Link CLOSES HIS EYES and then 'TOOTS' the faintest of notes from the mouthpiece.

(NOTE: as the mouthpiece is NOT attached to its designated instrument, this sound is not at all polished or 'tonal' in any respect).

Suddenly part of this mouthpiece GLOWS very faintly; Link DOUBLES OVER and RETCHES, as if he is choking. The delicate mouthpiece FALLS BETWEEN HIS FEET, where it once again SHATTERS into many pieces.

Link FALLS TO HIS KNEES, BUG-EYED, and GASPS frantically.

At this point, for at least 30 seconds, we can hear SEVERAL 'ECHOING', OVERLAPPING LINES FROM THE PREVIOUS FILM ("THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME"). The specific lines used are unimportant, except that they present a 'representative' view of that film, given the few lines that can be used in the time-frame allotted.

DURING this cacophony of lines Link COVERS HIS HEAD, as if in pain, and by the end of it he has CURLED UP in a sort of squatting FETAL POSITION. He MAKES A 'STRANGLER' NOISE after these lines are done echoing, finally LOOKING UP with a SHOCKED, PAINED LOOK on his face. A small TRAIN OF BLOOD curls down on of HIS NOSTRILS.

Link makes a loud STARTLED GRUNT.

Link PUTS HIS HANDS OVER HIS FACE, as if in SEVERE PAIN; he MOANS, gripping his face, and when he finally removes his

hands from his face we see a BRIGHT TRAIN OF RED FLUID running down Link's LEFT CHEEK; his left eye, although PUFFY AND IRRITATED, is no longer red, but BLUE, perfectly matching his right eye.

Link RESTS HIS HEAD against the cobwebbed podium, appearing very TIRED; when he finally LOOKS UP he appears to be in a DAZE.

The sound of a KEY CLICKING IN A LARGE LOCK comes from the door in front of the podium; the door SQUEAKS OPEN very, very slightly.

Link CATCHES HIS BREATH, WIPING the RED SLIME off his face. He GETS TO HIS FEET and DRAWS HIS SWORD.

Link APPROACHES the door, HESITANT, and PULLS IT OPEN. He steps into the next room.

INT. BANQUET HALL IN THE GREAT PALACE (CONTINUOUS)

A massive banquet hall, complete with many PILLARS lining each side of the room; TATTERED PURPLE CURTAINS run between these pillars, faded and bleached out from their original royal purple hue.

DUSTY BRAZIERS sit at regular intervals, flanking a MASSIVE TABLE that spans a good portion of the room; these braziers are LIT and cast EERIE SHADOWS all around the room.

SAGART sits at the head of the table on the other side of the room. He is EATING from a small plate of MEAT; at Link's arrival he SIPS from a goblet of WINE, WIPING HIS CHIN genteelly with a disheveled napkin.

Sagart SMILES at Link devilishly.

SAGART

"Well met, 'Pale Rider'..."

Link PARTS HIS LIPS, as if to speak, but then STOPS; he finally responds after a pause.

LINK

"My name is Link... of- of the Kokiri..."

SAGART

"Fills in at least few blanks for you, doesn't it? Turns out your life didn't start when you were 8-years-old; it just restarted..."

LINK

"Zelda... and I... we saved Hyrule 15 years ago: we defeated Ganondorf--"

SAGART

"No: you set him up to be 'dealt with' by much stronger hands."

LINK

(whispering)

"Divine judgment..."

Sagart NODS begrudgingly.

LINK

"Ganondorf took the New Kingdom, but that wasn't enough for him. It was never enough: he was always after the power of the Golden Goddesses--"

Sagart's BROW ARCHES; he SMILES amusedly. He rolls off his next line VERY SLOWLY, placing an UNDUE AMOUNT OF EMPHASIS on the LAST SYLLABLE.

SAGART

"Goddess-es?"

Sagart LEANS BACK in his chair, PRESSING HIS FINGERS together.

LINK

"He didn't get what he wanted--"

Sagart HOLDS THREE FINGERS UP.

SAGART

"There were three bodies in which divine favor rested, were there not? And, in fact, there are still three bodies in which divine favor still rests, are there not?"

Link GRITS HIS TEETH.

LINK
"No..."

Sagart SMIRKS.

SAGART
"Strip off that shirt, why don't you?"

Sagart TAPS HIS OWN STERNUM.

SAGART
"A branding iron only erases that which can be seen, you know..."

Link SNARLS, LOOKING OFF to one side.

SAGART
(shaking his head slowly)
"What's inside you, though? What's inside all three of you? Indelible, no matter how hard you might try..."

LINK
"What? What the hell is it?"

SAGART
"Something Ganondorf meant to monopolize; something he needed to possess, in full. He meant to be the last one standing when the smoke cleared fifteen years ago— when the 'judgment' of the Sages was handed down— but he wasn't..."

Sagart again HOLDS THREE FINGERS UP, WAGGING them suggestively.

SAGART
"There were three surviving vessels at the time of the Sages' judgment; three conflicting... 'interpretations' of that divine thing Ganondorf so coveted. Wisdom, courage, and power: they are not mutually exclusive, but they are... 'volatile' in the presence of each other..."

Link STARES DOWN, CONFUSED.

SAGART
"One power divided three ways: one great force of divine nature split into three separate pieces, like a wishbone torn asunder. Not quite what the prince of thieves planned for, was it?"

LINK

"Ganondorf's irrelevant: he's locked in the Sacred Realm."

SAGART

(shaking his head again)

"No: not anymore, at least."

Sagart LEANS FORWARD over the table.

SAGART

"Do you not remember the unease on the Old Shore? 'Shadows moving through the Western Woods and a foul breath on the wind'? Even if you can't feel him, the rest of the land certainly can..."

Link's EYES BULGE.

LINK

"Ganondorf... is on the move?"

SAGART

"At this point it would be more accurate to just call him Ganon..."

LINK

"How do you know all of this? And just who the hell are you?"

SAGART

"I told you: my name is Sagart—"

LINK

"But who are you? I've had enough of your fucking riddles—"

SAGART

(irate)

"Watch your mouth: little whelp!"

The man RECOVERS from his outburst, CALMLY saying his next line.

SAGART

"Most people are in the habit of cleaning up their tongues when they talk to a priest. So I'm told, at least."

LINK
"You're a priest?"

SAGART
"A chief priest, in fact; I'm a follower of the Golden Goddess—"

Sagart PAUSES; he SMILES meekly and SHAKES HIS HEAD.

SAGART
"Well, that's irrelevant, really."

Sagart SLOWLY RISES out of his seat, gently PUSHING the disheveled dining chair back into place.

SAGART
(looking to one side, preoccupied)
"In point of fact I suppose that I'm a heretic, now. A priest is a vessel of peace, after all, but I suppose I've betrayed all that."

Sagart looks DIRECTLY AT LINK; his demeanor is icily calm.

SAGART
"Releasing that monster Ganon from his captivity may be the very first violent act I've ever performed in my entire life..."

Link's EYES BULGE.

Sagart MOVES TOWARDS Link, walking very slowly around the dining table.

SAGART
"...and striking Zelda, the Princess of Hyrule, with her current illness might just be the second..."

Link's gaze goes ICY; he GLOWERS at the man.

SAGART
(looking Link up and down, emotionlessly)
"...so, then, I suppose killing you will be the third."

Link LEVELS HIS SWORD at the man, SNEERING.

SAGART
(whispering, with dry lips)

"Could I see it, please? The flower, I mean..."

Link appears SHOCKED. He PAUSES in confusion.

SAGART

"Or you could simply strike me down, losing any and all hope of ever reviving your beloved princess. I told you, whelp: the brain is not a muscle. Do not use it as if it were..."

Link STARES at the man in CONFUSION.

Sagart slowly PRODUCES TWO VIALS from his cloak: one contains glowing liquid that is DEEP RED in hue, and the other liquid that is DEEP ORANGE in hue.

