



The Legend of Zelda

Power is fleeting...

Wisdom can fail...

Courage take leave...



...Vengeance
is
immemorial.

Ocarina of Time

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME
A SCREENPLAY
BY SHANE KENT KNOLLTREY

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PREFACE

Hi, there. My name's Shane.

I don't happen to know if you live in a big city or not, but if you do I wouldn't mind putting a visual in your head: do you remember back before Bluetooth was all the rage, 'back in the day' (God, I hate that phrase, don't you?) when crazy people were easily identifiable as crazy given their penchant for self-directed muttering and stumbling around in a daze?

Nowadays, of course, the average person on their Bluetooth simultaneously texting on their iPhone fits the same bill (I hear that some college campuses are installing 'bumpers' on their lamp posts just to reduce texting-related injuries, in fact). My point is, these days the crazies are even harder to spot.

At first blush, of course, one way to easily spot a 'crazy' would be to observe that they had written an unsolicited, entirely unsellable screenplay to a heavily-copyrighted intellectual property with a strongly-devoted fanbase of canon-defending fanboys. Not only that, but a 400-page monster of a thing, at that...

Welcome to my world.

I could take up the pages of this preface by rambling on about any number of different things: talking up my 'grandiose achievement', thanking God and country, lobbying the 'powers that be' (augh: another phrase I hate!) into optioning this thing into a major motion picture, but instead I'm gonna try to answer just one simple question:

Why?

It has to do with my childhood...

Right now you're either settling in, a-lá-Freud, ready to brood over my spiritually meaningful words, or you've moved on to the story and nearly gotten to the part where Link kills Kotake. Either way is fine. In the off-chance you're interested, however, I would like to explain.

Shigeru Miyamoto put out the original 'Legend of Zelda' game on the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1987. I was six years old at the time. The game itself— a high-fantasy adventure starring a dashing hero sent to rescue his beloved princess— was a revolution, both spiritually and technologically, over other games of its time. Historically speaking, the Legend of Zelda is probably the greatest video game ever made.

Yes: that's a loaded phrase. Let me move on...

Miyamoto got many of the ideas for the 'Zelda' series from his own boyhood 'adventures' growing up in Japan, especially games played in the woods outside his home in Kyoto. There's a wonderful, childish glow that graces the whole series, and if the plots of the games ever get complex they almost invariable boil-down to one simple theme:

A princess and her knight facing down evil, together.

Timeless stuff, huh? And all born from the mind of a genius, 'natch.

So then, you may ask: what the hell does any of this have to do with my childhood?

Ocarina of Time was released onto the Nintendo 64 in 1998, eleven years after the first 'Zelda' game graced our console systems. The release was a massive affair: stores accepting pre-orders were all swamped, buzz was frantically high, and the first buyers even got special gold-covered cartridges in honor of 'Zelda's' first-ever jump to a then-'next-generation'-system.

The anticipation for that release date was unbearable. Even a certain young high-schooler took to biting his nails in absolute suspense as the launch date approached.

The day came; it went. I got a gold cartridge.

I'm staring at it right now. It's still sitting on a shelf in my upstairs room: shining in a place of honor.

Why a place of honor, you ask? And eleven years after its original release date?

If I were to be all fanboyish I'd dote on how Ocarina of Time is a sensational feast of incredible game design and gripping story; I'd go on about how ridiculously incredible it is to play, and how satisfying it truly is from start to finish.

I would, but I won't.

The fact that Ocarina of Time is, in fact, one of the greatest video games ever made— and that it is a sensational feast of incredible game design— is almost beside the point. Why does this game matter so much to me, you might ask?

In the years since Ocarina of Time's release my life has had its highs and lows, ups and downs, trials and tribulations (insert any other hackneyed phrases you like, here), but ultimately the last actual, honest-to-goodness childlike moment of pure glee I can remember is opening up that little oblong box and finding that glistening golden cartridge in my hands.

It's not that I've never been euphoric since then, but rather that all my subsequent experiences of joy seem to lack that 'kid on Christmas morning' vibe. It's something that we, as adults, seldom get to feel, if ever.

To quote Link, from my own Zelda adaptation:

"It's a lot purer than anything an adult feels. We qualify our emotions too much, and a child can't do that, really."

Why is the Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time important to me? It has to do with my childhood.

Specifically, it has to do with my childhood's end.

After 'Ocarina's' release came 'Majora's Mask', which I dutifully played, but after that 'Zelda' and I lost touch. A slew of games have come and gone since then ('Wind Waker', 'Twilight Princess', 'Phantom Hourglass', to name only a few). I haven't played any of these; they aren't part of my knowledge of Zelda.

They're the stuff for the next generation of Zelda fans; maybe some of them will remember those games fondly in correlation to their own maturation process, as well.

Growing up with 'Zelda' isn't a bad way to go about things, after all.

The only bittersweet part is that you do grow up...

This screenplay is a work for my generation: the little children who knew 'Zelda' in her first incarnation, and the teens who triumphed over Ganondorf in 'Ocarina'. We're all adults now, and now's as good a time as any to declare that this screenplay is a work for adults. There's no way a director could get anything less than a 'PG-13' based on what I've written, and even then it would be very difficult to avoid an outright 'R' rating, I think. There is no problem with sexual contact (minus a grown man forcibly kissing an unwilling 8-year-old girl on the lips at one point) or profanity (the script's single f-bomb is delivered at a most judicious point in the story, if I don't say so, myself), however I think a filmmaker would run into trouble with what the MPAA calls 'intense or persistent violence', in addition to 'two scenes of torture'.

For those that are interested, there is also a 'depiction of tobacco use' and '(simulated) cruelty toward animals'.

Often a film that has considerable pre-release buzz and interest will be given a 'code-name' as it's being made to avoid overeager fans from disrupting production ('Empire Strikes Back' was code-named 'Blue Harvest', as one example). I think that an appropriate code-name for this screenplay, as it stands, would be 'Sweet and Sour'. In writing this story I've tried to incorporate the finer, delicate natures of some of the characters (many of whom are little children) in realistic ways, painting a picture of incomparable innocence and startling naivete. On the opposite end, though, the more adult themes at play demand heavy-handed mercilessness and disquieting brutality: if I were to be like a greasy, 'blurb-hungry' movie critic I would call this work "one-part 'Chronicles of Narnia' and one-part 'Kill Bill'".

I'll just let the brilliance of that statement sink in for a moment...

I hope that two things become apparent as you read this screenplay. First is that this author has no idea how to write an actual 'screenplay'. There're all sorts of

things in this work that don't belong in a real screenplay, including stage direction and camera angles, as well as gross formatting errors. My answer to this complaint is simple: I don't particularly care, and I'm too lazy to research screenplay formatting as it is. If you can't follow along with what I have written then you have my deepest sympathies.

The second thing I hope for is that you realize this author can, at least in some limited way, write. Not to be immodest, but this is probably one of the most complete and professionally-written pieces of Zelda fanfiction in existence (screenplay formatting errors aside...). It needs copious editing (and yes: as I wrote this thing I came to realize why they give out Academy Awards for editing: they're probably the most important awards ever given out, in fact), but in the end this is something that I'm not particularly disappointed with.

It gets a little complicated at points; in this work the predominant themes of loyalty, loneliness and purpose bounce off each other in varying degrees. But if the plot of this screenplay ever happens to get complex it almost invariable boil-down to one simple theme:

A princess and her knight facing down evil, together.

And the aforementioned princess and her knight? I don't think I really need to say anything more about them...

...because you know her legend, and you know his name.

FADE IN:

The SOUND OF A CHILD'S SHOES ON MARBLE, frantic, DRAWING CLOSER over time, accompanied by A CHILD'S HEAVY, LABORED BREATHING.

ON BLACK the title, in the FAR LOWER LEFT:

"The Legend of Zelda"

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - DAWN.

A large ceremonial hall covered in WHITE MARBLE with a CIRCULAR ROCK PLATFORM at the center.

An 8-YEAR-OLD CHILD comes racing into the hall in the distance, running unsteadily. His LABORED BREATHING sound is louder. A CLOSE-UP as he stumbles against a WHITE MARBLE WALL reveals copious BLOOD STAINING; he is leaving a TRAIL OF BLOOD as he runs up to the CIRCULAR ROCK PLATFORM.

A TORTURED SCREAM erupts from far away down the hall.

The 8-year-old child collapses near the PLATFORM, crawls on his knees and then lands FACE DOWN on the floor. A TRAIN OF BLOOD moves over the MARBLE FLOOR from the boy to the base of the PLATFORM. AN EERIE HUM rises.

THE BOY'S EYES reflect the circular stone platform; unnatural WHITE LIGHT rises. THE CHILD'S HEAVY, LABORED BREATHING rises also; the breaths come quicker and his eyes fall to unsteady saccades.

SLOW ZOOM ON THE BOY'S EYES.

THE CHILD'S BREATHING stops and his EYES stop moving. The EERIE HUM reaches its peak.

ON BLACK, CENTER:

"Ocarina of Time"

EXT. DESOLATE FIELD - TWILIGHT.

A large field of ruined, petrified trees. The sun is setting red on the horizon.

An OLD WOMAN sits in the dirt, shrouded by a makeshift tent with a SIMMERING POT boiling between her knees which she stirs with a HUMAN BONE. This is KOTAKE. She appears old beyond belief. As a DISTANT OBJECT approaches on the horizon she MUMBLES to herself indistinctly.

KOTAKE

"...mmmm...hmmm... Making mushroom stew, I am..."

The DISTANT OBJECT is revealed to be a hooded horseman. He draws nearer.

KOTAKE

"...mmmm... hmmm... toil and... toil and..."

The rider dismounts at a distance and approaches KOTAKE; This is ADULT LINK. He is a 20 year-old young man. He sits across from her with the SIMMERING POT between them. KOTAKE continues mumbling; LINK'S CLEAR BLUE EYES peer out from under his grey hood.

KOTAKE

(Staring down)

"And... toil and... and..."

LINK

"A sweet smell, old woman."

Kotake stirs her pot, grinning.

LINK

"It smells like a memory."

KOTAKE

"Memory? Memories! Sweet and fleet... a treat: a treat!
Toil and... toil.."

The HUMAN BONE in her hand spins even faster in the pot. We see that there is no fire under this pot, despite the fact that the contents are at a slow boil. Kotake finally looks up at Link:

KOTAKE

"Making mushroom stew, I am!"

LINK

"A sweet, sweet smell."

Between the pair on the ground a FILTHY PINK RIBBON sticks out of the dirt; it is the kind worn in a child's hair.

Kotake breaks out of her trance, as if seeing Link for the first time. She grins.

KOTAKE

"You, my hooded friend: wizzrobes haven't a need for horses, do they?"

Link's horse stands some distance behind the pair; at these words she BRAES and PAWS the ground.

LINK

"I'm not a wizzrobe, old woman; I'm not a creature of magic."

Kotake stares at the dun-colored cowl on Link's head, eyeing its every nook and fold with suspicion.

KOTAKE

"You say no, so no."

She ladles portions of the stew into small EARTHENWARE CUPS: one is for herself, and the other she hands to Link.

KOTAKE

"From where do you come?"

LINK

"From the East, old woman."

KOTAKE

"Down the tributaries of the Lake of Leagues?"

LINK'S EYES STARE OUT from beneath the cowl.

KOTAKE

"Down in the hollows of the Great Fen... but you must confess to me, my opal-eyed child, that the swamp-folk of the marsh do not 'pierce' one so with their gaze..."

LINK

"Have my eyes so 'pierced' you?"

KOTAKE

"You would certainly pierce some."

LINK

"And have I so 'pierced' you?"

KOTAKE

(grinning)

"Hehehe! I am not 'some'. And you are not swamp-folk. From where do you come?"

Kotake begins SLURPING down the stew in her bowl; it trains down the sides of her chin, changing in consistency from hot, chartreuse-colored stew to DRIED RED BLOOD as it drips.

LINK

(leaning forward)

"I come from Utter East, old woman."

Kotake stops slurping. She sets her bowl down.

KOTAKE

"Through marsh and fen... beyond the hilly fields that slope o'er the Eastern Palace... past the rotted caves of dark men's malice... where the Lake of Leagues turns from sweet to salt, and then sweet again: where they call it 'Lake Hylia', for the honor of long-dead men..."

ADULT LINK

"And then further still, old woman: where the lake opens up to salt, and where the bodies of water bear no names."

KOTAKE

"No names and no memories: nameless and lonely with the rest of the land. How far have you come, traveler?"

Link's eyes wander across the blasted wasteland all around them; they focus on a LARGE MOUNTAIN far away in the distance behind Kotake: this is DEATH MOUNTAIN. On one side of this mountain SMOKE RISES, as if from a town, and across the way from that a BANK OF BLACK CLOUDS stands, unmoving and unyielding.

Link shakes his head.

LINK:

"Not far, now..."

KOTAKE

"You tell a truth, now? Hah! You have not come from the shores where the old sun once shone! You did not come from the ancient land of Old Hylia, boy."

LINK

"You say no, so no."

Kotake's grin widens; she takes to her bowl of stew with malicious glee, SLURPING down the brew with renewed gusto. When finished she wipes her chin:

KOTAKE

"How far does foolish mortal man fall when he stoops to pitiable lie, eh? From a stoop to a fall, and that you can't deny!"

Kotake quickly scrapes the remainder of the small cauldron of stew onto the dirt; she mashes up various STRANGE HERBS and BERRIES into the vessel, leering at Link all the while. She takes up the HUMAN BONE once again, stroking it with DELICATE MOTIONS.

KOTAKE

"But, then again, how much of life could mortal man hope to bear without delusion at his side? Hehehe!"

Kotake hugs the pot with her knees once again: the contents quickly begin to SMOLDER and then openly burn.