SAGART

"You shouldn't refuse such a simple request, especially when the man making it has a certain power over life..."

Sagart BOBBLES the RED VIAL in one hand.

SAGART

"...and death..."

Sagart BOBBLES the ORANGE VIAL in his other hand.

The man then LOOKS DOWN at the vials in his hand, BLINKING in 'MOCK CONFUSION'.

SAGART

(smiling devilishly)

"...or... or was it the other way around? It's so hard to remember! It's just a little drop into the nose, either way, but they're two very different ways to go, aren't they?"

Link SNEERS.

SAGART

(replacing the vials in his cloak)

"The flower? Please?"

Link slowly pulls the SMALL RED FLOWER from his cloak.

Sagart SMILES upon seeing the flower; he WALKS FORWARD and slowly TAKES IT from Link's hand; Sagart SITS at a chair on

Link's side of the table, TWIRLING the flower in between his fingers. He LOOKS UP at Link.

SAGART

"This thing was stark and radiant white once: fifteen years ago— a lifetime ago— when I dropped it on the chest of a snoring little boy in his makeshift camp outside of Castletown. You were on your way to the Old Shores, you know, and you were well on your way to turning this thing as red as blood..."

Sagart continues TURNING THE FLOWER over in his hand; we see that the petals of the flower no longer bear any whiteness on their outer edge: it is COMPLETELY RED.

SAGART

(whispering)

"...and now it is..."

Link STEPS IN FRONT of the seated man, still BRANDISHING his sword before him.

Sagart suddenly LOOKS UP AT LINK, annoyed by the sword in his face.

SAGART

"Foolish brute! You continue posturing, so? Do you know how easy it would have been, fifteen years ago, just to pluck you up off the road? Do you have any idea how tempting it was, standing over you, to think I could just drag your little 8-year-old body out of bed and fillet that sacred power right out of your tiny, bleeding loins?"

Link COCKS HIS HEAD; he very slowly SITS opposite Sagart at their section of the table.

LINK

"So why didn't you?"

SAGART

(looking away, EVASIVE)

"You... were an innocent, then. Or at least you were dyed as such. A cheap coat of varnish for your memories, 'Pale Rider', and a child's heart set inside you. You were still a wolf in sheep's clothing, but it was good clothing. I had no stomach for such butchery..."

LINK
"But now?"

Sagart TOSSES THE RED FLOWER on the table between them; the petals WILT quickly, and after several seconds the flower turns to ASH.

SAGART
"You're no innocent, now."

Sagart LEANS BACK in his chair, apparently more AT EASE.

SAGART
"Besides, if I'd taken you then I'd have only gotten one part of the Sacred Power for my trouble. No: no, I devised a much more... 'complete' method for handling the situation. It took years of study, and all my discipline, but my plan came into being when I finally loosed Ganondorf from his captivity, setting him upon Hyrule, and my plan will end when I run him down like the wild pig that he is; any diluted 'powers' he now possesses are no match for my own."

Sagart GRINS demonically.

SAGART
"And in the end letting you go was no great loss: not only did I always know where you were, but I always knew just how to get you to come to me, obedient little boy that you are!"

Link's FACE FALLS.

LINK
(whispering)
"Zelda?"

SAGART
"Who else but her 'champion' would come to her rescue? True, though: you were so very thick at first- I came to wonder if you would ever set out across the water!- but a little 'prodding' from a helping hand managed to set you in the right direction!"

LINK
(whispering)
"The Throne... Nimh?"

Sagart LEANS FORWARD, his face SERIOUS.

SAGART

"You... you should know that when I come to her— when I stand beside her helpless body and butcher her open— rend that Sacred Power from her soul— it will be the most difficult moment of my life."

Link stares at Sagart with EQUAL SERIOUSNESS. He, also, LEANS FORWARD.

LINK

(whispering gravely)

"You should know, Sagart, that I'll be providing you with the most 'difficult' moment in your life!"

Link SETS HIS SWORD-BEARING HAND on the table top; his sword's blade SCRAPES over the table surface.

Sagart regards the blade with BEMUSEMENT.

LINK

"So just what are you looking to do with this 'Sacred Power', huh? Sounds very special, if it exists, that is. A man could become a god himself, couldn't he? What is your plan? You want to kill off the Golden Goddesses, or do you just want to be an equal with them? Wanna know what it's like to get one of them 'between the sheets'?"

Sagart suddenly RASPS HIS FISTS against the table, LIVID.

SAGART

"Blasphemy!"

Link SMILES DEMONICALLY.

LINK

"Yeah: that's true. What does that matter to a heretic, though?"

Sagart's FACE FALLS.

LINK

"You're disobeying the will of whatever Goddess you worship, aren't you?"

SAGART

"I... I am, yes."

LINK

"Hope whatever you're getting in return is worth it--"

SAGART

(shaking his head)

"There is nothing in the bargain for me. Once I've reaped the Sacred Power from your bodies my plan will be at an end, as will my usefulness to my... to my cause: I will leave Hyrule--"

LINK

(scoffing)

"How?"

SAGART

"How does any creature that draws breath leave this world?"

LINK

(laughing)

"What: you'll die? Do you mean you'll kill yourself? Can't hope for a very good afterlife, can you, Sagart? Heretics don't go to heaven--"

Sagart NODS solemnly.

SAGART

"Yes, I know that."

LINK

"--in fact, I was always taught that heretics went to hell: you'll be damned for what you've done--"

Sagart NODS; we see a SMALL TEAR curling down one side of his face, although it remains STONY.

SAGART

(still NODDING, with a very matter-of-fact tone)

"I'm prepared for that."

Link speaks after an AWKWARD PAUSE.

LINK

"Why?"

Sagart appears to RECOVER HIS COMPOSURE; he STANDS, slowly, SMILING WISTFULLY. He PACES slowly across the other side of the table, all the while being watched very carefully by Link, who also RISES out of his chair.

SAGART

"This... 'Sacred Power': it is an absolute, the grand essence of wisdom, the pure savagery of courage and the strange mystery of power. But it was never meant to be divided, never meant to be separated, bastardized into some... 'triple force' like it is, now. That is not its nature."

LINK

(muttering)

"Seems natural enough to me: three Goddesses, three Powers..."

Sagart IGNORES Link's words.

SAGART

"Its nature is to unite, to join together..."

Sagart STOPS WALKING, GLARING at Link.

SAGART

"And so your natures are to unite, all three of you. Your destiny is to come into conflict with each other: wisdom, courage and power—"

LINK

"Speaking as someone who's taken Ganondorf down once, I could say 'bring it on'. I'm courageous enough, aren't I?"

SAGART

(appearing SHOCKED)

"What? Courage? You mean, you actually think that you..."

The man ROLLS HIS EYES, CHORTLING.

SAGART

(whispering, as if to himself)

"Pitiable children: cradling toys they can't possibly begin to understand!"

LINK

"Hey! If the Goddesses want their damned 'Powers' back then they can have them: Zelda and I don't damn-well want them!"

SAGART

"But the prophecy is clear: you'll all use them!"

LINK

"Don't you give me any magical nonsense about 'prophecy'!"

SAGART

"Think back, boy: what was it she told you, hmm? What weapon was there that could stay 'any disaster, for he who would wield it as a master'?"

LINK

(staring down, CONFUSED)

"Zelda's... legend? Dhise Slaighre? It's just a blade, Sagart! I've used the damned thing to kill all manner of creatures, great and small: it is not a magical sword! It's just another instrument of death! Other than a few... 'idiosyncrasies' it's brutally ordinary and it works just like any other sword, blunt end to pointy end!"

SAGART

(shaking his head)

"No, no, no: as thick as you are, there's always the possibility that you, or someone else— who knows?— will somehow learn the way to properly use the Master Sword—"

LINK

"Just as well, then!"

SAGART

(SCREAMING the first three words)

"That can't happen! This... this is the point where I... 'differ' in opinion from my Goddess: she would see Dhise Slaighre used to stay the cataclysm. She would see balance return to the Sacred Power through that sword's... activation."

LINK

"You're arrogant to think you know her will to begin with!"

SAGART

"I know her nature; it's enough to deduce her will."

There is a LONG PAUSE.

LINK

"Damn it: what is it? What is the Master Sword?"

SAGART

(rolling his words slowly)

"Why, it's 'just another instrument of death'. That's all."

Sagart suddenly becomes VERY BUSINESSLIKE and 'PROFESSIONAL'; the man produces a VERY SMALL DAGGER from a pocket in his cloak.

Link SQUARES HIMSELF defensively.

Sagart produces a small VIAL OF GLOWING FLUID and sets a few drops onto the dagger's blade.

SAGART

"You're very well acquainted with 'death', are you not, 'Link of the Kokiri'? You certainly dispense it well-enough, do you not? And you ride in its very wake, well-enough, but it's such a traumatizing thing, isn't it?"

Sagart BURIES THE TIP OF THE BLADE into his LEFT THUMB.

SAGART

"You may think that the consequences of your actions have been damaging enough for you- hang anyone who might have a cross word to hurl in your direction!- but there's a certain hypocrisy: Thunderbird confronted you with your worst sin- the worst sin you can remember, anyway- and I have no doubt that it was a doozie. And yet you bested the poor Boobrie's best efforts: it couldn't drag you down into death, could it? No, because you have inside you what it takes to be immune to its 'charms': you've got a bastard's heart beating beating in your chest! You have a 'justification' for anything, don't you?"

Link SNARLS.

SAGART

(shrugging casually, 'jovially')

"You could argue with me, but you'd lose: I happen to know this as a fact, because it's precisely the reason why I'm immune to the creature's assaults. Otherwise the real

estate here would be far less... 'desirable' a thing. Where your great personal 'justification' for you actions rests on unparalleled love for another creature, and your desire to see her live, my 'justification' rests on..."

Sagart suddenly SMILES after a pause, as if appreciating an IRONIC point.

Sagart REMOVES THE BLADE from his thumb; A COPIOUS LINE OF BLOOD gushes from the wound, but moving in an IMPOSSIBLY NARROW and PERFECT STRAIGHT LINE towards the floor.

SAGART

"Well, let's just say we're really not so different, you and I. But let's put these childish games to rest, if we can: I'd like to reacquaint you with someone who might just want to have a little chat about your past 'actions'. You might have quite a time justifying yourself to him..."

The TRAIN OF BLOOD gushing from Sagart's thumb soon begins 'PARTING' around some invisible outline of a figure; the figure grows from two-dimensionality to 3-D as the blood makes a nebulous outline of it: the figure appears to be vaguely humanoid, about the size of an average 8-year-old child.

Suddenly, as all this blood gushes around it, the figure TAKES SHAPE; all the blood cascading around its body is 'absorbed' into the figure.

CUT AWAY to Link's SHOCKED FACE.

CLOSE-UP on the naked upper body (ie: above the navel...) of a young, blue-eyed, towheaded boy; his head is BOWED slightly and his eyes are CLOSED. He wears a SMALL RED EARRING in one ear.

This is YOUNG LINK.

Adult Link GASPS in surprise.

LINK

"L- little guy?"

SAME CLOSE-UP on Young Link's bare upper torso and face; suddenly the boy's EYES OPEN and he LOOKS UP, facing forward.

A GREEN SHIRT suddenly 'appears' on Young Link's chest, quickly 'oozing' from his skin and solidifying into true fabric (consequently the rest of the boy's body is now clothed, as well).

Young Link considers Adult Link with a COCKED HEAD; his neutral demeanor quickly changes into a DEEP SCOWL.

The boy HOLDS UP A SMALL WOODEN INSTRUMENT (this is the FAIRY OCARINA); he SMASHES the instrument on the floor, then he YANKS OUT the small RED EARRING from his ear, TOSSING it aside, as well; it CLANGS noisily on the floor as it bounces away.

Adult Link considers the boy with ALARM.

Sagart LOWERS HIS HAND, which until now has been hovering over the child; the man's thumb NO LONGER BLEEDS; Sagart TOUSLES the boy's blond locks, RUNNING HIS HAND back through the child's hair as he walks behind him.

SAGART

"Such a devious thing: bringing a lamb to slaughter..."

Young Link suddenly RIPS AN ORNAMENTAL OYSTER KNIFE from a leather sash on his shirt, BARING HIS TEETH.

SAGART

"...how rare is it that the lamb gets an opportunity to return the favor?"

Young Link 'FLIPS' his knife in a stylistic display; as he does so his body suddenly 'EXPLODES' with greasy BLACK TENDRILS. When these tendrils clear the boy is replaced with a TOTALLY BLACK ('FEATURELESS'), ADULT-SIZED CARBON-COPY OF ADULT LINK'S BODY, also bearing a pitch-black ARMING SWORD in place of the oyster knife.

This is LINK'S SHADOW (or simply THE SHADOW).

Sagart STEPS BACK from the figure, FOLDING HIS HANDS genteelly.

SAGART

(to Adult Link)

"What are you: speechless? Well, actions do speak louder than words, and you two have so very much to discuss, don't you. I think you'll find our little friend here to be most... 'talkative'..."

The Shadow suddenly CHARGES Link, brandishing its black arming sword.

Link quickly KICKS UP the dining chair beside him so that it FLIES UP in the air in front of him; he VIOLENTLY SHOVES the chair with his hands, sending the thing CAREENING INTO the Shadow.

The Shadow 'GUARDS' with its sword; the chair HITS THE CREATURE dead center and SHATTERS into pieces, but only manages to slow the creature down for a moment; the Shadow soon RESUMES its sprint towards Link.

Link SQUARES HIMSELF defensively.

The pair engage in a PROTRACTED SWORDFIGHT with Link mostly on the defensive; Link LOSES GROUND throughout the engagement, being pursued around the dining table by the seemingly unstoppable Shadow. During this fight Link uses certain defensive tricks (throwing out the long tablecloth at his opponent, wielding a chair as an impromptu shield, using the flatware and plates on the table as projectiles) however he is clearly outmatched.

Eventually Link takes refuge BETWEEN TWO COLUMNS, DUCKING DOWN against a narrower part of the hall and BLINDLY SLASHING his sword forward at the Shadow's legs; the Shadow's only path of attack is directly to the front. Eventually the Shadow appears to RELENT; it CEASES its attack, CONSIDERING Link with a TILTED HEAD.

Link, PANTING HARD and BLEEDING from some superficial combat wounds, also STOPS SLASHING the air and LOOKS BACK at the Shadow, wary.

The shadow TURNS AROUND suddenly, FACING AWAY from Link; it EXPLODES INTO BLACK MIST and DISAPPEARS.

Link PEEKS OUT from between the safety of his two columns, LOOKING AROUND hesitantly for the figure. As Link TURNS HIS

HEAD back and forth we very suddenly see the SHADOW'S HEAD: it is standing directly behind Link.

The Shadow SLOWLY RAISES its sword.

Link's face SCRUCHES and the man SHIVERS involuntarily; suddenly, and at the very last possible minute, Link WHIPS AROUND and BLOCKS the Shadow's attack, knocking the Shadow's sword-bearing hand against one of the columns.

Link immediately COUNTER-ATTACKS with a series of blows; he forces the Shadow's guard down and then quickly RUNS THE CREATURE THROUGH its stomach, pushing the hilt of his sword hard enough to DRIVE the thing backwards and against a far wall of the banquet hall.

During this time the Shadow DROPS its BLACK SWORD.

The Shadow (with Link's sword penetrating its stomach) comes to rest against this wall; Link PANTS HARD, still holding the creature up against the wall.