ADULT LINK

"Tell me: how deluded are you, old woman?"

Kotake begins stirring the new contents of the pot, but the BONE she uses quickly disintegrates.

LINK

"Kotake..."

The woman looks up at Link, SURPRISED.

KOTAKE

"M... making mushroom stew, I am..."

LINK

"How far did you fall, Kotake? How deluded were you to ever think he might forgive you? Didn't you know— you of all people— that he is not in the business of 'forgiving'?"

Kotake takes Link's hand through his cloak, gently pulling his ARM out from the cloak, and then stroking his wrist with DELICATE MOTIONS. She CHOKES UP as she speaks.

KOTAKE

"How far is there to fall?"

LINK

"No matter the distance, there's always a few feet more..."

Kotake pulls Link closer to her, lips wet with saliva.

KOTAKE

"M... making mushroom stew, I am..."

CLOUDLY GREEN STEAM rises from the pot.

LINK

"And just where are your mushrooms, Kotake?"

KOTAKE

"What good is a plant compared to an animal?"

The CLOUDY GREEN STEAM rises up over Link's face; his eyes dilate and begin to develop SMALL GREEN FISSURES along the blood vessels.

KOTAKE

"What taste is mushroom flesh to animal blood?"

Link's head bows closer to the pot; the green ruptures in his eyes expand. DARK GREEN SLIME begins draining out his nose. Sweat blossoms on his chin, slowly turning greenish in hue. Link's breaths slow.

KOTAKE

"Taking life from you, I am!"

Link MUTTERS INDISTINCTLY as Kotake CACKLES.

A SMALL BULGE at the peak of Link's cowl moves quickly down the front of Link's cloak; a magnificently BRIGHT BLUE PINPOINT OF LIGHT emerges from Link's neckline. It arcs

through the air and finally rams into his face head-on, radiating BRIGHT WHITE SPARKS against his lips and nose.

Kotake continues CACKLING as Link's EYES quickly revert to their original blue. He SNARLS and throws his cloak off.

A VERY LONG ARMING SWORD emerges from underneath, white with an ornate hilt, marred in several places with DARK RED STAINS. This is the "DHISE SLAIGHRE" ('dee-say slug-ear').

Link rams the sword through KOTAKE'S MIDSECTION, pinning her to the thin tent pole behind her; the STEW POT falls to one side on the ground and instantly TURNS TO ICE. Kotake screams with pain.

LINK

(snarling whisper)

"Have I so 'pierced' you, Kotake?"

The woman MOANS. Staring down at Dhise Slaighre her face becomes serious; she looks up at Link, nodding at first, but then she grins and reverts to CHORTLING:

KOTAKE

"N- no m- muh- master are you!"

Blood gums up the woman's lips; Kotake SPITS at Link, and then she dies.

The PINPOINT OF BLUE LIGHT re-emerges from under Link's dun-colored cowl; this is NAVI, the fairy. She is a lithe-bodied blue creature with serious, malicious eyes. She is $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch tall. Navi lands on Dhise Slaighre's hilt and 'SKIS' DOWN THE BLADE, coming to rest against Kotake's still body. She grins with satisfaction upon confirming the old woman's death, looking back at Link with sinister approval.

Link TOYS with a very small RED EARRING in his RIGHT EAR. He GRUNTS noncommittally.

LINK

(nodding)

"Yeah: a lot like a pig, right?"

Link stumbles off some distance, holding his stomach with one hand. We see that there is a small, OLD SCAR on his forehead.

NAVI flies up to and sits upon link's shoulder, glaring at him. Link finally retrieves Dhise Slaighre, pulling it from the old woman's body. As he draws it out the BLOOD ON THE BLADE seems to dry, resulting in a new stain (we see approximately four other such 'high-water' marks on the blade).

Link stares at Kotake's slumped body, appearing very ill at ease. After a moment he regains his composure and then he SPITS on her.

FADE OUT.

EXT. DESOLATE FIELD - DUSK.

The same field; the light is far more wan, now.

LINK'S HANDS carve out a small hole in the dirt. He takes the EARTHENWARE CUP Kotake handed to him and pours the foul green liquid into the hole. He covers the patch with dirt and then bows his head against one knee, SOMBERLY MEDITATING.

A VOICE sounds behind him; it is androgynous in tone.

VOICE

"To whom do you pray, traveler?"

Link quickly rises and turns, unsheathing Dhise Slaighre.

A figure stands in the shadows of a petrified tree, their clothes that of a fleet warrior; the outer layer comprised of patchwork scarves and shawls, all ruffling in various directions in the wind.

VOICE

"Prayer is outlawed here, you know, along with hope."

LINK

"Identify yourself."

VOICE

"That's my question."

The figure steps out of the shadows; we see that their face is largely covered with a ratty white shawl. Upon emerging from the shadows the FIGURE'S EYES are (very, very briefly) shown to be a deep, penetrating DARK VIOLET. As soon as the figure notices THE SWORD in Link's hand they stop walking forward.

VOICE

"But, first, you should probably answer my other question:
to whom do you pray?"

LINK

"To the Golden Goddesses of Old Hyrule; that's who."

VOICE

(laughing)

"What possible concern could Goddesses made of gold have
about creatures made of flesh?"

LINK

"They care enough to give us hope."

VOICE

"You've violated both the laws of this place, then; both of
'his' laws..."

The figure begins a predatory semi-circle around Link; Link draws up the Dhise Slaighre and squares himself into a defensive posture.

LINK

"What are you, then: the enforcer of those laws?"

VOICE

"Hardly..."

The figure steps out of the shadows; as they do there is a FAINT BRIGHT FLASH encompassing the entire screen. When the figure emerges they stand before Link with changed eyes: bright RED instead of violet.

VOICE

"I am not, but you must think yourself to be quite the
lawgiver."

The figure nods its head at the sword in Link's hands.

VOICE

"After all, that is no mere arming sword. You bear the Dhise Slaighre, stranger: you must think yourself to be something else, indeed."

LINK

"I am not the owner of this sword—"

VOICE

"The way you so readily wield it, you could have fooled me..."

KOTAKE'S DEAD BODY still lies against her tent post some distance from the pair.

LINK

"There's more to all this than you know. That woman deserved—"

The figure walks closer to Kotake's body.

VOICE

"This is no 'woman'. And yes: of course she 'deserved' it."

The figure removes one black glove and cups Kotake's cold chin in their hand: we see a tattoo on the figure's backhand of a WEEPING EYE. The figure's bright red eyes quiver.

VOICE

"His surrogate mother. One of them, at least. I shouldn't be happy just for that, not just for that reason..."

The figure looks off to the side at the SMALL MOUND OF DIRT where Link buried the contents of his cup. It then looks back at Kotake's dead body.

VOICE

(whispering)

"Farore help me: I am, though..."

Finally the figure disinterestedly turns Kotake's dead head to one side, allowing the rigid body to fall into the dirt. The figure stands, pulls its glove back over its naked hand and turns toward Link, who is still standing at the ready with his sword.

VOICE

"My name is SHEIK, owner of Dhise Slaighre—"

LINK

"I told you that I don't own this sword. I use it in its owners' stead."

SHEIK

"Its owners?"

LINK

"The royal family of Hyrule and its current proper owner: the princess of Hyrule—"

SHEIK

"The princess? Ha! The princess of Hyrule no longer exists, stranger!"

LINK

"She is dead?"

SHEIK

"She might as well be; if she weren't then I would be most interested in making her so."

LINK

"You are an agent of the king of thieves, aren't you?"

SHEIK

"I am a shadow, stranger. A sorry remnant of a bygone time. In another time I'd be a servant, but now I'm only a shadow. One of many forced to suffer and struggle for the utter stupidity and immaturity of the princess of Hyrule! You have the look of one who's traveled far and long, stranger, but I doubt that in a ten-thousand mile-long quest you could ever find such a foolish, unthinking little bitch as her."

Link takes one step towards Sheik, reflexively, but he stops as quickly as he started, regaining his composure. He lowers the Dhise Slaighre as a sign of good faith.

LINK

"What do you know of her, anyway?"

SHEIK'S RIGHT EYE sparkles dimly. Another FAINT BRIGHT FLASH fills the screen, this one accompanied by a very brief SEPIA-TONED image of A GROUP OF CURIOUS-LOOKING CHILDREN— all around 8-to-12 years of age— standing before the brick wall of a castle courtyard (...INSERT DISTINCTIVE BACKGROUND IMAGES EASY TO RECOGNIZE ON SIGHT...). Standing in their midst is a boy with bright red eyes wearing juvenile HEADGEAR similar to Sheik's.

LINK'S FACE scrunches; he blinks uncomfortably.

Sheik turns around and begins to walk off. Link chases after him.

LINK

"Answer me! What do you know about the princess of Hyrule?"

Sheik TURNS HIS HEAD and glares at Link.

SHEIK

"Little. What I do know is that she is unworthy of your devotion..."

Sheik faces away from Link, staring at the LARGE MOUNTAIN in the distance and the small plumes of smoke rising off one side.

SHEIK

"Long have I hunted for the fiend of the wasteland steppes: the Gerudo witch Kotake. Her list of crimes grew long in the time she'd been banished from his court and cast out into the wastes. There were many names on her 'menu'..."

LINK

"If you've been searching for her for so long then how is it that you found her here, and now? What brought you to this place?"

SHEIK

"The Dhise Slaighre— that sword you wield— it is not an instrument that can travel this land unnoticed..."

Link takes several more steps towards Sheik.

SHEIK

"His surrogate mother is dead; thank you for that much, at least. As for your sword, you should use it as you will,

stranger, but it will provide no comfort to you. I advise you to leave this land and its suffering to those sworn to bear it."

Sheik pulls out a small, shining marble from under his wraps. He looks back at Link one last time.

SHEIK

"In the best of all possible circumstances we will not meet again..."

Link moves closer to Sheik, who quickly throws his marble against the ground; it explodes with bright light and smoke. When all this clears Link is left standing alone in the field.

NAVI emerges from Link's cowl and flits about; Link looks around with confusion, finally discovering a set of horse tracks. Following them with his eyes he sees a SMALL CLOUD OF DUST on the horizon moving towards the LARGE MOUNTAIN in the distance; Sheik is retreating on horseback.

Link races to his horse and unties her from a petrified tree, but he suddenly stops and shakes his head. He slowly walks his horse to a ridge and surveys the land below him: the wasteland of Hyrule.

NAVI rests on his shoulder.

LINK

"Immature... unthinking little bitch?"

NAVI looks up at Link with an UNPLEASANT SMILE.

LINK

"You agree with him, don't you?"

NAVI looks back out at the view before them.

LINK

"It was a mistake, Navi: she made a mistake. She couldn't be held responsible..."

NAVI arches a brow, unconvinced. Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"She can't. And now, to think that the princess may be dead: that makes things worse, I think..."

NAVI shakes her head, skeptical.

LINK

"There was us too, you know: how much do you blame us, Navi? How much do you blame me?"

NAVI stares down at her feet, scowling.

LINK

"We... we just made a mistake..."

PAN across the desolate wasteland of Hyrule, stopping on the DISTANT MOUNTAIN and the STATIONARY THUNDERSTORM roiling on its far edge.

FADE OUT.

EXT. HYRULE FIELD - MIDMORNING.

TWELVE YEARS BEFORE the previous scene. It is a field of rolling green hills; a stark contrast to the wasteland of modern-day Hyrule (ie: from the previous scene).

A RICKETY WOODEN CART lumbers up a dirt path led by two horses walking abreast. It is driven by a 10-year-old girl with strawberry-blond hair clad in a simple white tunic and sandals; this is MALON. The back of the cart contains CLUCKING CHICKENS, sacks of flour, barley and milk crates.

An OVERWEIGHT MAN WITH A THICK BLACK MOUSTACHE lies in the back of the cart; this is TALON. He SNORES loudly.

MALON

(singing)

"Hey chick-a-chucka, hey chick-a-me...
Dough in the bread pan; dough chick-a-lee..."

Talon's SNORING from the back of the cart crests; Malon glances back at him with annoyance. She looks down at the PAIR OF HORSES BENEATH HER and smiles; she is holding one rein in each hand: one for each horse. She takes one of these reins with a firm grip and continues singing.

MALON

(singing)
"Try come-a-callin', try chick-a-see...
Pick chick-a-chika, pick chick-a-me!"

Malon pulls one rein taut, causing the cart to veer off sharply in one direction; Talon goes tumbling out the back, waking with a start in the dirt. He leaps up, confused, and struggles to get back up on the cart, which Malon (smiling) spurs to a greater speed. Talon struggles with and accidentally tears open a SACK OF BARLEY, which begins to spill out onto the dirt.

TALON
(out of breath)
"Uh... er... Malon, honey: my turn driving, is it?"

We hear MALON'S OVERLY-SUNNY VOICE from the front.

MALON
(singing)
"Hey chick-a-chucka, hey chick-a-me..."

TALON
"Malon... uh... Malon!?"

The cart rolls off with Talon precariously struggling to climb back in, CALLING out to the girl and MALON SINGING as she drives.

PAN back over the trail and DISSOLVE to a similar stretch of trail, this one surrounded by a copse of thin-necked trees. Far away in the distance are thicker groupings of much larger trees, ultimately plunging into a MASSIVE, DARK GREEN FOREST.

The sound of a CHILD'S SHOES ON DIRT tromp in regular intervals; PAN-UP from the trail to reveal a pair of KID'S BOOTS walking over the ground. PAN-OUT reveals a child of 8 dressed in GREEN SHORTS and GREEN TUNIC, a leather utility sash draped over one shoulder from which a SLINGSHOT and other 'sundry items' hang. The sash extends to his back, from which is slung an unpainted woodwind instrument: a FAIRY OCARINA. He is carrying two SMOOTH STONES in his dominant left hand, absently SCRAPING THEM AROUND with his fingers. The child's eyes are blue; this is YOUNG LINK.