The Shadow LOOKS UP at Link with its featureless face; it then SLUMPS and its head FALLS BACK against the wall.

Link CLOSES HIS EYES, SIGHING hard.

Suddenly, without any warning, the Shadow violently HEAD-BUTTS Link, sending the dazed man SPRAWLING back past the columns and against the banquet table.

The Shadow casually DRAWS Link's sword from its midsection with its right hand and then artistically 'FLIPS' the sword through the air; it deftly lands in its left hand. The Shadow then PURSUES Link back over to the banquet table, apparently not at all injured from its wound.

Link, still REELING from the head-butt, stumbles backwards, FALLING on the ground; he CRAWLS away quickly, but slows, he FLIPS AROUND on the ground and then, upon seeing the Shadow standing over him, begins 'CRAB-WALKING' backwards, desperate.

Sagart CHORTLES softly; he stands behind the Shadow and casually FOLLOWS the creature as it walks forward in pursuit of Link.

SAGART

"Poor Thunderbird just didn't have had the strength to make you feel the weight of your sins, boy; damnable bastards like you and me need something stronger to bring us down. It isn't enough for the dead to be given a voice, is it? No: in order to reach vile creatures like us the dead must be given a hand!"

Sagart's face becomes more IMPASSIONED; he speaks as if making a PLEA:

SAGART

"This is what's owed to you, child: accept it! Just accept it... just go to sleep!"

Link ROLLS AWAY from the Shadow; he retrieves the Shadow's BLACK SWORD from the ground beside the banquet table. He SNARLS at the Shadow and SWIPES at the creature, managing to inflict a SUPERFICIAL WOUND to the creature's RIGHT ARM.

The Shadow makes an 'ODD BARKING' sound and its black body FLASHES WITH LIGHT along the wounded arm; it BACKS UP, standing ten feet away from Link, who READIES HIMSELF in a defensive posture.

BLACK SILT can be seen TRAINING from the Shadow's wounded RIGHT ARM, much like blood pouring from an open wound.

After a BRIEF PAUSE the Shadow LUNGES at Link; the pair LOCK SWORDS and then awkwardly 'TUSSLE', each unable to effectively swing their sword.

The pair end up FALLING on top of the banquet table, ROLLING over each other several times; the Shadow comes up on top of Link, BRANDISHING Link's sword and holding it snug against LINK'S THROAT.

Link SCOFFS, smiling.

LINK

"Shadows aren't supposed to come out on top, are they?"

Link is revealed to be holding the Shadow's BLACK SWORD up against the Shadow's STERNUM, just as the Shadow holds Link's sword against his throat.

LINK

"Well: there it is. You can kill me... I can kill you..."

The Shadow COCKS ITS HEAD.

SAGART, standing about 20 feet away, near the columns,
CHORTLES.

SAGART

"As if the dead have a fear of death!"

LINK

(to the Shadow, whispering)

"But, then, I never wanted to kill you..."

Link VERY SLOWLY pulls the BLACK SWORD away from the Shadow's sternum and RESTS the blade on the table beside him. He RELEASES his grip on the black sword.

LINK

"...and I still don't want to, now. I used you- that's true- and it was wrong of me to do what I did. You ended up dead because of me, and I can't undo that. I would, if I could, but I can't--"

The Shadow PRESSES THE BLADE down closer against Link's throat, drawing a thin line of BLOOD.

Link WINCES, but does not react.

LINK

"Maybe this would take the sting out. If it gives you even a fraction of an ounce of peace, then you're owed it..."

Link STARES the Shadow in the face, INTENT.

LINK

(whispering)

"But consider why I did what I did: why we did what we did. You know what we were trying to do, and who we were trying to do it for. If you really think that it wasn't worth it... that she wasn't worth it... and that what I'm trying to do now still isn't worth it... then you can do what you need to do. You can take the sting out..."

Link RESTS HIS HEAD on the table, RESIGNED. He still LOOKS at the Shadow INTENTLY.

LINK
"After all: you are owed."

There is a LONG PAUSE.

Finally the Shadow 'SHORES-UP' its hold on Link's body, ADJUSTING itself. It presses LINK'S SWORD even deeper against Link's throat; Link CLOSES HIS EYES and TURNS HIS HEAD calmly.

The Shadow slowly RETRIEVES its BLACK SWORD, using its free hand, and holds BOTH BLADES against Link's head.

There is a BRIEF PAUSE.

Suddenly the Shadow PUSHES ITSELF off Link's body and TOSSES Link's Sword away; it holds its own BLACK SWORD in its left hand and BRANDISHES it over Link, menacingly.

Then, with no hesitation, the Shadow swiftly IMPALES ITSELF on its own black sword, stabbing itself in the CHEST.

SAGART instantly SCREAMS with pain; his body SPASMS as if he is also feeling the effects of this wound.

The Shadow slowly FALLS TO ITS KNEES, STARING FORWARD; BLACK 'TENDRILS' again EXPLODE OUT from the creature's body, and when they part we see YOUNG LINK kneeling in the Shadow's place, naked (NOTE: use 'strategic' camera angles, here...) with the OYSTER KNIFE'S HILT protruding from his CHEST.

Adult Link slowly RISES off the banquet table and LOOKS DOWN at the kneeling boy.

The boy LOOKS UP at Link wordlessly; Link looks back down at the child with a SORROWFUL LOOK.

Young Link slowly FALLS BACKWARD, landing hard on the stone floor. As soon as he lands a MASSIVE COLUMN OF VERTICAL, WHITE LIGHT erupts from the spot, EXPLODING UPWARD very quickly.

The SHOCKWAVE from this blast is enough to blow most of the FLATWEAR and PLATES off the banquet table and send Link TUMBLING off the table.

EXT. FAR, FAR DISTANT VIEW OF THE GREAT PALACE (CONTINUOUS)

We see the remaining superstructure of the Great Palace itself, surrounded by smoldering lava flows and desolate, 'moon-like' terrain; much of the palace appears to be carved directly into the rock of the Dawnland Stairs. The sun is SETTING far off in the distance.

At one distant section of the structure we see a NARROW COLUMN OF WHITE LIGHT erupt from the ceiling, training out very far into the sky (NOTE: the NOISE accompanying this blast is not deafening and 'incredible', but rather faint and echoing, as a massive explosion would sound in reality if viewed from very, very far away).

INT. BANQUET HALL IN THE GREAT PALACE (CONTINUOUS)

The white column of light begins FADING quickly; eventually Link STUMBLES OVER to the place where Young Link fell. He reaches the spot immediately after the column of light DISAPPEARS, finding only the CHARRED REMAINS OF THE OYSTER KNIFE sitting on the ground; he PICKS THIS UP, considering the blade, and the blade quickly TURNS TO ASHES in his hands.

A STRANGLED GRUNTING SOUND brings Link out of his daze; he LOOKS UP and notices SAGART, who is STUMBLING against the columns along the far wall of the hall. The man HOLDS HIS CHEST and GROANS painfully, DOUBLING OVER with a sputtering SCREAM.

Link CONSIDERS THE MAN with little emotion.

The massive column of white light has made a GIGANTIC HOLE in the ceiling of the banquet hall exposing MANY FLOORS ABOVE the hall itself. Very soon the BIRDLIKE SHRIEK OF THUNDERBIRD can be heard echoing throughout the upper floors of the palace.

Link LOOKS UPWARD upon hearing this noise, but he doesn't react with any strong emotion.

Eventually the GHOSTLY TRAIN OF THUNDERBIRD'S BODY dives into the banquet hall from the floors above. It CIRCLES throughout the room several times, 'buzzing' Link's body a

few times as it flies, but it refrains from touching the man.

After a moment of flying around in circles the Thunderbird heads STRAIGHT FOR Sagart; the man still WRITHES IN PAIN, standing against the columns, and he can barely manage to LOOK UP before the creature IMPACTS him. Sagart is THROWN beyond the columns, SCREAMING HORRIBLY, and he lands several feet away, his body ROLLING along the floor and coming to rest against the wall.

Link RUNS OVER to Sagart as Thunderbird DEPARTS the room; a SMALL QUAKE develops in the ground and PIECES of the floors above begin RAINING DOWN through the hole in the ceiling.

Link gently ROLLS SAGART over so the man is on his back; we see the man's face is becoming EXTREMELY GAUNT very quickly and his HAIR is starting to fall out in clumps (NOTE: These rapidly-developing symptoms are meant to mimic the symptoms of Zelda's illness).

As Link rolls the man over we see the RED and GREEN vials of liquid lying intact beside the man's body.

Sagart MOANS hoarsely.

Link CONSIDERS the crumbling palace around him; the ENTRANCE to the banquet hall is quickly becoming surrounded by debris and it is clear that it will soon be SEALED.

Link GRABS the neckline of Sagart's cloak, LEANING FORWARD to speak with the man.

LINK
"Sagart... Sagart!"

The old man GIBBERS, CHOKING on spittle in his mouth.

Link's grip on the man's cloak SLIPS; he accidentally BARES much of Sagart's now-diseased chest. We can clearly see a TATTOO on his sternum: it is a stylish rendering of a LITHE-BODIED NUDE WOMAN STANDING WITH HER WRISTS CROSSED OVER HER BREASTS. Her wrists appear to be BOUND.

This is a depiction of the GOLDEN GODDESS NAYRU.

Link NOTES this tattoo with SHOCK; his eyes NARROW in anger and he SNARLS.

LINK
"N- Nayru?"

Link again GRABS Sagart's cloak and DRAWS THE MAN CLOSER to his face; Link SCREAMS at him.

LINK
"Nayru?"

SAGART
(hoarse whisper)
"You fools: you'll kill her. You'll all... kill her..."

Link again LOOKS at the tattoo with DEEP CONFUSION; the tumbling rocks all around him bring him out of his daze.

LINK
"You're not long for this world, Sagart. You're about to die, damn it, and Ganondorf is somewhere out there. You'll never be able to harvest our powers- not now- so there's no point anymore: there's no reason to make her suffer!"

Sagart CONSIDERS Link's words with an INEFFABLE EXPRESSION.

Link MOTIONS to the two vials of liquid with his head.

LINK
"Come on, Sagart: which one is it? Which one do I use to save her?"

Sagart LOOKS at the vials without moving; he suddenly begins COUGHING BLOOD and GREEN BILE.

LINK
"Damn it, Sagart: you say that you're not a man of violence, but that your hand's been forced? That's all over, now. Make the very last act of your life something you're not ashamed of! Die the way you claim you lived: with compassion!"

Sagart LOOKS UP at Link very slowly.

LINK
"Sagart!"

The man slowly TURNS HIS HEAD, considering the vials. Eventually, and very slowly, Sagart GRIPS the RED VIAL in his hand. He barely manages to HAND IT to Link before his wrist falls, limp, on the floor.

SAGART

"That... in there... is what is needed..."

LINK

"This will save Zelda? This will cure her?"

SAGART

"That... in there... is what... is... needed..."

Sagart COUGHS again, CHOKING, and then he DIES.

LINK

"Sagart? Sagart!"

Link LAYS the man's body down; he then bundles BOTH GLOWING VIALS in his cloak and MAKES HIS WAY to the banquet hall's exit.

As he moves, however, LARGE STONE BLOCKS fall, effectively SEALING the banquet hall entrance.

Link LOOKS AROUND THE ROOM, frantic, but can find no other exit.

A set of FADED PURPLE CURTAINS against one far wall of the crumbling hall RUFFLE unnaturally, CATCHING Link's eye. Link races over to investigate this, finding a SMALL PASSAGEWAY behind the curtains; Link quickly SETS OFF down this passage.

INT. 'BACKROADS PASSAGES' OF THE GREAT PALACE (CONTINUOUS)

These narrow, branching passages, much like alleyways in a congested city, are designed for easy access to many other sections of the palace and as 'shortcuts' to otherwise distant places in the palace network, however (again, much like alleyways) they are not particularly navigable to someone who is unfamiliar with them. NARROW SHAFTS OF LIGHT illuminate the corridor at very irregular intervals, streaming like light from closed doorways.

The Great Palace continues CRUMBLING as Link RACES through the narrow passages.

Link pursues a SMALL, SHADOWY FIGURE through the network; we can barely see this figure at all, however after several twists and turns throughout the corridors (and many CLOSE-UP DUTCH CAMERA ANGLES later) it is clear that the figure is wearing KOKIRI BOOTS and a KOKIRI SKIRT (ie: Link is pursuing the KOKIRI FORST CHILD).

The light of the SETTING SUN soon meets Link's eyes and he RACES for the palace exit. As Link runs the corridor OPENS UP into a somewhat uncultivated natural cavern environment (ie: an area that was not carved into a proper stone chamber by the palace residents). CAMERA FOCUS on Link, in profile, as he runs: we can see the KOKIRI FOREST CHILD sitting on top of a small rock formation in the background off to Link's side at one point (NOTE: this is not entirely obvious and takes some attention on the part of the viewer to see).

Link does NOT notice the girl; he is focused on escaping the crumbling tunnel.

EXT. DAWNLAND STAIRS CLIFFSIDE PEAK (CONTINUOUS)

An unremarkable mountain cliff face about halfway up one of the mid-sized peaks in the Dawnland Stairs.

Link EMERGES from a small, barely-noticeable HOLE in the mountainside; he STUMBLES OUT into the open, SHIELDING HIS EYES from the bright red light of the setting sun.

There is a DEEP RUMBLE from inside the cavern; an 'explosion' of air and tiny debris 'burps' out of the cavern (indicating that it has been TOTALLY SEALED at some point along its length). This explosion of air KNOCKS LINK DOWN; the man GRUNTS in pain, gently ROLLING onto his back and lying SUPINE in the evening light.

After several seconds the BIRDLIKE SCREAM OF THUNDERBIRD can just barely be heard echoing through the rocks (this sound is almost inaudible).

Link PANTS HARD, catching his breath.

LINK

(panting whisper)
"Goodnight... Aguichees..."

Link PRODUCES both the RED and ORANGE vials from his cloak, holding them in the sunlight. Eventually he REPLACES them in his cloak.

LINK
"I think I need... a little nap..."

Link SLOWLY LAYS HIS HEAD BACK, gently resting it on the ROCK GROUND below; as soon as the back of his head TOUCHES the rock, however, he STARTS, LEAPING UP with an EXCLAMATION.

He CALMS DOWN quickly, SHAKING HIS HEAD.

LINK
"On second thought... maybe I've slept enough for now. I could probably stand to stay awake for a little while..."

Link ORIENTS himself and finds a PATH to begin making his DESCENT down the Dawnland Stairs.

LINK
(muttering)
"...maybe for the next fifty years, or so..."

INT. GREAT HALL OF NORTH CASTLE - EARLY MORNING.

An indeterminate number of days since Link's escape from the Great Palace; ZELDA still lies in state on her pedestal, apparently not dead, however not breathing either, in the same condition as before.

A LONE KNIGHT patrols around the pedestal.

The sound of HEAVY OAK DOORS bursting open STARTLES the guard; he stands expectant as HEAVY BOOTS tromp into the massive great hall.

LINK walks through the hall, but his features are nearly black, silhouetted by RISING SUNLIGHT from the garish morning outside (he is almost similar in appearance to LINK'S SHADOW from before). The KNIGHT SHIELDS HIS EYES, DAZED by the brightness.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #3
"Halt: who goes there!"

Link CONTINUES WALKING, not responding.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #3
"Stand and declare yourself, by order of the King!"

Link finally reaches the Knight, who by this time has UNSHEATHED HIS SWORD. The Knight STARTS when he recognizes Link.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #3
"S- Squire? Is that you? Is that Squire Link?"