A HIGH-PITCHED SQUEAL rumbles from the child's stomach; Link stops walking momentarily and stares down. He soon resumes his journey.

Navi the fairy emerges from one of the small pockets on Link's shoulder sash (being one of those 'sundry items'). She lands on top of the boy's scraggily, PLATINUM-BLOND HAIR. Link SCRUNCHES his face in annoyance and wags his head, causing the fairy to take to the air very briefly before settling on his head once again.

NAVI

"You're hungry, aren't you?"

Link shakes his head.

NAVI

"Oh. You sleepy, then?"

Link shakes his head again.

NAVI

"Tiiiiired?"

Link shakes his head again.

NAVI

"Ya' mopey? You seem a bit mopey, to me..."

Link screws HIS EYES up as far as he can, glaring towards the top of his head with displeasure.

NAVI stares down at Link, lying prone on his hair and absently kicking her legs; she nods.

NAVI

"Mmm-hmm. Mopey: that's the word..."

The trees lining the trail grow scarcer as he walks along.

NAVI

"You need to eat something, you know."

Link ignores her words.

NAVI

"You're not going to eat anything, are you?"

Link shakes his head.

NAVI
(sighing)

"You really are an impossible little boy, you know. Hey: it's gonna be really hard to look so mopey when you pass out from hunger, you know, and if you really enjoy being mopey so much you might as well give-in to your stomach."

Link ignores Navi.

The fairy shuttles off Link's head and lands on THE BOY'S NOSE. She stares him down (while Link, meanwhile, must cross his eyes just to view her at all).

NAVI
"Hey: you can sulk all you want, but you need to live, too."

Link continues walking, even with the fairy perched on his nose.

NAVI
"What would she think of you not eating, huh? How would that make her feel? Betcha anything she's worrying enough about you already without you making sure that something bad happens to you, you know?"

Link stops walking; he BALLS HIS LEFT FIST.

Navi flies off Link's head and hovers over his shoulder.

NAVI
"You're... angry, aren't you?"

The boy SNARLS, and then he throws the STONES in his hand with all his might; he strikes a tree trunk beside the road. The whole tree quivers, and then a small leafy tree branch suddenly falls from the sky and clobbers LINK, burying him in leaves as the boy SCREAMS.

Link emerges from the leaves in a prone position, dirty, and with a few GRAINS OF BARLEY wedged in his mouth. He blinks, and then sucks air into his lungs, swallowing the grain as he does so. He blinks again, then stumbles out of the leaf pile and nabs some more BARLEY GRAIN lying in the

dirt, ravenously wolfing them down as he stumbles along the trail in search of more morsels.

NAVI follows behind him.

NAVI

"Hmph. You were hungry!"

The fairy crosses her arms and looks on at the boy with concern:

NAVI

"And you are angry..."

FADE OUT.

EXT. CASTLE TOWN - AFTERNOON.

A grand WALLED CITY, complete with massive arched CITY GATE, DRAWBRIDGE and MOAT. Etched stonework dominates; all stones are a clean, light-colored gray with distinctive bright speckling (identical to the stones in SHEIK'S VISION, pg. 15).

A couple of CHICKENS mill about on the path to the drawbridge, CLUCKING. One of them eyes and moves toward a PIECE OF BARLEY on the ground but is beaten to it by a pouncing LINK, who wrestles the morsel away from the chicken and devours it. Navi hovers overhead.

NAVI

"The chicken would've tasted better, don't you think? You haven't got a spit, have you?"

Link turns his head and spits at the fairy, who nimbly dodges the salvo.

NAVI

"Oh, that's very cute..."

Link smiles, then he gazes up at the massive DRAWBRIDGE and MOAT below. He steps forward cautiously. NAVI perches on his nose once again.

NAVI

"You got any clue where we're going, or are you as in the dark as I am, huh?"

Link crosses HIS EYES devilishly. He snaps his hand through the air, snatching Navi right off his nose and holding her tight in the balled fist of his hand. He continues walking over the drawbridge.

NAVI

(muffled in the boy's fist)

"Not funny! Really not funny! Hey, listen! Hey! Hey, listen: I'm serious! Hey!"

Link crosses the ARCHED CITY GATE and enters the capital of Hyrule: CASTLE TOWN.

A MASS of people bustle through the narrow streets, especially in the MARKETPLACE at city center. LOUD CHATTER, several COMPETING SOURCES OF MUSIC and ANIMAL SOUNDS dominate.

One man works a large crowd at his vending stall (which bears a strange tarp over its top unlike others in the plaza, resembling a gigantic onion): he is tall and thin, oriental, with a wrinkly face and a seemingly permanent, creepy Cheshire cat grin. This is the HAPPY MASK SALESMAN. He struts back and forth before his stall carrying a massive rucksack laden with different masks.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

(cavorting)

"Come one, come all,
Come big, come small!
Come near, come far,
Come clear, come call

on the most wonderfully wondiferous,
amazingly alliaceous,
curiously cumulonimbusical

Happy Mask Shop: home to Hyrule's greatest purveyors of happiness! See here, my dreary denizens of Castle Town: who do you wish to be?"

The Happy Mask Salesman quickly dons a mask from his rucksack: that of a GORON WARRIOR.

Of THE LARGE GROUP OF SPECTATORS one boy, standing up front with a group of small children (where they can see) SMILES.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"A Goron warrior, maybe? Munching down rocks deep within the crags of Death Mountain? Why, with this wondrous bit of craftsmanship at your side you'll have dodongos running from your very presence in no time!"

MURMURS from the CROWD.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Or... perhaps..."

The Happy Mask Salesman quickly switches out his Goron mask for a ZORA MASK.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"...an elegant, magnificent Zora Aalenaut?"

The salesman sways his body and waves his arms in an interpretive dance.

A GIRL among the group of children in the front row GIGGLES.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Sail through any sea with ease! This enchanting race may have died-out of our lands and lay buried in the fossil record, but now they live again, just as sure as the shallows of their old haunt glow blue; they live through the magnificence of the master crafters here at the Happy Mask Shop!"

The salesman rips the mask away, his unsettling grin still beaming.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Or, perhaps, something from our best-selling 'celebrity personalities' line?"

The salesman digs into his rucksack and ROOTS AROUND, leering up at the crowd.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Introducing... a Happy Mask Shop exclusive: in honor of the Royal Family, and in celebration with all the citizenry of Hyrule... a captivating, commanding presence to be adored with absolute bliss and not to be missed, or missed-out on... Her Royal Highness- daughter of His Majesty the King of Hyrule and Heir-Apparent to the Throne--"

The salesman finally finds what he's looking for: he quickly dons a mask depicting a child of about 8, but the proportions are ODD and the overall appearance GROTESQUE.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Crown Princess Zelda, herself!"

All crowd chatter STOPS, replaced by uneasy murmuring.

The salesman removes the mask and holds it up to the side of his head, looking back and forth between it and his audience apologetically.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
(Quietly and quickly, as in 'fine-print' reading)
"Slight precaution: objects in mask may appear less attractive than they really are..."

UNEASY MURMURS continue.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Oh, come now: good citizens!"

He puts away the ZELDA MASK and retrieves another more curious one: this mask depicting a GIANT EYE CRYING A VERY LARGE TEAR. This is the MASK OF TRUTH.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Life is but a magnificent masquerade! Why, the vital essences of entire worlds are carved into the stately oak frames of our masks. What better pathway to utter delight: to utter happiness?"

SLOW ZOOM on the MASK OF TRUTH.

PAN through the crowd from the POINT OF VIEW of the SALESMAN: everything has a faint ruby tint, as if seen through red glass. As the camera pans we can hear the THOUGHTS of every person in center screen, faint, and reverberating as if in an echo chamber:

WOMAN
"That Aalenaut mask would be perfect for Susan--"

YOUNG BOY
"...--those actually his real teeth?"

FARMHAND

"Well, we could scare the whole sheep flock into line with that 'princess' mask..."

BEARDED MAN

"...such disrespect towards the Royal Family--"

TEEN GIRL

"...wonder if he carries any faces that look like those 'Gerudo' women I saw at Castlebridge--"

OLD WOMAN

"...thought the Royal Princess would look a little better than that--"

PAN DOWN and RIGHT

NAVI

"...this guy's full of shi--"

PAN FARTHER DOWN and RIGHT

CENTER on LINK, standing in the front of the crowd with his head cocked to one side, staring at the man quizzically. Notably, there is NO INTERNAL MONOLOGUE from the child, only an (actually spoken) GRUNT of curiosity.

The SALESMAN removes his mask, staring at Link with more interested eyes (his grin, however, remains firmly intact).

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"So, my young friend..."

The man shimmies his body, causing the rucksack on his back to spill out three different masks against the floor: one a ZORA MASK for the woman in the crowd, a ZELDA MASK for the farmhand and, for the teen girl, a mask depicting a brown-skinned warrior female with flaming red hair; the latter is a GERUDO mask.

The crowd MURMURS as all these masks appear before them. In their rush to examine the curious trinkets they push past Link and the Happy Mask Salesman. The Mask Salesman bows down closer to Link.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

(holding the MASK OF TRUTH up beside his own head)

"One thousand out of one thousand-and-one are babbling brooks: they have some very interesting surfaces, to say the least..."

The Salesman waves the MASK OF TRUTH before his own face, very slowly and in one deliberate motion.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"...but still waters—"

The Salesman taps the boy's forehead; Navi hovers up near Link's head, circling in a protective formation. For his part Link merely stares up at the Salesman's finger as it taps his skull."

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"—they run deep."

His GRIN widens.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"And such waters can be so very dangerous, indeed!"

CLOSE-UP on the midsection of a woman in LIGHT WARRIOR'S ARMOR. She pushes through the crowd and, upon reaching the Happy Mask Salesman the woman grabs him by the scruff and pulls him up to his tiptoes.

WOMAN
"I should teach you a thing or two about 'danger': knave!"

She is shown to be a dead-ringer for the mask in the teen girl's hands: a GERUDO WARRIOR.

GERUDO WOMAN
"'Danger' follows anyone who would choose to carve out such abasements toward the Gerudo race!"

She points at the GERUDO MASK.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN
"Oh... ah, oh!"

NAVI still hovers near Link's head.

NAVI

"I dunno; you'd think this 'Zelda' girl would have more of a right to be upset..."

The crowd scatters around uneasily upon the Gerudo woman's appearance. This commotion causes the SHOP'S TENTPOLE to be knocked over, sending the onion-shaped awning falling, causing further chaos. When the crowd clears and a semblance of order is restored Link is revealed to be lying on the dirt, legs spread, with the MASK OF TRUTH between them.

There is no sign of the HAPPY MASK SALESMAN. The GERUDO WOMAN is shown amongst the crowd, looking for the man in vain; she finally walks off with a snarl, joining a small group of similarly-dressed and similarly-appearing GERUDO WOMEN.

The boy GRUNTS in confusion; he picks up the mask and walks off, stepping backwards slowly and always facing the now-upturned tent. He doesn't turn away until he crosses a side-street leading away from the market.

EXT. PATCHWORK ALLEYWAYS - AFTERNOON.

A maze of narrow streets and alleys cloistered off from Castle Town's larger main roads.

After worming through many alleyways and narrow lanes Link comes to an alley opening up on a much larger street: the ROYAL ROAD. Some of the city's TALLER BUILDINGS flank this great street. Far away in the city background there is a divergence in the lane: part of the road winds UPWARD in back-and-forth zigzags culminating in a grassy plateau containing HYRULE CASTLE. This is the 'HIGH ROAD'. The other divergence slinks down in another cardinal direction; it stops abruptly against another CITY GATE, identical to the one Link passed through earlier, but covered in moss and decay and bearing an image of the WEEPING EYE over its arch. The street leading down to this city gate is the 'LOW ROAD'. This city gate— an extremely direct route to Hyrule Caste— is the SHADOW GATE.

MANY PEOPLE mill about in both directions as Link watches from his place in the alley. Eventually he surveys the mask in his hand, fumbling with it, and then he puts it on.

We see through his RED-TINTED VISION as many people walk by; Link catches RANDOM, UNIMPORTANT THOUGHTS from many of them.

MALON walks down the street in the direction leading away from Hyrule Castle. Her THOUGHTS echo aloud:

MALON

"How much time could that louse Talon take up there? What's he doing? 'Oh, Malon: these meetings with the royal quartermaster take time!' Lazy lay-about better not be sleeping! Those crates of milk over at Castlebridge will sour in the time it takes him to check-in with the guards! And what about all those sacks of grain? Their security's a joke! Someone might steal them!"

Malon stares at Link (ie: the camera) as she passes, looking him up and down curiously and with a QUIRKY SMILE. We hear more of her echoing thoughts.

MALON

"Hmmm, a little... lumberjack?"

Navi emerges from Link's leather shoulder sash as the boy removes the Mask of Truth.

NAVI

"Woah! How cool is that!? Just think: with this piece of hardware you could do all kinds of things! I mean, you could—"

A HIGH-PITCHED SQUEAL erupts from Link's stomach; the boy looks down, and then back up with a determined glower.

Navi hovers before his face.

NAVI

"Um... you're not going to... are you?"

Link looks back and forth along the street and then darts out, seeking street signs and directions.

NAVI

"Okay: this is why nobody ever puts this kind of absolute power in the hands of little kids... all they can think of is their stomachs. If the Great Fairy herself popped up to

grant you a wish right here and now you'd probably wish for all of the world's grass to turn into slabs of roast beef!"

Link glances back at Navi, sardonic.