LINK
(very seriously)
"Most of him, at least."

HYLIAN KNIGHT #3
(smiling warmly)
"I- well, by the Goddesses, Squire! Being in the bloody Threadbares for the better part of a month! We didn't think we'd ever see anything of you again! Did you really journey so long?"

LINK
(shaking his head slowly)
"No. The path itself was very short: seven days through, and seven days back, that's all."

The Knight SQUINTS, quizzical.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #3
"But... then why..."

LINK
"Cause some roads can't be measured in furlongs, and on some roads it takes all the running you can do just to stay in one place..."

Link LOOKS BEHIND the Knight, at the unconscious Zelda, and STEPS AROUND the man.

The Knight quickly MOVES TO BLOCK LINK'S PATH. He RESTS ONE HAND on Link's shoulder.

HYLIAN KNIGHT #3

"Sorry, Squire: the King's ordered no one approach Her Highness at present, on advice from the old wizard, 'lest a person's touch interfere with her treatment', so he says."

Link calmly LOOKS DOWN at the hand on his shoulder, and then back up at the knight.

INT. GREAT HALL OF NORTH CASTLE (CONTINUOUS).

HYLIAN KNIGHT #3 lies UNCONSCIOUS on the floor of the great hall, his sword and scabbard strewn about messily.

Link sets the RED and ORANGE vials down on a small oak table beside Zelda's body. He retrieves an ORNATE GLASS 'DROPPER' from a tray beneath this table and holds it in one hand.

Link STARES DOWN at each of the vials, red and orange, looking at them INTENTLY.

After a significant PAUSE Link chooses one of the vials.

(NOTE: due to the camera angles used in this scene the audience is UNABLE TO SEE which of the two vials Link has chosen).

Link BRINGS THE GLASS DROPPER up to Zelda's NOSE, setting the slender tube directly upon one of her nostrils, and EXPELS a few drops of the fluid (NOTE: it is impossible to tell what the COLOR of the expelled fluid is).

Link REMOVES the dropper, WATCHING the woman intently.

After a prolonged period of time nothing appears to happen; Link LEANS OVER her, slowly, facing the woman NOSE-TO-NOSE. He FEELS EITHER SIDE OF HER THROAT, slowly, and after a moment SMILES DEEPLY and WARMLY.

Link RAISES HIS HEAD and KISSES ZELDA'S FOREHEAD, very slowly, before STANDING UP and stepping back from the pedestal.

Link SURVEYS Zelda's body again, one last time, before TURNING and setting off for the great hall's exit.

TIGHT CAMERA FOCUS on Zelda's body as Link is seen walking away in the background (very out of focus): slowly, and with rising intensity, we see that Zelda is beginning to BREATHE once again.

INT. BAGU'S OFFICE CHAMBERS - MORNING.

As Bagu ENTERS HIS OFFICE we see a great BUSTLE of people moving around outside his door, ANIMATED and CHATTERING excitedly. When Bagu CLOSES his door all outside noise is diminished, replaced by calm.

Bagu SETS A SCRAP OF PAPER on his desk and moves to a bookshelf, SCANNING it dutifully. After a moment he appears UNEASY; upon turning around he notices a FIGURE sitting in one of his chairs, facing away from him, staring out into the COURTYARD OF DHISE SLAIGHRE.

Bagu COCKS HIS HEAD, curious, but then SMILES BEGRUDGINGLY.

BAGU

"Not very like you, hiding in plain sight, is it?"

Link, sitting in the chair, TURNS HIS HEAD to look at Bagu.

LINK

"Don't have much of a choice, these days..."

Bagu SQUINTS at the man, noticing his now perfectly-matching BLUE EYES. Bagu APPROACHES Link, KNEELING DOWN beside the man; he gently RUNS ONE HAND over the left side of Link's face.

BAGU

(whispering)

"Goddesses, boy!"

LINK

"Not exactly..."

Link FACES FORWARD, again STARING out into the courtyard.

BAGU

"We got word just hours ago. She... was very hungry, if you can believe that..."

Link DOES NOT RESPOND.

BAGU

"The old wizard has it coming to him, I hear: an acre of gold, among other things. Whatever nostrum he concocted for Her Highness did its job. Or so the King believes, anyway..."

LINK

"What do you believe, Bagu?"

Bagu also STARES DOWN at the courtyard.

BAGU

"I 'believe' that old bag of bones had another 'magic potion' at the ready for her every two days, at least: each one more expensive than the last. Each one as ineffective as the last. What was different about this time?"

Bagu LOOKS DOWN at Link.

BAGU

"As for me? I believe..."

LINK

"I need to see Nimh. I need to speak with him."

Bagu SCOFFS, WALKING to his desk. He RETRIEVES the SCRAP OF PAPER and HANDS IT to Link.

BAGU

"That... will be difficult..."

Bagu produces the DISTINCTIVE CRYSTAL DECANTER (from pg. _____); it is now COMPLETELY EMPTY of the shining fluid it once held.

BAGU

"We found him in the barracks this morning, with this still pressed to his lips..."

Link LOOKS UP from the note, EYEING the crystal decanter.

BAGU

"It seems that a few drops, administered over time, can suspend life, but an entire bottle, consumed all at once, can take it, as well."

LINK

"Did... did he say anything, or leave any other words?"

BAGU

(shaking his head)

"Just that, and his burial request: he wants a grave beneath a leafless oak tree, filled-in with rocks instead of dirt and marked by a broken pillar of limestone."

LINK

(whispering)

"A heretic's burial..."

Bagu NODS slowly. He speaks after a PAUSE.

BAGU

"Well, was he?"

Link SNAPS OUT of his light daze.

LINK

"What?"

BAGU

"Was Nihm a heretic as well as a traitor?"

Link LOOKS DOWN, uncertain.

LINK

"I... don't know. He says he was, so..."

Link DISCARDS the scrap of paper, RESTING HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS; he SIGHS softly.

Bagu KNEELS beside Link's chair, staring at the man.

BAGU

"I believe you, my boy..."

Link LOOKS OVER at Bagu, quizzical.

LINK

"I never said anything about—"

BAGU

"Your lips didn't. But your face..."

Link slowly LOOKS AWAY from Bagu.

BAGU

"They say that the greatest journey a hero can take is one where he learns not so much the secrets of the world, as it is, or even the secrets of others, but the secrets inside himself. The longest travels expose the greatest inner truths: that's the real adventure. So they say, at least..."

Link BOWS HIS HEAD.

BAGU

"You're tired, Link, and I think you're humbled, as well. Tell me: what did you find out there in the Threadbare Lands? What... 'truths' did our young hero learn for himself?"

Link RETURNS BAGU'S GAZE, but with apparent difficulty; he LOOKS AWAY once again.

LINK

(whispering clearly)

"I learned that I'm not a hero... I'm just a knight..."

Bagu NODS appreciatively. The man STANDS and WALKS to the far side of his office; he retrieves a YELLOW CAPE from a shelf and returns to Link, DEPOSITING it in the man's lap.

Link STARES DOWN at the yellow cape without emotion.

LINK

"Zelda deserves someone like me to protect her— to keep her safe. But..."

Link FINGERS the cape's fabric.

LINK

"...she deserves someone better than me to make her happy— someone who can't, or won't, do the things that I'm willing to do. These things: they need to be done, but they don't need to be a part of her life..."

Link continues STARING down at the yellow cape; eventually Bagu TURNS to leave the room, but Link CALLS AFTER HIM.

LINK

"Do you remember... when I was younger?"

BAGU

(smiling wistfully)

"I think you were several years younger when you set out from here just a few weeks ago..."

LINK

"During the night, before I'd come of age to be in the barracks, when they'd douse the perimeter fires all around North Castle. Do you remember that?"

Bagu's face becomes more SERIOUS.

BAGU

"Yes, I do."