NAVI
(Sighs)

"Don't get me wrong: I'm with you, of course. If this means that you've decided to start eating again..."

Navi hovers CLOSER to Link's face, an affectionate maneuver, but Link soon pulls his head back and tromps off down the Royal Road with Navi in tow.

DISSOLVE CUTS as Link meanders around town, at one point we see an old man staring down at the boy and pointing with his hand in one direction, as if Link has just asked him a question.

The last DISSOLVE CUT shows the boy walking down the broadest section of the High Road, right before it begins worming up around the hill leading to Hyrule Castle.

EXT. CASTLEBRIDGE - AFTERNOON.

Hyrule Castle sits high up on the land, perched on a steep hill. A picturesque WATERFALL runs down that golden green hill, ending in a small lake down at Castle Town's center. The ROYAL ROAD arches over this lake right in front of the waterfall. This place— a massive raised platform over the water— is the beginning of the stretch of track called the HIGH ROAD, colloquially referred to as 'CASTLEBRIDGE'. Soldier barracks, storerooms, very high-end mercantile shops and a select-few citizens' domiciles flank this natural bridge of land.

Link meanders around this bustling area, passing by the imposing ROYAL GATE leading to Hyrule Castle.

The many rows of storerooms Link passes have different PLACARDS identifying the tenants; Link reaches one that reads 'PERISHABLE GOODS AND LIVESTOCK, LON-LON RANCH'.

Navi hovers in front of the signage.

NAVI
" 'Malon'... 'Talon'..."

She faces Link.

NAVI
"``Lon-Lon'."

Link GRINS.

INT. LON-LON STOREROOM - AFTERNOON.

A moderate-sized wooden storehouse filled with rickety wooden shelves and hay flooring; a SMALL PEN for chickens sits in a corner. MILK CRATES sit opposite, shelved on racks filled with ice. Between them many rows of GRAIN SACKS, FLOUR and other staple crops rest on shelves. This is a below-surface room; small street-level windows line it.

Link KICKS IN one of these and shimmies into the room, falling ungracefully onto the hay floor.

Navi flies up and inspects the busted window.

NAVI
(sighing)
"Breaking and entering..."

She turns to see that Link has found the row of MILK CRATES; the boy removes one ice-cold bottle, unscrews the cap and begins greedily guzzling the fluid.

NAVI
"...it does a body good, I guess..."

INT. LON-LON STOREROOM - EARLY EVENING.

PAN UP from a set of emptied milk jugs and torn crop sacks; Link lies with his head against a grain sack, dozing.

The BLUE SPARK of Navi's body slowly appears over Link's ear (she having lost consciousness at the same time as the boy). She jets off Link's body and butts-up against his nose, waking him.

NAVI
(whispering)
"Hey! Hey, listen! Did you hear that?"

Link looks up at her, sleepy, and shakes his head, returning to his nap.

We hear a GIRL'S VOICE from somewhere outside the storeroom.

GIRL
(singing)
"Hey chick-a-chucka, hey chick-a-me..."

Link's eyes open wide and the boy bolts upright. He scrambles to the STOREROOM DOOR, but realizes that this is where the singing is coming from. The GIRL'S VOICE is closer, now.

GIRL
(singing)
"Dough in the bread pan; dough chick-a-lee..."

Link races to the window he shattered to enter the room only to find himself far, far too short to reach it. As he HOPS UP AND DOWN frantically Navi hovers overhead.

NAVI
"You'd think all that milk would've kicked in by now..."

Link GLARES UP at Navi.

The latch on the STOREROOM DOOR begins to turn.

NAVI
"Hey, c'mon: it sounds like it's just one little girl. You can take on a girl, can't you?"

Link stop hopping up and down and looks back at the door.

Seconds later the door opens and MALON enters with a small sack of flour over her shoulder. She takes a few steps into the room and then immediately Link SPRINTS BY, aiming for the open door. The SLINGSHOT on his sash, however, gets caught in Malon's HAIR BRAIDS and propels both children into the doorway where they tumble one over the other. Link eventually comes to rest atop the supine girl, palms pressing down on her collarbone and his knees pinning down her legs.

MALON
(dazed)
"Little... lumberjack?"

NAVI
"Hey! Yeah! Lock her in the storeroom! Tie her up in one of those sacks! Knock her on the head with a milk jug!"

Link looks over at Navi, his face scrunched with INCOMPREHENSIBLE DISGUST.

NAVI
"Oh, yeah... maybe not, I guess..."

Instantly MALON'S FIST comes up and catches Link on the CHIN (CAMERA remains stationary on NAVI). The boy flies off her body (and off-screen) with a loud GRUNT. We hear him land on the floor.

NAVI
"Ouch..."

INT. LODGINGS ABOVE THE LON-LON STOREROOM - EVENING.

A small COMMON ROOM with wooden table and tiny HEARTH; this serves as quarters for MALON and TALON during their trips into Castle Town with their goods. The looming presence of HYRULE CASTLE stands outside with light from its ARCHED GOTHIC WINDOWS clearly visible.

Talon, Link and Malon sit around the table, Link beside Malon with a small packet of ice held up to his chin.

TALON
"A-hahahahahahaha!!!"

MALON
"It's hardly funny, you know..."

NAVI
(Hovering over Link's shoulder, speaking to Link)
"Well, it kinda was if you were there..."

Link inaccurately SWATS THE AIR beside his shoulder.

TALON

"Boys and their stomachs: always churning up a recipe for disaster! If you really had such a need to fill your belly, dear boy, you could've checked our help-wanted sign out front."

NAVI
(to Link)

"That would've involved a bit more effort than we thought was required..."

TALON
"Anyway, it's just as well: I need a good set of hands at the moment, little or no..."

MALON
"What? You wanna hire him on? But he broke our storeroom window! Y'know how many rupees it'll cost to fix?"

TALON
(slapping Link's shoulder)
"I have an idea, and that's why we'll be paying our little chum here in squares instead of diamonds..."

BOTH CHILDREN look up at Talon curiously.

TALON
(holding up three fingers)
"Three square meals a day, and snacks between to reward good effort. After all, what would a boy become without a little extra sustenance between meals now and then?"

MALON
(looking the overweight man up and down)
"Thin?"

TALON
"You'll work off the cost of that window in no time, kiddo, and perhaps you'll even leave town with a few rupees to your name. My daughter and I always stay in Castle Town for some time during the quarterly grain drive."

Talon looks over at Malon.

TALON
"Although we're liable to be here a tad shorter than usual this time around, what with all the official rigmarole surrounding the Castle's current 'guests'. These Gerudo

visitors have everyone in the Castle all out of sorts; the sooner their crown prince what's-his-name finishes his business with our King the better."

MALON

(pointing at Link)

"But if we just let Fairy Boy here go around free as a bird he might run away! How would we get our money back for the window then?"

TALON

"What do you suggest, honey: we tie him up in a grain sack and lock him in the storeroom at night?"

NAVI

(to Link)

"That seems unduly harsh..."

A HIGH-PITCHED SQUEAL erupts from Link's stomach. Everyone takes note.

TALON

(laughing)

"Trust me, Malon: a small stomach is as tight a leash as anything."

He turns to Link.

TALON

"I don't suppose you'd go running off wily-nilly, would you?"

He pokes at the boy's EXTREMELY SLENDER midsection.

TALON

(smiling)

"You're skin and bones, after all, and we might as well do something about that, eh?"

Link RECIPROCATES THE SMILE.

Talon touches the short sleeve of Link's GREEN TUNIC.

"Ah, and with some proper work clothes you'll fit in quite nicely—"

Link's demeanor immediately changes; he shies away from Talon's touch, gripping his shirt sleeve reassuringly, his EYES INTENSE.

TALON

"Er... now, then again: maybe green is more you're color, huh?"

Link winds down a bit, scooching back to his original place on the wooden bench.

A small BLACK POT on the hearth starts boiling over with a FRAGRANT STEW. Talon jumps up and attends to the dish.

TALON

(smelling the aroma with approval)

"Ah! Well, anyway- for the moment- let's see about getting you a little 'advance' on your work..."

Malon turns in her seat to face Link.

MALON

"Alright, Fairy Boy: if you're gonna work for us and all we might as well get along, so put 'er there."

Malon QUICKLY EXTENDS HER HAND for a handshake, causing Link to reflexively SHRIEK and flail backwards, consequently falling off the bench onto his back (again: OFF SCREEN)

Navi still hovers in the air where the boy had been sitting; Malon looks up at the BLUE PINPOINT OF LIGHT (NOTE: it is not clear that she can understand the fairy's words).

NAVI

"He's a super kid, really." (pause) "Uncoordinated, but super..."

EXT. CASTLEBRIDGE - MORNING

An indeterminate number of days since the last scene.

The same RICKETY WOODEN CART (from page 18) sits outside the Lon-Lon Storeroom. Link walks out of the storeroom burdened with burlap sacks (to the point that only his bare

knees and leather boots are visible. He tosses the sacks into the cart with a GRUNT and wipes his forehead.

There is a RUCKUS coming from the direction of the ROYAL GATE leading to the Castle. CONFUSED and ANGRY SHOUTS are heard. Link follows the sounds to the gate, where three armed soldiers of Hyrule have their hands full with a situation: four FEMALE GERUDO SOLDIERS shout at TALON who, for the moment, is shielded from the women by the Hyrule soldiers.

TALON

"Why? What? All I said was--"

GERUDO WOMAN #1

"What gives you the right to accost a Gerudo soldier, wretch?"

GERUDO WOMAN #2

"Perhaps the cur would enjoy a trip down the waterfall for his trouble?"

TALON

"I only asked for my knife back!"

A tall, imperial-looking Gerudo female stands behind the other women; she motions to GERUDO WOMAN #1 with her head.

LEAD GERUDO WOMAN

"Our sister says she does not have this man's instrument, thus it is so."

She crosses her arms.

LEAD GERUDO WOMAN

"This dishonorable accusation is reprehensible; the man deserves just punishment..."

Link stands far apart from this scene, watching.

The lead Hyrule soldier among the group attempts to mediate.

HYRULE SOLDIER

"Ma'am, maybe if we all just calmed down and acted with good faith; if your fellow soldier could just empty her pockets we'd have the truth for sure, and I assure you that

any falsehoods in this man's story would be treated most seriously--"

GERUDO WOMAN #1

"You will not do any such thing! A warrior of Gerudo would never deign to be subjected to such indignity!"

LEAD GERUDO WOMAN

"It would be regrettable, don't you think, if some trifle such as this were to strain our relationship? Especially on the eve of our new-crowned prince's arrival to pledge his loyalty and support to your kingdom? Would it not be a shame for Hyrule to wait another 100 years for the next Gerudo lord to mend relations?"

Link stands far apart from this, but now he is wearing the MASK OF TRUTH on his face. The boy removes it and slings it over his back; he now bears a DARK SCOWL.

The lead Hyrule guard approaches Talon hesitantly.

HYRULE SOLDIER

"I'm sorry, Mister Talon, but I think it's for the best that we take you into custody, for now."

TALON

"What? I've done nothing wrong! I- I only wanted my knife back. Here: she can keep the blasted thing, if it's so important to her--"

HYRULE SOLDIER

"Even then, Mister Talon, it's for your own good that we get you out of here; these 'ladies' are liable to do anything at the moment, and we're under strict orders from His Majesty the King: we can't rightly control them! It's only until things cool down--"

TALON

"But the perishables in my wagon!"

A SHOT of all the participants in this episode from the WAIST-UP; a scraggily mop of platinum blond hair comes sailing through the bottom of the screen; Link races by GERUDO WOMAN #1, gripping one of the belts on her waist as he does so. By the time he has made it to Talon's side a SMALL SILVER KNIFE with opal ornaments on its hilt clanks

on the ground between Gerudo Woman #1's feet. It is a squat-bladed, razor-sharp OYSTER KNIFE.

Everyone stops speaking; noises are replaced by BACKGROUND SOUNDS of the waterfall behind them and commerce continuing further down Castlebridge.

The LEAD GERUDO WOMAN steps up to GERUDO WOMAN #2 slowly.

LEAD GERUDO WOMAN
"What dishonorable treachery is this?"

GERUDO WOMAN #1
"Nabooru... this- this is not..."

NABOORU
"-the behavior of a dignified Gerudo soldier? I concur."

GERUDO WOMAN #1
"Whom would you believe, Nabooru: your sister, or these pale-skinned Hyrule pisshe-"

Nabooru quickly backhands the woman, causing a spurt of blood to sail out her nose.

NABOORU
"I trust my eyes first and foremost! Get out of my sight!"

The OTHER GERUDO WOMEN depart. Nabooru retrieves the SILVER OYSTER KNIFE from the ground and stands before the guards, Link and Talon.

NABOORU
"You have... my apologies..."

There is a long pause. Finally Nabooru flips the knife in the air, violently and quickly; everyone (Link, the guards and Talon) square their bodies defensively (almost as if choreographed) and GRUNT in preparedness. Nabooru, however, hands the knife hilt-first to Talon.

NABOORU
"Gerudo abide their word; Gerudo live with honor. I am... embarrassed."

Talon takes the knife back, quietly thanking the woman.

Nabooru walks up the hill, GLARING SINISTERLY AT LINK. She gives the Gate Guard a withering stare; he quickly opens the gate and allows the woman onto the Highroad leading up to the Castle.

Navi flies out from under Link's leather shoulder sash.

NAVI

"We're making all kinds of friends today, aren't we?"

Talon kneels down beside Link, staring at Nabooru as she walks off.

TALON

"Tch! Gerudo may live with 'honor', but the definition is what's lacking, to me."

He turns his head to face Link.