LINK

"Even then, there wasn't a whole lot of things that could reduce me to a crying mess of a thing—"

BAGU

"You were afraid of the dark; that's all..."

Bagu LEANS AGAINST one of the arms on Link's chair.

BAGU

"...and you chased that fear out of you well-enough, didn't you? All that damn spelunking you do: you're of the type that confronts their fears— that turns their weaknesses into their strengths— and I've always known that about you. That's one thing that makes you special, and one of the things that gets you into so much trouble..."

Link LOWERS HIS HEAD even more.

BAGU

"You know that you're of the type that lives through, Link."

LINK

"Do you remember what you'd do for me, when it got dark?"

BAGU

(smiling)

"What: all those bedtime stories? Didn't think you still remembered any of that. Silly stuff, yeah, but if it took your mind off the darkness for a while, well, it was time well spent..."

Link LOOKS UP at Bagu; his eyes are PUFFY AND RED.

LINK

"There's a darkness, now, Bagu... it's getting very dark outside..."

Bagu slowly KNEELS beside Link's chair.

BAGU

"So, what story will it be, my boy?"

Link STARES at Bagu SERIOUSLY.

TIGHT CAMERA FOCUS on BOTH MEN'S FACES, in profile, STARING at each other; the COURTYARD OF DHISE SLAIGHRE is in the far background beyond the window, framed at perfect center, very much OUT OF FOCUS.

LINK

"Tell me everything you know about the Master Sword. Everything. Tell me the legend of Dhise Slaighre..."

Bagu appears SURPRISED; slowly his eyes turn away from Link and focus on the COURTYARD beyond the window.

CHANGE CAMERA FOCUS to the COURTYARD OF DHISE SLAIGHRE.

EXT. COURTYARD OF DHISE SLAIGHRE - LATE AFTERNOON.

The sky is reddish with the first touch of twilight.

Link stands apart from the resting place of Dhise Slaighre; several green-cloaked SQUIRES of the New Hylia Guard PRACTICE SPARRING each other far off to the side of the courtyard (ie: NOT on the actual circular stone slab).

Link wears his YELLOW CAPE; he watches the squires practicing, idle, and eventually turns his attention to the WILLOW TREES behind the courtyard; a flock of GRAY PIGEONS move amongst branches in the trees, settling fairly close to Link.

ONE OF THESE BIRDS, milling innocently with the others, is revealed to be a SEAGULL, not a pigeon. The bird PREENS itself, nonchalant.

LINK STARES at the seagull INTENTLY.

The seagull eventually LOOKS UP at Link, bearing the simple countenance of a bird; it soon TAKES FLIGHT with the rest of the flock, DISAPPEARING through the highest branches of the willow trees.

Link WATCHES the seagull vanish from sight.

The sound of SWORDS DROPPING to the ground snaps Link from his daze. He LOOKS BACK across the courtyard at the squires: every man is ON HIS KNEE WITH HIS HEAD AGAINST ONE KNEE.

PRINCESS ZELDA stands on the opposite side of the courtyard, flanked by her purple-robed attendants.

Zelda STARES AT LINK with intent eyes; the woman walks forward, slowly at first, but a FAINT SMILE creeps up her face. By the time she has passed Dhise Slaighre her eyes are WATERY and her grin is WIDE. She QUICKENS her pace.

Link stands still as the woman runs over to him. At the last second it looks as if Link is about to take STEPS to meet the woman halfway, but then, just as Zelda reaches him, Link FALLS TO ONE KNEE, WITH HIS HEAD AGAINST ONE KNEE.

Zelda stands AWKWARDLY before Link, STARING DOWN at the man. Her smile turns into BEWILDERMENT; she gently TOUCHES the blond locks of Link's hair, but the man does not move from his curled-up kneeling position.

Zelda's bewilderment slowly turns to SORROW.

The woman begins BENDING DOWN, placing a hand on LINK'S SHOULDER, but the man 'TIGHTENS' himself in his kneeling position. Zelda is REPULSED by this action. She CONSIDERS Link with a FRESH TEAR in one eye and then, after a pause, slowly turns away and rejoins her attendants on the other side of the courtyard.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S BENT BACK; we hear the man BREATHING HARD. His body is TREMBLING SLIGHTLY.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP ON THE BLADE OF DHISE SLAIGHRE, with the blade itself horribly out of focus: we see Zelda in the FAR DISTANCE leaving the courtyard with her attendants.

CHANGE CAMERA FOCUS TO THE BLADE OF DHISE SLAIGHRE: Link is seen in the REFLECTION of the blade, still KNEELING. One of Link's shoulders is barely reflected by the blade's edge; a feminine, BLUE-HUED HAND is seen resting on Link's shoulder in this reflection. This hand belongs to NAYRU, but due to the curvature of the blade it is NOT easy to see.

INT. BARRACKS OF THE NEW HYLIAN GUARD - MORNING.

A highly ordered barracks composed of both large common rooms for squires and semi-private quarters for the Knights of the Guard.

LINK is in one of the latter of these, sitting alone on a well-made bed. Morning light streams in from a simple ARCHED WINDOW on the other side of the small room. Link appears to be finishing DRESSING, buckling his sword's SCABBARD to his belt and linking the COLLAR of his yellow cloak around his neck.

Link CHAFES uncomfortably at the ornate dress, appearing to be BOTHERED by the union of clothing around his neck; Link FIDDLES with all this, eventually pulling out MARIN'S CELTIC CROSS from his arrangement of 'dog tags' and other trinkets of militaria around his neck.

Link BOBBLES the heavy cross in his hand, CONSIDERING it with a SERIOUS FACE.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES; the man LOOKS UP at the door of his small quarters.

The echoing sound of METAL HITTING WOOD can be heard.

Link slowly RISES off the bed.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the WOOD FLOOR of Link's quarters: we can see both the DOOR to Link's quarters on one side of the room and the ARCHED WINDOW on the opposite side. MARIN'S

CELTIC CROSS lies on its side between these two points, discarded on the floor, in the CAMERA FOREFRONT.

A SEAGULL is perched upon the ARCHED WINDOW of the room, PREENING idly. Link, having NOT noticed the bird, can be seen CROSSING THE ROOM and exiting through a small doorway on the opposite end of the room.

After a BRIEF PAUSE the song "Under the Milky Way" by "The Church" begins playing with a SOFT FADE IN.

The seagull DEPARTS from the arched window as soon as this song begins; a few seconds into the song (ie: during the guitar interlude) a FLOCK OF SWIFT-MOVING SEAGULLS races past the window.

IMMEDIATELY CUT TO BLACK as these seagulls pass the window.

A NOTE ON THE CLOSING CREDITS:

The screen should REMAIN BLACK and empty for several more seconds before the SONG'S LYRICS come in ("Sometimes when this place gets kind of empty..."); at this point the CAST is acknowledged with scrolling credits, beginning with (in order) Link, Marin and Zelda, and ultimately ending with the two actresses playing the part of Nayru (i.e. in both her "Forest Child" and "Golden Goddess" forms). This scrolling cast list should be timed so that, once all the actors names have left the screen, there is a BRIEF MOMENT of blackness onscreen before the song's first refrain of "Wish I knew what you were looking for..."; immediately when these words are spoken the film's title ("Link's Adventure") is shown in the center of the screen, CUTTING OUT after a few seconds.

After this all the remaining cast and crew are acknowledged as usual.

During the song's BAGPIPE SOLO we FADE IN to a massive, all-encompassing OCEAN scene. The MORNING SUN is rising in the distance, and a SEAGULL is flying gracefully and playfully through the air, chasing the sun. This scene FADES OUT as the bagpipe solo ends, with the camera finally becoming STATIONARY, watching the seagull fly even farther out across the water in pursuit of the sun.

The rest of "Under the Milky Way" plays.