TALON

"You're just a wellspring of usefulness, aren't you my boy? Thanks for that: you saved a whole cart of merchandise from spoiling back there. Heh! I thought I was picking up a stock-boy when I took you on, but it seems I also got a little bodyguard, to boot, doesn't it?"

Talon stands up and pats the boy's head; he starts walking, then stops and removes the KNIFE from his pocket. Talon tosses the OPAL-ADORNED OYSTER KNIFE back through the air; it comes to rest in Link's left hand. The boy takes it up and looks at Talon quizzically.

TALON

"Well, bodyguards need their weapons, don't they? You can hold onto that for me for awhile, can't you? I haven't had much use from that since last summer at the lakefront (LOCATION?). Tch! It's been lucky for me, at least. Well, until today..."

Talon walks off, leaving Link to ADMIRE the elegant oyster knife.

INT. LODGINGS ABOVE THE LON-LON STOREROOM - LATE NIGHT.

It is extremely late at night; the HEARTH along one wall of the room is lit only by the faintest GLOWING EMBERS. There

is light from HYRULE CASTLE outside, too, very faint from few windows, EERIE in the darkness.

TALON lies on a mat against the far wall of the room (with no bed sheets), sleeping beside the hearth. On the other side of the small table, nearest the room's window, MALON sleeps on the floor beneath a sheet. Both Malon and Talon wear pajama-type clothes and FLACCID, POINTED SLEEPING CAPS on their heads (Talon's is BLUE, Malon's GREEN).

LINK sleeps in the center of the room, between the pair, beneath a sheet like Malon but wearing his normal GREEN TUNIC AND SHORTS. His LEATHER SHASH is draped over a chair back beside him.

The boy TOSSES AND TURNS in his sleep, murmuring very faintly. There is a BRIGHT FLASH across the screen: an EXTREME CLOSEUP of a SWORD HILT (It is the Dhise Slaighre, but nearly unrecognizable as such). Link SPASMS a bit after this. Another BRIGHT FLASH reveals an EXTREME CLOSEUP of a glittering stone wall (PANNING FAST across it), superimposed with another FLASH of a pair of YOUNG (CHILDISH), VIOLET EYES in slight profile, staring into the camera. Link's body becomes more still upon this image.

(cue creepy, MINIMALIST MUSIC)

Another SERIES OF FLASHES reveals an EXTREME CLOSEUP of a DARK MAN'S FACE; his eyes appear JAUNDICED. On the FIRST FLASH he is not facing the camera, however SUBSEQUENT FLASHES bring his face into the forefront, and, finally, reveal him staring into the camera with a SINISTER grin.

Another BRIGHT FLASH of the SWORD HILT, identical to the first, but this time the camera PANS DOWNWARD VERY QUICKLY, revealing a little more of the overall blade.

A BRIGHT FLASH of those JAUNDICED EYES, much closer than before, and with a more sinister, seemingly PAINED SCOWL.

Then there is another sequence, this one is not a flash but a FUZZY MEMORY: a child (a boy) lies asleep on a HALF-CUT LOG inside a very small TREE-HOLLOW hut (his face hidden), lying beneath a DELICATE GREEN SHEET. It is RAINING torrents outside the hut, which is enclosed only by a RATTY BROWN SHEET. FOOTSTEPS, first light but soon extremely loud, sound outside. The green bed sheet MOVES slightly; a

CLOSEUP on the hut entrance shows a pair of LARGE, 'CRUEL-LOOKING' BLACK RIDING BOOTS moving in front of the hut, walking off beyond the tiny domicile.

(creepy, MINIMALIST MUSIC quickly and unexpectedly CUTS OUT, leaving silence, except for distant CRICKET CHIRPS)

Link wakes with a start, SITTING UP quickly with a hand on his heart; he is SWEATING PROFUSELY and BREATHING HARD. The boy waits a moment to catch his breath, staring down at his lap. He finally looks up and towards the WINDOW, staring out at HYRULE CASTLE in the distance.

The boy moves closer to the window, crawling on HANDS AND KNEES and puts his head up against the windowpane (the castle is reflected in his EYES).

An EXCEEDINGLY BRIEF FLASH of the YOUNG GIRL'S VIOLET EYES again fills the screen (very, very brief: verging on subliminal). The boy blinks in confusion.

Link's head rises and falls slightly in rhythmic motion; it is revealed that he is directly above the sleeping MALON, with his hands on her stomach and shoulder. Link's eyes WIDEN in surprise.

Malon MUTTERS NONSENSE and then reflexively 'sleep-punches' Link directly on the chin; the boy falls backward and goes down with a thud.

EXT. CASTLEBRIDGE - MORNING

Talon sits in the wooden cart at the reins. It is fully stocked with goods buried beneath a GRAY TARP in the back. Link comes around front and CHECKS THE REINS on both horses.

TALON

"Nothing like an early start to a productive day, eh? Beautiful sunrise! It keeps one's spirits from spoiling, as well as our goods, naturally!"

Talon points to the BACK OF THE CART.

TALON

"And this stuff isn't the kind that should be left to spoil. Oh, no! I'm taking the choicest bits of our harvest up to the Castle, today."

He looks down at Link, who is still busy tightening the reins on the horses.

TALON

"And you're coming with me."

Link looks up, SURPRISED.

TALON

"After all: it seems I could use a 'bodyguard' in this kind of climate. How's that sound to you?"

Link scrambles up into the back of the cart, seating himself atop a GRAY TARP.

TALON

(smiling)

"I thought so. Now, then: be sure to mind your manners and do what I say..."

The cart starts MOVING. It reaches the ROYAL GATE and the guards open it; the cart rumbles through.

TALON

"I know that you're a gabby little charmer, but it's best if you speak to no one, especially given current circumstances up there."

He looks back at the boy as the cart moves up the HIGHROAD.

TALON

"And, for the Goddesses' sake: don't touch anything..."

The cart MOVES OFF, passing the castle gate and ascending the High Road. On the way up to Hyrule Castle the cart moves by several AUGUST STRUCTURES, including one massive, GOTHIC-LOOKING 'CATHEDRAL' set into the land beside Castlebridge (it is perched beside a large drop-off into the lake below). This is the TEMPLE OF TIME.

EXT. HYRULE CASTLE GROUNDS - MORNING

A massive, fairy-tale like castle complete with spires constructed of glittering grey stone. The castle's CENTRAL SPIRE is gigantic, looming over all other castle ramparts. There is a massive field before the castle, over which the Highroad runs up to the MAIN ENTRANCE. Beside the road there is a steep drop in the terrain, leading down to a large, well-manicured HEDGEROW MAZE and, further back, still, to the EARTH-SHELTERED SECTION of the castle built into the back section of the hill upon which the castle-proper rests.

The cart moves along the Highroad at a distance from the Castle, still winding up the road. Link stares at the Castle with wonder, getting up on HIS KNEES to get a better look at the place. As he does so there is a GRUNT from the tarp beneath him and MOVEMENT as well.

Link quickly jumps off the tarp and is ready to scream in surprise, but HANDS come up from under the tarp and COVER HIS MOUTH while pulling him under the sheet: Link quickly realizes that Malon is hiding in the cart. The children lie prone beneath the tarp.

MALON

(cradling her finger)

"Ah, sheesh: you didn't have to bite down, did you, Fairy Boy? You could tell it was me, couldn't you?"

Link looks over at the girl, his face bearing an AMBIGUOUS expression.

MALON

"Alright: don't answer that..."

The boy COCKS AN EYEBROW.

MALON

"What? I'm here 'cause someone has to keep an eye on Talon; left to his own the layabout would go carousing with the Quartermaster's troops all afternoon long. That, or sleep on the job. Both, maybe."

She looks at Link with an IMPERIAL SCOWL.

MALON

"Not that I don't trust your work ethic, Fairy Boy, but business is just one of those things that needs a sensible

woman's touch to keep things on track. Hmph! And the Castle staff won't let girl-workers come up here, not unless they're chambermaids or kitchen staff, or those creepy Sheikah kids, I guess..."

Navi peeks out from Link's shoulder sash (due to the darkness under the tarp she radiates a striking amount of light).

NAVI
(to Link)

"They're imperialist sexist chauvinists, huh?"

Link looks down at Navi, CURIOUS.

NAVI
(to Link)

"Never mind: we'll make flashcards later, or something..."

Talon's cart crests the Highroad hill and skirts the short DROPOFF in land leading to the hedgerow mazes beside the Castle. Link and Malon peek out at the scene from under the tarp.

MALON

"I tell you: that is a castle. Y'know: I hear that the Royal Family has servants for their servants. I've heard that their pets live in carpeted apartments with fireplaces an' everything..."

The girl climbs up over Link to get a better look at the castle; in the process she digs her knees into Link's back and rests one elbow on his head.

MALON

"Someone even told me that the Princess uses people for footstools, if you can believe that!"

Link ROLLS HIS EYES beneath her.

Malon rolls off Link and shakes her head.

MALON

"Heh! Buncha spoiled poofs, if you ask me. Still, though, it must be kinda nice: bubble baths every day, fancy costume balls and stuff like that, satin sheets, pretty dresses, probably with little frills and everything. Oh,

and I bet the Princess gets to meet all kinds of interesting people..."

The girl rests her head in her hands.

MALON

"And knights: I'll bet she meets knights all the time. You have to be around knights a lot if you're a princess, right? All that shiny armor, the polished helmet, sword at the ready— all just for you— all at a moment's notice..."

PAN across from Malon's face to Link's: the boy is looking at her quizzically with a COCKED BROW. The girl snaps out of her reverie and glares at the boy.

MALON

"What're you looking at, Fairy Boy?"

Link quickly looks away.

Talon pulls the cart to a stop about 100 yards from the Castle's MAIN ENTRANCE. Link rolls out from under the tarp and watches as Talon and the CASTLE QUARTERMASTER greet each other. With laughing and back-slapping the pair walks off. Talon calls back to Link.

TALON

"See here, my boy: supervise these good chaps while they unload our goods, will you?"

Talon and the Quartermaster walk out of view.

Link stands by the cart, looking confused, while a few CASTLE GUARDS begin unloading the contents of the cart.

Malon rolls out from under the tarp and lands beside Link.

MALON

"Ooooh! I'll 'supervise' you, you louse!"

The girl points at Link commandingly.

MALON

"You stay and guard the cart! You understand?"

Link nods.

The girl storms off after Talon but is soon confronted by a spear-carrying CASTLE GUARD.

CASTLE GUARD
"Aha, little missy..."

The man kneels down to eye-level with the girl.

CASTLE GUARD
"And where are we going, running about on the Highroad today, my little radish sprout? Do you need some assistance?"

Malon snarls and grabs the guard's GOLDEN SUIT LAPEL.

MALON
"No: it's you and your guard boys who'll be needing assistance when you misplace half of our shipment and let it spoil 'cause you don't know how to store it right! You think the Royal Family'll be out of sorts when they don't get their fresh milk in the morning? That's nothin' compared to the bill we'll be charging to the Captain of the Guard for our lost earnings!"

CASTLE GUARD
"Ah, uh..."

The man stands up, befuddled. Before he can speak Malon runs off after the guards carrying the shipment; the Castle Guard helplessly follows behind her. Malon BARKS VARIOUS ORDERS to the men as she chases after them.

Navi hovers near Link's head.

NAVI
"That man has my deepest sympathies..."

Link turns away from the cart and stares down the STEEP HILL leading to the HEDGEROW MAZE.

NAVI
"Well, at least our job's simple: watch the cart, keep people away. Yup: just need a little simple vigilance on our side..."

Link ignores the fairy as he STARES INTENTLY at the part of Hyrule Castle beyond the Hedgerow (in particular, the GLITTERING GREY STONE the composes it).

NAVI

(hovering closer)

"Uh... something important I'm missing, here?"

Link steps forward, closer to the edge of the hill and continues staring at the Castle, slowly cocking his head to the side.

Navi rests on the boy's shoulder, staring at him CURIOUSLY. She, too, looks down upon the castle and TILTS HER HEAD in exactly the same angle as Link.

CLOSE UP on Link and Navi.

A DUSKY WOMAN'S FINGER comes to rest atop Link's head; the finger slowly twirls his hair around in a small arc.

Link LOOKS UP with his eyes.

ZOOM OUT reveals Nabooru standing directly behind Link.

NABOORU

(smiling unsettlingly)

"My apologies, little one: it's just that Gerudo children lack such a hair color. By the Golden Goddesses! This stark-white blondness: I find it most..."

Nabooru's finger tousles the boy's hair more vigorously.

NABOORU

"... 'curious'. Do you fancy the view, little one?"

Link faces forward and doesn't answer; Navi produces a very nervous SQUEAK.

The Gerudo woman points out several BRIGHT SPECKS moving through the Hedgerow in ordered cadence.

NABOORU

"The Royal Guard is out in force today, as they have been all week long. They don't trust us Gerudo, you see, and are always on the lookout for whatever mischief we 'savages' might get into..."

Nabooru crosses her arms.

NABOORU

"The presentation of a Gerudo crown prince is no small matter: it is an unprecedented honor that we bestow upon your Kingdom. Tch! No matter: it seems that the Royal Guard prefer to honor only the stereotypes of my people. We're just a coterie of thieves, after all, and our lord a prince of thieves; they're out looking for a mischief-maker..."

Link says nothing.

Nabooru kneels down closer to the boy's side and extends her arm across Link's face.

NABOORU

"They've nothing to fear from us, after all: our skin hardly blends in so well with such greenery. Our bodies are made to blend in with the dark red rocks of the Gerudo Valley, after all. How could we possibly hide in the Royal Family's precious little garden? How could we possibly make mischief for them in such a way?"

The woman touches Link's shoulder, fingering his BRIGHT GREEN TUNIC.

NABOORU

"You are 'well-suited' to such pursuits, though: aren't you?"

The woman again tousles Link's hair.

NABOORU

"Even though not all of your body blends in so well, does it? Oh, my little towheaded tattler: I guess that would give you a 50-50 chance of avoiding their patrols, although— to be honest— I'd never put any money on a small child's tactical prowess. Please understand: my sister's actions down at Castlebridge the other day were not typical of my people's virtues, and I should thank you for bringing that issue to light..."

Nabooru stands up and moves behind Link, putting her hands on his shoulders.

NAVI

(whispering to Link)

"Not good... not good... not good... not good..."

NABOORU

"But you can help my people out even more, little one, by dispelling the Royal Guard's unjust stereotype about the Gerudo people while simultaneously reaffirming a most deserved stereotype that's been around since the dawn of time..."

The woman leans down near Link's ear and speaks with a wide grin.

NABOORU

"Small children left to their own devices can stir up more trouble than a nest of newborn dodongos'."

Nabooru violently PUSHES Link down the steep hill; the boy tumbles wildly and uncontrolled, SCREAMING all the while. He reaches the bottom and crashes through several rows of the hedge maze, leaving a small boy-sized hole in each hedge before coming to rest in front of a small GARDEN FOUNTAIN, upside down, with his back against the granite backplash.

Link GROANS.

Navi lilts through one of the shredded hedges and comes to Link's side.

NAVI

"I told you that wasn't good..."

There are SHOUTS of Castle Guards coming from the area of the maze that Link crashed through. Link gets up, dusts himself off and stumbles down the hedgerow, away from the loud voices.

NAVI

"Alright. It's fine: it's all fine. Look, just find a guard and explain the situation to him, okay? They'll understand what happened and get us out of here and back up to the Highroad..."

Link looks up at Navi, HOPEFUL.

NAVI

"Orrrrrr... maybe they'll get suspicious and hold you for questioning and we'll miss meeting up with Malon and Talon; they'll get upset, you'll get fired, and then you'll end up without any food or shelter and we'll both starve to death in a ditch outside town somewhere..."

Link GLARES at her.

NAVI

"What? I'm just accounting for all possible outcomes..."

The boy WANDERS around the maze, at first with timid alertness, but ultimately more disarmed and with increasing frustration at not finding the exit.

NAVI

"Well: if we do run into any guards, just remember that it'll be your own 'natural eloquence' that gets us past 'em, so look sharp..."

FAR OVERHEAD ZOOM on Link trudging through a part of the oversized maze.

NAVI

(echoing in the open-air)

"Heck, this maze is so big we probably don't have anything to worry about: we could walk for hours through here and not run into another living soul..."

Link rounds a corner and instantly comes face-to-face with THREE HYRULE CASTLE GUARDS, all holding large spears in their hands, flanking the boy and lying in wait for him.

NAVI

"...or not."

CASTLE GUARD #1

"You there: boy! What business do you have in the King's Garden?"

Navi hovers near Link's ear.

NAVI

"Uh... tell them you're a plant waterer: a gardener's assistant, or something. You don't happen to have any hedge clippers strapped to your back, do you? I didn't think so..."

CASTLE GUARD #2

"Knave! You will answer us!"

NAVI

"Remember: 'natural eloquence'..."

Link looks around nervously, first at the men surrounding him, then at the spears in their hands. He OPENS HIS MOUTH slowly, as if to speak.

FAR OVERHEAD ZOOM on the hedgerow maze. LINK'S WILD SCREAMING echoes across the maze.

TIGHT CAMERA CHASE as Link careens through the hedges, freely diving through several bushes, darting around others, spending most of his time scrambling through the plants.

Random guards' HANDS grab at him periodically. Link darts between several sets of FEET.

GUARDS' SHOUTING is audible in all directions. The guards eventually lose their line-of-sight with the boy and begin a search; a TROOP OF GUARDS run past a small hedge; one stays behind, at the ready, directly in front of the SMALL HEDGE.

A RED-TINTED VIEW of that guard from the view of the bushes beneath him. The GUARD'S THOUGHTS echo.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"They would call us all out on alert, today! This had better not be another drill..."

The man briefly STANDS ON ONE FOOT, uncomfortable.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"My bunion's acting up doubly-fierce this morning!"

A moment later Link bursts through the hedge between the guard's feet wearing the MASK OF TRUTH. The guard manages to grab Link by the SCRUFF and struggles to control the boy.

Link fails wildly and manages to bring his own foot down on the guard's left foot. The guard DROPS the boy and HOWLS, clutching his foot while Link runs off.

NAVI

"That wasn't very nice."

TIGHT CAMERA CHASE as Link quickly darts through the maze interspersed with cuts of his RED-TINTED VISION as he watches guards run by from the safety of the shrubs. Their THOUGHTS echo as he passes them.

CASTLE GUARD #4

"...over by the water fountain..."

CASTLE GUARD #5

"...damned skulking bastard..."

CASTLE GUARD #6

"...probably moving to the south quadrant..."

CASTLE GUARD #7

"...could it be her? She'd better not be toying with us again! Gah! Mistress Impa needs to have long talk with her..."

CASTLE GUARD #8

"...gotta be a Gerudo: bet my life on it!"

Link manages to avoid all patrols and bursts through a hedge at the end of the maze; the boy stays low and sprints between two TALL STONE WALLS signifying the castle proper: he runs headlong into the CASTLE COURTYARD.

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD - MIDMORNING.

A large 'rupee-shaped cutout' in Hyrule Castle; there is an ornamental moat of clear blue water surrounding it, flanked by small bushes, all bearing brilliant WHITE ROSES. The grass along its center is bright green and well-trimmed. A RAISED PLATFORM along the most interior section of the courtyard allows one to see the castle interior through TALL, NARROW WINDOWS. The large, gray, sparking stone walls are several floors tall on every side.

Link sprints into this courtyard, bounding over a SMALL WOODEN BRIDGE over the ornamental moat, and ducks down

behind a small WHITE ROSEBUSH. He is still wearing the MASK OF TRUTH over his face.

Several CASTLE GUARDS eventually move past the courtyard entrance, take one long look down the courtyard and then move off in another direction. Link WATCHES THEM from his hiding place and pulls the mask up above his head when they walk off.

The boy SIGHS in relief and lies down with his back to the bush.

OVERHEAR SHOT: there is an UNEXPLAINED SHADOW cast down across the grass near Link's rosebush: it is a SILHOUETTE OF AN ADULT WOMAN, but it is not otherwise conspicuous and the boy does not notice.

Eventually Link notices movement along the raised platform at the courtyard interior: AN 8-YEAR-OLD GIRL in a light purple dress is kneeling near one of the castle windows, her back to Link. She very faintly TURNS HER HEAD for an instant, but remains focused on the castle window.

At this movement Link dives behind the rosebush and dons the MASK OF TRUTH (to see if she noticed him). We see A RED-TINTED VIEW of the girl from Link's perspective, however there is NO INTERNAL MONOLOGUE.

Link removes the Mask of Truth and holds it up to his face while looking at it QUIZZICALLY. He raps it with his fist and then shakes it around (like an Etch-a-Sketch).

NAVI
(whispering)

"Best to get moving, shall we? After all: your track record going up against little girls isn't exactly sterling, is it?"

Link moves his hand slowly through the air, brushing Navi away. The boy takes several small steps towards the girl, INTRIGUED, and then stops about 50 feet from her.

We see that the girl wears a headscarf with a THREE-LINKED-TRIANGLE symbol sewn into the back of it in brilliant gold weave.

After a long delay Link takes several more steps, coming to the bottom of the platform; his footfalls land on the WOODEN PLATFORM and are audible to the girl, who turns around quickly, STARTLED. The girl is exceedingly beautiful, with large VIOLET EYES and delicate DIRTY BLOND HAIR bunched up beneath her tight ornamental headscarf. She GASPS in surprise.

LONG SHOT from a white rosebush in the garden with both children on near-opposite sides of the screen.

YOUNG GIRL
"W- who are you?"

Link does not answer; his pose and demeanor are equally NERVOUS as the girl's.

PAN UP to Link's right shoulder; Navi hovers in the air.

The young girl looks at Navi with WONDER.

YOUNG GIRL
"You have a fairy..."

Navi CIRCLES THROUGH THE AIR in small, erratic patterns.

YOUNG GIRL
"Oh, I'm sorry: you travel with a fairy companion. A- are you, by chance, a Kokiri child?"

Link slowly looks down at his own feet, and then off to one side, as if this is a difficult question to answer.

YOUNG GIRL
"You... are a Kokiri, aren't you? There are stories I've heard about the Kokiri- how they can never leave the Great Forest- but you are a Kokiri, aren't you? I don't mean to pry, but it's just that... I- I think I've seen..."

The young girl looks Link up and down very slowly. She soon stands erect and wiggles her head.

YOUNG GIRL
"Oh, my goodness! I didn't mean to be so rude, either!"

The girl puts a hand against the front of her violet dress, over her heart. She DESCENDS the stairs and comes face to face with Link.

YOUNG GIRL

"How could I forget to introduce myself? My name is—"

MEN'S SHOUTING comes from the far entrance to the Castle Courtyard. Several CASTLE GUARDS dash into the Courtyard with long spears.

Link GASPS at the sight and quickly dives into a nearby rosebush, however he soon rolls out of the other side HOWLING in pain, with several small cuts from the thorns.

CASTLE GUARD #3, moving quickly but also LIMPING, grabs the boy by the scruff and holds Link up, sneering.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Bunions or no, boy-o, I'm gonna take real pleasure in sticking my boot so far up your—"

The Young Girl COUGHS daintily.

The Guard immediately turns around and stands at attention before the girl, still holding Link high over the ground with one hand.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Oh! Sincerest apologies! A minor annoyance! We'll see to this bold trespasser for you! We're all so very, very sorry for the disturbance, Your Hi—"

The Young Girl crosses her arms.

YOUNG GIRL

"The 'disturbance' is fine, Captain. But may I ask what it is, specifically, that you wish to do with my guest?"

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Well: a night or two in the castle dungeon might—"

The guard SPUTTERS and BLINKS.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"D- did you say he was your 'guest'?"

YOUNG GIRL

"I did. Is such a thing not allowed? Can I not consort with people of my own choosing?"

CASTLE GUARD #3

"N- no! Not at all! I mean: of course, Your Highness!"

CLOSE UP on NAVI, near Link's ear.

NAVI

"`Highness`?"

The guard DROPS LINK on the ground; the boy lands with a GRUNT and then stands up slowly, DUSTING HIMSELF OFF.

The guard quickly KNEELS before the Young Girl, head against his knee. The Young Girl looks around at the other guards.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"A thousand apologies, Highness!"

YOUNG GIRL

"You use such an effort to go after someone so small: did you really think he was a kidnapper, or engaged in some other nefarious act, Captain?"

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Of course not, Highness, but orders are orders, as you know, and the law—"

YOUNG GIRL

"—is the law; I know this as well, Captain."

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Of course you do."

YOUNG GIRL

"Would you take your leave?"

The Guards quickly form rank and file out of the Castle Courtyard; CASTLE GUARD #3 bows as he leaves.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Again: my sincerest apologies!"

YOUNG GIRL

"And, again: it's alright, Captain. Thank you for demonstrating such devotion to your duty."

The guards leave the Courtyard. The Young Girl walks past Link a few steps, watching as they disappear beyond the courtyard's edge. She turns her head back in Link's direction with a nascent SMILE.

YOUNG GIRL

"I don't suppose you actually are a kidnapper, are you?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD; the Young girl SHRUGS (seemingly DISAPPOINTED).

YOUNG GIRL

"Oh, well. I don't suppose you'd have gotten very far if you were, anyway..."

The girl MOVES back toward the platform as she speaks these words; a TIGHT FOCUS on her and Link's faces in the frame suddenly, inexplicably (and very, very briefly) reveals a RED-EYED WOMAN DRESSED IN DARK CLOTHES AND CHAINMAIL standing directly behind Link with her arms crossed. The Young Girl's head passes through the frame and then this woman is gone and Link is still watching the Young Girl, oblivious.

YOUNG GIRL

"Let's see, where were we?"

She faces the boy and puts her hand back over her heart.

YOUNG GIRL

"Oh yes: I was introducing myself. I'm Zelda, the Princess of Hyrule. It's really a pleasure to meet you..."

The girl extends a hand in the 'kissing-position'; it is girded in a delicate white glove. Link awkwardly reaches up to take her hand, but stops short, BLUSHING profusely (NOTE: he does NOT touch the girl's hand).

ZELDA

"It's strange, and it can't be a coincidence..."

Zelda steps back up the wooden platform, closer to the castle windows. She appears DISTRACTED.

Link COCKS HIS HEAD.

ZELDA

"I wouldn't be so personal with someone I'd just met— not normally— but now I think I should, even though I don't really know why. My sleep has been troubled for a long while now. Maybe its not so long, I suppose, though it seems like it when you can't sleep well. I— I've had dreams, many kinds of dreams, and they've been more intense recently: more uniform, and more... disturbing."

Zelda sits on one of the wooden slats in front of the window, careful not to crease her violet dress. Link very slowly sits down beside her, allowing about a foot of distance between them. The girl motions back to the castle window with her head. She cups both hands over her chest.

ZELDA

"I've seen... 'him', even before I'd met him. And suffering: I've seen that too. All kinds, and I don't understand it, not all of it."

Zelda looks over at Link.

ZELDA

"Not any of it, I suppose. Also, I've seen a boy dressed in green— a towhead—"

NAVI

(to Link)

"Better'n a dishwater blonde..."

ZELDA

"—walking down a path: walking out of the forest. This boy I assumed was a Kokiri, based on the fact that he traveled with a fairy. His face..."

Zelda stares down into her lap and then looks back up at Link.