For the remaining credits a SYMPHONIC ARRANGEMENT OF THE GREAT PALACE THEME from "Zelda 2: The Adventure of Link" should be used.

This music should FADE OUT as the credits end.

As the music finally CEASES we see the TITLE, ON BLACK, very close to center-screen but just SLIGHTLY DOWN AND TO THE LEFT (ie: CLOSER to center-screen than in the beginning of the film):

"The Legend of Zelda"

SLOW FADE IN.

INT. PRIVATE CHAMBERS OF THE KING OF HYRULE - MIDDAY.

A luxurious apartment, befitting supreme royalty. This place is the King's sitting room, where much business is performed and much leisure enjoyed.

A STYLISH-LOOKING MULTI-LEVEL 'STRATEGY BOARD' is set up in one corner of this room: upon its gilded gridlines are the 'positions' of every Knight of the Guard in relationship to their duties (indicated by the 'centerpieces' on each level, representing the main 'charge' of the knights on each level).

A CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD gently REMOVES one of the pieces from its place on a certain level, where it had been amongst other pieces surrounding a TINY REPLICA OF PRINCESS ZELDA'S CROWN; the captain places this piece on a DIFFERENT LEVEL of the board; we see the word "Link" carved into the side of this piece.

A RASPY, SICKLY VOICE sounds from the opposite side of the room.

HAGGARD MAN

"Oh, no, no, no: one could never take offense from foolish young hearts, Your Majesty. And all: our youths should have the right to be foolish, on occasion."

The speaker is revealed to be a HAGGARD-LOOKING OLD MAN, his face mostly wrapped in CLOTH and only ONE EYE entirely visible.

The KING OF HYRULE can be heard speaking to this man, although he is NOT SHOWN.

KING

"Nonsense: what, with some foolhardy boy trying to wrest all the rightful glory from a learned scholar such as yourself! It matters not that he is somewhat acquainted with my daughter. Tsk! She's still positively convinced the boy had something to do with your magic, as well. Honestly!"

HAGGARD MAN

(smiling good-naturedly)

"Oh: young hearts are only fit to play at games, Majesty, if you don't mind me saying. Still, of course, I'd like to think that the boy is not playing at some very... 'dangerous' game with the princess... however..."

We can tell from a CREAK and RUSTLE in the unseen chair in front of the Haggard Man that the King is LEANING FORWARD.

KING

"Please: but speak your counsel, valued wizard, and I would hear it! I am in complete debt to your wisdom—"

HAGGARD MAN

(laughing politely)

"Oh, ho! 'Valued Wizard'? You give me far too much praise, mighty King. Please, may I only be a humble servant before you, Your Majesty. Do not dress these old bones up in such an undeserved title."

KING

"You deserve a thousand times grander a title, my friend. But then, the point is made: what am I to call you?"

The Haggard Man's GRIN DEEPENS into an UNSETTLING SNEER.

HAGGARD MAN

"Agahnim."

ON BLACK, CENTER:

"Link's Adventure"

*...wish I knew what you were looking for.
might have known what you would find....*



*...and its something quite peculiar,
something that's shimmering and white.
leads you here despite your destination,
Under the Milky Way tonight...*

AFTERWORD

Suffice to say I'm not a very big fan of Australian rock, but I thought "Under the Milky Way" might be as good a song as any to use during the closing credits. Originally I thought about using Michael Jackson's "Beat It" (continuing a "Jackson" theme that began with OOT's closing credits, where "Smooth Criminal" just seemed to be appropriate, strange as that may sound), however the 'downer' tone of this film's closing scene didn't lend itself to such a rollicking rock anthem...

...yeah: you probably don't want to talk about that as much as some 'other' things about this story, right? I can kinda read your thoughts, or predict them, at least:

You... you just turned Link- hero of one of the most beloved video game franchises of all time- into a murderer-

Well... that's not entirely accurate, you know-

A killer, then...

Um... yeah: that's a touch closer to the truth...

I had the bare-bones outline to "Link's Adventure" in my head long before I ever finished work on "Ocarina of Time". To be honest it only seemed a natural extension: whereas OOT dealt heavily with the idea of Zelda overcoming her own perceived guilt and fallibilities "Link's Adventure" would highlight the opposite: our hero, Link, would be forced to deal with his own personal demons in order to advance the story.

The only difference (and it's a *big* one) is that, in Link's case, those feelings of 'guilt' and 'fallibility' are much, much more deserved, and he damn-well has a legitimate reason for feeling them.

Speaking as someone who has lost a loved one to the slow, rotting decay of illness I can personally attest to the feelings of helplessness and cowardice that can strike a body. There comes a point when you'd feel justified striking God himself dead if it meant easing the sufferer's suffering; there comes a point when you'd feel justified doing *anything* to almost *anyone* in order to help the sufferer even one tiny bit...

...or maybe I'm only speaking for myself. If you've been through such a thing and you *didn't* feel that way deep, deep inside then that might make you a much better person than I am. That might make you more 'evolved' as a *human being*...

...or maybe it makes you more 'cold' as a *person*, but I really can't say for sure. I don't presume to know the right answer to that question.

This story, as fiction, is not in any way 'autobiographical' either: Link's *emotions* may indeed be driven by my own personal feelings (point of fact I can *guarantee* that they are) but his story is his own: this is me providing a retelling of "The Adventure of Link", changed-up for a 'theatrical' experience, and my point is that I don't believe I have strayed from the overall *spirit* of the "Legend of Zelda" series.

You might not believe me, and I wouldn't blame you. At this point in the story, where I leave off with "Link's

Adventure", things are very bleak, and it is much more the 'darkness before the light' (the 'light' in question being a proposed sequel: "Triforce of the Gods"). This afterword section exists entirely as my own justification for what I've done with the Zelda storyline so far because that sequel might never be written.

If I actually do write the sequel it would certainly go a long way in 'redeeming' my own "Legend of Zelda" screenplay series from the darkness it now finds itself in: I honestly don't believe I could make a *better* story to top this one (I personally believe LA is a far superior thing compared to my OOT screenplay, for whatever that's worth), however the final *tone* of said sequel would be exceedingly 'positive'.

All I can say in regard to that 'positive tone' is that the 'Goddesses' would be shown to actually have a plan— a reason for all the suffering endured by the bearers of the Triforce— or at least *one* of them would. Long story short: 'Nayru the Irrational'— the central deity of my LOZ adaptations— would finally be shown to be anything *but*.

But here, as things stand, we're left holding the disparate pieces, unable to fathom a way to put them back together and make ultimate sense of what is, on the surface, supremely *senseless*. If there *is* a plan somewhere out there, it seems very nebulous, to say the least.

That's a lot like life itself, isn't it?

OOT's theme was much about learning to *let go* of the guilt that one needlessly carries. This screenplay was about finding a way to live with the guilt one *deserves* to bear. I can't say that "Triforce of the Gods" will ever be written, or that it won't be, but I will say this much about the overall theme of that work:

It would be about having *faith* that all the pain and suffering one endures is part of a much grander plan, and that the sun will rise again, brighter than anything imaginable. If LA is about a sunset, then TOG would be about the dawn. All I can really say is 'stay tuned'...

Shane Kent Knolltrey

Zelda II Adventures of Link
 Hyrule's World Map
 by
 Skyfall <http://www.skyfall.com>
 Show that some things Sprites Are Sacred
 WITH OTHER EDITS BY SKK



"THE ISLAND OF INFINITE HORIZONS"

"THE THREADBARE LANDS"

"THE THREADBARE LANDS"

"THE SHORES OF OLD HYLIA"

"THE SHORES OF OLD HYLIA"

NOTE:
 FOR THE "HEART OF NAVRU'S LOVE", MUST
 USE MAP FROM "A LINK TO THE PAST"

TO THE "NEW KINGDOM"
 (LOCATION OF ALL EVENTS FROM "OCCASION OF TIME"
 AND THE "SEAT OF DYN'S JUDGMENT")