ZELDA

"It was you, I think. It is you: I saw you— I've seen you— even before I met you. I don't understand it, not all of it... and, again, I don't really know why..."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Oh, my goodness: her cart's moving with no one at the reins..."

Zelda STANDS UP; Link does LIKEWISE.

ZELDA

"How could I know you before I'd met you? It sounds absurd—crazy, I know— and I haven't spoken to many about this."

Zelda looks at Link with a WISTFUL SMILE.

ZELDA

"You should see people when I do speak of it: I say it's crazy— I accuse myself of being crazy, even— but it's always the same platitudes and reassurances: 'You're not crazy', they tell me, but I'm not taken seriously either: as if I'm playing at some strange game. Why would I be taken seriously, anyway? I can't expect anyone to take my bad feelings to heart and investigate them, can I? Such vague premonitions..."

Link looks at Navi QUIZZICALLY.

NAVI

(to Link)

"Flashcards. Later."

Zelda turns away from Link.

ZELDA

"Princess or not: one simply doesn't invest such an effort to act on behalf of someone so small. People talk thousands of words, but when you see it in their eyes— that they don't believe a word they say to you— those platitudes hurt even more."

The girl's eyes QUIVER, but she takes a stiff upper lip and LAUGHS bitterly. She bows her head and closes her eyes.

ZELDA

"I'm sorry to burden you with my troubles, so. You don't have to tell me that I'm not crazy: I know you think I am. You should, anyway..."

Zelda opens her eyes and looks up: to her surprise Link is standing an inch from her face. There is a short pause and

then Link SHAKES HIS HEAD BACK AND FORTH very slowly, staring at Zelda seriously.

Zelda SNIFFS very faintly.

ZELDA

"Do you believe me?"

Link nods.

Zelda squats back down on the wooden steps.

ZELDA

"People talk thousands of words... but you don't look like you need that many: not to look sincere, at least. Thank you."

Link takes a step back from the girl and looks up at one of the NARROW WINDOWS beside the platform. He bows down, identical to how Zelda did when he first saw her, and peers inside: there is a LARGE GRANITE-CLAD HALL, complete with MEN AND WOMEN of the Royal Court standing at various places.

Link BLINKS, then pulls the MASK OF TRUTH off his back and puts it on; his RUBY-TINTED VISION moves across the crowd, picking up VARIOUS THOUGHTS until the boy cranes his head as far as possible to view the far side of the room.

A MAN IN A DARK CLOAK wearing LARGE, CRUEL-LOOKING BLACK RIDING BOOTS is kneeling, head against one knee before a throne (most of the throne, as well as its occupant, are not observed). The man's face is obscured, but as he bows forward we see that he has FIERY, DARK RED HAIR indicative of a Gerudo. Despite the fact that Link wears the Mask of Truth there is NO INTERNAL MONOLOGUE from the man.

Link rises and pulls the Mask of Truth off his face. We see that Zelda is now standing close behind the boy. Link takes the Mask of Truth and stares at it quizzically and shakes it (again: like an Etch-a-Sketch) while Zelda speaks.

ZELDA

"My father is holding his court, today. He... requested my presence— he wanted me to be there— but I didn't want to appear. It's an insult, he thinks, because today the crown-prince of the Gerudo is presenting himself to my father;

he's declaring his respect for and his loyalty to the Royal Family of Hyrule. I... I greatly admire the Gerudo people, and it's not to insult them that I refused to appear."

Zelda bows her head and shakes it.

ZELDA

"It doesn't matter. My father didn't force me to show: he's been worried about me lately— about my own health, I think— and he has forgiven my disobedience for the time being..."

Link puts the Mask of Truth back on and looks through the window, however immediately (and unexpectedly) the MAN IN BLACK'S head turns slightly and we see a JAUNDICED-LOOKING eye move in Link's direction.

Link GASPS and falls backward, landing on the wooden platform with a thud.

Zelda stands over the boy.

ZELDA

"What? Did they see you?"

Link pulls the Mask of Truth up over his head.

ZELDA

"He saw you, didn't he?"

The girl bows slightly and extends a gloved hand for the boy. Link reaches up, but then pauses; he eventually gets up on his own without taking the girl's hand.

ZELDA

"His name is Crown-Prince Ganondorf, of the Colossus Oasis Plain."

Link's head picks up at this name, he stares at Zelda INTENTLY.

ZELDA

"I knew him before I met him..."

She looks up at Link, registering his surprise.

ZELDA

"You did, too: didn't you?"

Link does not answer.

Zelda walks away from the window with her hands over her chest.

ZELDA

"It's such an important occasion, and I understand that: after all, only one male child is born to the Gerudo Nation every 100 years, and that male is destined to be their king..."

Link nods absently, but then his eyes WIDEN; the boy GESTURES ABSTRACTLY with his fingers, trying in vain to understand this arrangement; he looks over at Navi QUIZZICALLY.

NAVI

(to Link)

"I don't know how that would work out, either..."

ZELDA

"As for the Prince, I don't trust this man's intentions: I cannot, given what I've seen, given what I've felt..."

The girl faces Link.

ZELDA

"...and given what I know, things that I couldn't possibly know but— nonetheless— things I do know."

She turns, slightly in profile, as if she wishes to face away from Link but refuses out of politeness.

ZELDA

"...I've seen a boy dressed in green— a towhead..."

CLOSE UP on LINK.

ZELDA

"I said before that it doesn't matter what I say to anyone else: princess or not, one simply doesn't invest such an effort to act on behalf of someone so small..."

She moves closer to the boy.

ZELDA

"But... we're both small, aren't we? I want to ask you for your help. It's so rude of me, having just met you, but I feel like I have no other choice."

NAVI

(whispering to Link)

"Not good... not good... not good... not good..."

Link inaccurately SWATS THE AIR beside his head.

ZELDA

"The suffering I mentioned, not all of it is a vague premonition: I know there is unrest among the Goron people at Death Mountain, and there are whispers of strange happenings in the former domain of the Zora. These places are two of the three symbolic 'jewels' of our realm: they're places that ordinary citizens of the crown do not necessarily consider vital, but for which the Royal Family is uniquely tasked with preserving. The legitimacy of our rule is linked to it. It is by the will and the leave of these places alone that we have access to the great arsenal of the Royal Family's rule: a sacred item bestowed upon Hyrule by the Golden Goddesses themselves."

Zelda picks up the hem of her purple dress and curtsies at this reference, bowing her head deeply; Link, however, does no such thing.

ZELDA

"These two locations in Hyrule are pained, and their pain jeopardizes the very legitimacy of my family's rule. The fact that Prince Ganondorf appeared at my father's court at the same time cannot be a coincidence. My father and his advisers rule wisely, and justly, but their current concerns are all political: they steer our kingdom through stormy weather, but they're not looking out to the horizon. I fear that something terribly may soon happen, and if it does we will be defenseless to guard ourselves against it without the health and consent of the land: without the strength of the three 'jewels' of Hyrule."

Zelda looks at Link.

ZELDA

"I know this is a lot of information. Do you understand everything I've told you?"

Link SHIFTS HIS EYES left and right; he finally NODS at the girl.

ZELDA

"My family has always had good relations with the Goron race, at least during my lifetime. Their lord, King Darunia, is a close personal friend of my family. He'd come to court often in the past to talk business with my father, and he'd amaze me with acrobatic games and fire-flower tricks: such things were quite mesmerizing for me when I was little..."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Ah, yes: 'cause you're at the peak of womanhood, now, aren't you?"

Link inaccurately SWATS AT THE AIR.

ZELDA

"My father requested a Goron delegation to attend this meeting with Lord Ganondorf, but he's heard nothing from them since. The Goron are an insular people, but I cannot believe that King Darunia would refuse to appear at court on such an occasion. I would send my own envoy, for him to answer to me, personally, and explain his behavior."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD.

ZELDA

"I know: you think that if he would ignore the words of a king that he'd surely ignore the words of a princess. That might be true, if I were only a princess, but I'm also a child he's watched grow up: a curious little girl he used to amaze with silly games..."

Zelda closes her eyes and SMILES, fondly.

ZELDA

"...that is harder for a person to ignore, I think."

The girl faces link.

ZELDA

"My father's court is in full diplomatic flair: there is no one for me to send on my behalf, at the moment."

Link looks the girl UP AND DOWN.

ZELDA

"No: that is out of the question. I... do not have that kind of freedom..."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Obviously..."

There is a pause, then Link STEPS FORWARD and faces Zelda head-on, looking RESOLUTE.

ZELDA

"Would you go see Darunia for me?"

NAVI

(to Link)

"Oh, this is not happening; this is not happening!"

Link nods.

Zelda CLAPS HER HANDS, grinning ecstatically; she REGAINS HER COMPOSURE and hands the boy a GLISTENING TRINKET: a keychain-sized token depicting THREE INTERLOCKED TRIANGLES (a pattern identical to the one on the back of Zelda's headscarf).

ZELDA

"This is not exactly my family's crest; you probably saw that on your way through the castle grounds. This design is older: it was something used by my family long ago in our history, from back when our people dwelled on the shores of old Hylia. It's a design I've always liked. Darunia knows that about me... he will see you, I believe."

Link LOOKS DOWN at the trinket, then back up at Zelda.

ZELDA

"The Goron Tribe settlement is just a heartbeat away, right up the shallow slope of Death Mountain—"

NAVI

(to Link)

"Right: and that's 'just a name', I'm sure..."

ZELDA

"—up the Eastern Trail through Kakariko Village. You can be there in no time. I really can't thank you enough!"

Link NODS at the girl, then slowly starts walking off; he crosses through the center of the Castle Courtyard, moving slower as he goes, and more UNSURELY. Zelda calls after him.

ZELDA

"My nursemaid can show you through the gate on the eastern end of Castletown—"

Link TURNS AROUND and bumps right into Impa's midsection, hitting her black chain mail shirt with his face. The boy backtracks quickly, staring up at the woman with ALARM.

ZELDA

"Impa will make the guard at the Shadow Gate allow you in and out; it's the quickest way to go between the castle and the mountain trail."

Impa stares down at Link with her arms crossed, a NONCOMMITTAL SCOWL cemented on her face.

Navi produces a very nervous SQUEAK (identical to the one on PAGE 48).

Link turns, slowly, and begins walking out of the courtyard; at this point Zelda notices the FAIRY OCARINA slung over Link's shoulder. She STEPS FORWARD, her regal demeanor changed, slightly: she is more a normal, curious girl.

ZELDA

"D— do you play?"

Link looks back over his shoulder, first at Zelda, then his ocarina and finally back to the girl again. He NODS.

ZELDA

"I play music; I have studied, anyway. I know I couldn't be nearly as good with an ocarina as a Kokiri forest child, but I can play, too. It was King Darunia who gave me my own ocarina: an old birthday present. Music is so much more important to Goron culture than it is to ours. Darunia loves music— he used to bring his best singers to perform Goron opera for us— and he's always said that he loves

'musical hearts', too. The instrument he gave me is supposed to be able to join together the most devoted of hearts, wherever they might wander..."

Link looks back at his ocarina, BLINKING.

ZELDA

"Maybe... perhaps we could play a duet, sometime?"

Link cocks his head slightly; Navi again produces a very nervous SQUEAK.

EXT. SHADOW GATE OF CASTLETOWN - LATE MORNING.

A massive stone gate on the eastern end of Castletown; it is identical to the MAIN GATE Link passed through earlier, but aged and neglected from disuse. There are COBWEBS in its heights and dust litters the ornate gate design; a symbol of a LARGE WEEPING EYE adorns the top-center of this gate. Unlike the main gate this gate has no massive drawbridge (though it appears to have been equipped with the mechanism for one at some time): only a relatively smaller iron door at the gate's base allows passage.

SLOW PAN across the relatively isolated 'Low Road' of Castletown. This area is a residential district, but not nearly as populated as the rest of Castletown. The road slopes STEEPLY DOWNWARD on its way to the Shadow Gate.

IMPA treads down the lane with ease; Link follows behind her, awkwardly tromping down the very steep road with difficulty.

IMPA

"This is the Low Road of Castletown: the 'street of shadows', they once called it. You came to Hyrule Castle from the High Road: that's the road of the people—royalty, nobility, merchants and peasants: the road of the living."

Link looks up at Impa QUIZZICALLY.

IMPA

"The Low Road is the street of the Royal Family's servants, and the Shadow Gate is a portal for its most trusted guardians: the Sheikah. We cede our lives willingly for the protection of the Royal Family—what life we have within us

is devoted to our duty, alone— so the route we now trod is
the road of the dead...”

NAVI

(to Link)

“This is still not happening; this is still not
happening!”

IMPA

“My charge is not foolish to think there is trouble in the
land. She is most... ‘sensitive’ to such changes in Hyrule
around her, even though she’s confined behind three-story
stone walls...”

Impa looks back at Link.

IMPA

“Her concerns merit investigation, although in truth I
would prefer someone with more suitable ‘qualifications’ to
set out on her behalf.”

Link stops walking; Impa notices this and turns around. The
boy is standing with folded arms, surveying the woman up
and down INTENTLY.

IMPA

“That is impossible. I would not leave my charge’s side. If
the castle guards would let a petulant 8-year-old through
their ranks, what else might they allow into her midst?
Besides, if her visions can be trusted then the greatest
threat to her wellbeing is already lurking within the very
corridors of Hyrule Castle...”

Impa looks over at the SHADOW GATE; she gestures to the
lone guard standing beneath its rusty frame, who balks in
surprise. Impa gestures again, this time more sternly. The
guard fumbles with a large key ring on his belt and
retrieves a large SKELETON KEY. He turns it in the lock,
opening the small, narrow door beneath the Shadow Gate. It
CREAKS noisily.

IMPA

“The Death Mountain Trail begins at Kakariko Village. In
times past that was once the foothill of my people’s camp,
as we were ever-ready to ride through the Shadow Gate at
the command of royal lips. Now, though, it has become a
city of the living...”

Link looks back up at Impa one last time, then hesitantly steps up to the doorway. Impa calls after him.

IMPA

"My charge spoke of three 'jewels' in the land of Hyrule, but only described two of them. You must know what the third is. She was too polite to ask you directly, but I am not: what has happened to the Lost Woods in the southland? What events transpired in the Kokiri Forest? Why is it that you have left?"

Link stops walking; he stares down at the ground for a moment, but then continues walking off, ignoring Impa.

IMPA

(to herself)

"You are either a disastrous choice for my charge's errand, or you have even more 'qualifications' than I first thought..."

She watches as the SHADOW GATE DOOR closes behind the child with a rusty clank.

IMPA

(to herself)

"Or both, perhaps."

SLOW ZOOM on the RUSTY DOOR beneath the shadow gate.

DISSOLVE FADE transition into the next scene.

EXT. SHADOW GATE OF CASTLETOWN - VERY EARLY MORNING.

It is the same location, 12 YEARS LATER. The entirety of Castletown is now a desolate, scarred husk, nearly unrecognizable from the vibrant city it was 12 years prior. It is CLOUDY throughout, and a STATIONARY STORM billows over the Castlebridge/High Road area, around where HYRULE CASTLE used to be.

ADULT LINK forces his way into the city through the door; its hinges turn to dust as he forces the door to give way. His HORSE is tethered to a withered tree outside. There are strange noises coming from the ruins of town: an eerie GUTTERAL COOING.

Link MOVES THROUGH the seemingly-deserted city, stumbling through debris and detritus in the streets. He eventually begins winding up the former HIGH ROAD and comes to its zenith: there is a massive SOOT-ENCRUSTED CASTLE situated at the center of a huge LAKE OF LAVA; the former hilltop the held Hyrule Castle has been converted into a volcanic basin. The castle at its center— comprising the central spire of the former Hyrule Castle and part of the former castle's central keep— is GANONDORF'S CASTLE.

Link approaches the lava lake's edge and STARES across the vast chasm. There is more eerie GUTTERAL COOING in the distance behind him.

After a moment Link turns away and sets back off down the High Road. He passes a MASSIVE GOTHIC-THEMED TEMPLE complete with flying buttresses and arches ('Cathedral'-like); this is the TEMPLE OF TIME.

Link moves past this place slowly. NAVI emerges from his COWL and rests on his shoulder. She LOOKS UP AT LINK, questioningly.

Link looks at her, then he down to his side at the DHISE SLAIGHRE sheathed against his hip. He shakes his head.

LINK

"No: I don't think it works that way, Navi..."

Link moves on, coming into a dense cluster of ruined homes and storefronts, finally coming to the old marketplace square. He stops walking, looking ILL AT EASE.

TIGHT CAMERA FOCUS on Link's face, in profile; he turns his head away from the camera, revealing a REDEAD (a hideous, emaciated ZOMBIE-LIKE CREATURE) standing thirty feet away from him, watching.

Link unsheathes the Dhise Slaighre and STARES right back at the ReDead. The creature unleashes a loud, GUTTERAL COO.

After a moment the ReDead turns awkwardly on its 'heels' and stumbles off.

Link LOWERS HIS GUARD slightly, then flinches: QUICK PAN DOWN reveals a MUCH SMALLER REDEAD huddled up near Link's leg. Link shies away in terror, raising his sword and

preparing to strike; he freezes in this position though, watching as the little ReDead slowly stumbles away from him and totters off through the square, following the bigger ReDead.

Link SIGHS and sheathes his sword.

There is more GUTTERAL COOING, this time many more voices in unison; many DARK SHAPES move through the shadows: a herd of ReDead, all moving away from the square in the same direction.

Link watches these shadows, BLINKING.

The sound of HORSE'S HOOVES moving at a 'funereal' pace rise from behind Link, from the direction of the High Road. The sound of DULL SCRAPING is also audible.

Link ducks behind some debris beside a ruined vendor's tent as a massive KNIGHT IN DARK ARMOR appears, moving away from the direction of Ganondorf's Castle. Its armor is shining steel, but it is so covered in soot and grime as to appear black, with various incongruous shiny patches. This is the IRON KNUCKLE.

It rides on a fearsome BLACK STALLION; many thick cables extend from its saddle and drag behind the horse. A gigantic flat object (of the dimensions of a GRAND PORTRAIT) is being dragged behind it, making the DULL SCRAPE. The object is shrouded in black cloth.

There are two LONG, GOLDEN KNIVES dangling from the Iron Knuckle's hip, JINGLING discordantly as the creature rides in the saddle.

CLOSE UP on the Iron Knuckle's shielded head (none of its face is visible). LINK is visible in the background, crouched low as the Iron Knuckle rides beyond the ruined vendor's tent (soon the creature's face eclipses Link's body in the frame). Iron Knuckle stops its horse and quickly turns its head around: Link is no longer in his previous spot. The creature turns back around and SPURS the horse on; the horse protests with a TORTURED SQUEAL and continues walking, dragging the large, flat, shrouded object behind it. It is moving towards the old town drawbridge and main CITY GATE.

Link emerges from behind the ruined tent, ALERT, listening to the rider's sounds as it disappears from view. He finally slumps down against the rubble.

NAVI emerges from his cowl and sets-down on Link's knee.

LINK

"We can't get to him..."

He taps the HILT OF DHISE SLAIGHRE with an impatient hand.

LINK

"We can't get this to him: not now. Not right now, anyway."

NAVI looks up at Link with a scowl.

LINK

"No: we will. We have to."

The fairy CROSSES HER ARMS.

LINK

"We owe the land: that's why. And we owe her..."

NAVI's scowl DEEPENS.

LINK

"Yes, we do! I do, at least. If you're not with me, then you're not with me, but say so, at least."

NAVI drops her crossed arms and LOOKS OFF TO ONE SIDE, chastised.

LINK

(nodding slowly)

"Fine."

Link stands up; Navi disappears back into the SCRUFF OF HIS COWL.

LINK

"He rules with an iron fist: he must make public appearances, sometimes. If we don't know how to get to him, then we need to find out how to get him to come to us. Someone must know how to get that bastard's attention."

Link walks into and up a ruined building, reaching its roofless second floor; he looks out into the distance beyond town. PLUMES OF SMOKE rise from the land near Death Mountain.

LINK

"That 'Sheik': he went off for the base of Death Mountain. It must still be there: Kakariko Village. Someone there's gotta know something..."

NAVI's blue body PEEKS OUT from Link's cowl.

LINK

"Somebody's got to be fighting for the people of Hyrule..."

SLOW ZOOM on the gloomy DEATH MOUNTAIN.

DISSOLVE FADE into the next scene.

EXT. DEATH MOUNTAIN TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON.

12 years prior to the previous scene.

A gently sloping path, rocky and well-trod, rising up the side of mighty Death Mountain. Below, in the immediate distance, is the edge of KAKARIKO VILLAGE: a humble peasant town dominated by a large windmill at its center.

Young Link walks along the mountain trail. Navi sits atop LINK'S HEAD, bedded down in his hair.

NAVI

"Alright: so I'm not going to point out how completely insane it is for a royal princess to send a little boy out on a diplomatic mission (LINE NOTE: dramatic, sarcastic inflection) 'to save the world from turmoil' and all that, but have you thought about how ridiculously dangerous this is? I hate to be so obvious, but this is Death Mountain, right? And there are dodongos in Death Mountain, right? I mean: that's one of the reasons they call the bloody thing Death mountain in the first place, right?!"

Link comes to a very steep part of the trail; he has to begin climbing over boulders with considerable effort. In the process he SHAKES HIS HEAD in irritation, forcing Navi to take flight. She hovers in front of the boy's face as he clambers.

Link GLOWERS at the fairy as he climbs.

NAVI

"No: you're not being noble, as a matter of fact. You're just a sucker for pouty purple eyes is what you are."

Link glares at Navi with a DISAGREEABLE SNEER; despite this, he BLUSHES.

NAVI

"Hey: listen! Just try to think this through clearly, okay? She's a charming little girl, sure—mentally unbalanced or not— but for the Goddesses' sake think about what you're doing: you'd saw off your own left leg for her if she asked you to!"

Link stops climbing. He looks down at his left leg CONTEMPLATIVELY, ultimately looking back up at Navi while shaking his head. He PATS HIS RIGHT LEG instead, GRINNING SARCASTICALLY.

NAVI

"You think you're very funny, but you're not..."

Link moves up the mountain quickly, soon coming to a VAST OVERHANG in the Death Mountain Trail; this overhang gradually turns into a fully-enclosed cavern.

INT. GATEWAY TO THE GORON CITY - LATE AFTERNOON.

A massive cave room, dimly lit by a very small crack in the ceiling far, far overhead. This place is dominated by a GIGANTIC DODONGO SKULL (appx. two stories in height) sticking out of the far wall with its jaws CLOSED. On either side of the cavern are FISSURES in the earth, leading into an abyss of red-hued labyrinths. All along the outer rim of this cavern are plants, appearing as RADISH SPROUTS, sticking out of the clay earth fringes. These are FIRE FLOWERS.

Link and Navi move closer to the massive dodongo's skull. There is a small iron PLAQUE on the ground in front of the skull, forming a Spartan floor pattern. At its center is text written in the 'GORON' script. Link approaches it and stares down, QUIZZICAL.

NAVI moves close over this floor plaque, illuminating it.

NAVI

"Goroni script... you can't read that, can you?"

Link WAVES HIS ARMS in an irritated shrug.

NAVI

"Ah, that's right: you can barely read New Hylian, can't you?"

Link SCOWLS.

NAVI

"Anyway, it says: 'giant dead dodongo... when he sees red a new way to go will be open.'"

Navi flies up closer to Link's head, hovering by his EAR. Both of them stare at the massive skull.

NAVI

"A poem? Not very catchy, is it? It doesn't even really rhyme..."

The pair STARE at the dead creature for some time. Finally Navi flitters excitedly. She YELLS directly into Link's ear.

NAVI

"Oh, hey: listen!"

Link is SNAPPED OUT of his focus; he STARTS and then glares at the fairy, GESTURING at her angrily.

NAVI

(softer)

"Sorry. But I think this is a clue..."

The fairy flies up near one of the skull's eyes.

NAVI

"The Gorons have sealed up the entrance to their city: probably because of all that 'strife' the princess was talking about. But that seal down there is probably a hint for anyone who speaks Goroni to open the gate if they want to enter their city! All we have to do is figure out just what exactly the message means. If we—"

NAVI turns in the air, looking back down at Link. She stops speaking instantly; a LONG QUIET PAUSE fills the air.

CLOSE UP on LINK'S FACE. The boy stares up at Navi curiously.

NAVI does not speak.

CLOSE UP on LINK'S FACE again; the boy's eyes slowly widen and his lips curl. His breathing becomes louder, more frequent. Slow (SLOW!) pan to the side reveals a massive animal's jaw leering out of the darkness behind the boy. It is the same general shape and contour of the massive dead dodongo's skull.

The DODONGO behind link exhales a GUTTERAL BREATH; ruffling the back of the neck of the boy's tunic.

CLOSE UP on the dodongo as it emerges from the darkness, glaring with two creepy, GIANT BLACK EYES.

CUT to a FARTHER CAMERA SHOT (Navi's point of view) rapidly descending towards the dodongo, blazing past Link's shoulder (missing the boy by millimeters); CAMERA IMPACT with one of the dodongo's eyes: Navi has collided with the creature. BLUE SPARKS flash all over the screen.

Link UNGRACEFULLY ROLLS forward, GRUNTING as Navi swoops up through the air following her impact with the dodongo's face. The creature emerges from a WINCING position to lunge from the shadows, HISSING angrily and pursuing Link on all fours; it is similar in appearance to a giant iguana (appx. four feet at the 'withers') with a squat body and disproportionately large head.

Link races across the cavern's width only to be confronted by a SECOND DODONGO, snarling and flicking its LARGE REPTILIAN TONGUE. The boy dodges this creature and skirts the edges of the cavern, soon coming into contact with a THIRD DODONGO.

The boy runs through a length of FIRE FLOWES SPROUTS planted in orderly rows, eventually coming to a steep ledge in the cavern's side. Link SCRAMBLES UP the edge and comes to rest on the ledge, PANTING considerably.

Navi quickly comes to the boy's side as two of the three dodongos snarl and hiss on the cavern floor, snapping violently with their jaws. Link stands up, FATIGUED.

NAVI

"Ooooh-oh! They don't get much closer than that, do they?"

One of the dodongos begins HEAVING, like a cat struggling with a hairball. Copious plumes of SMOKE suddenly billow from its EARS. The dodongo beside it quickly recoils from the plums with obvious IRRITATION.

The heaving dodongo's ears stop smoking; the creature parts its teeth (resembling a very eerie grin). Bright yellow firelight is clearly visible in the gummed-up gaps of its teeth. It makes a noise akin to an asthmatic drawing in a DEEP BREATH.

CLOSE UP on Link; the boy WHIMPERS.

The dodongo suddenly SPITS A MESS OF FLAMING GEL through the air, coating Link's ledge. The boy goes tumbling down the side, avoiding the napalm-like emission. He comes to rest in the thick of the fire flower patch with one radish-like FLOWER poking up between his legs. A small puddle of flaming gel is on that flower, and immediately the small leaves IGNITE and begin HISSING like a sparkler (or the stereotypical fuse on a stick of dynamite). Link CRIES OUT and quickly barrel-rolls backwards; the small flower stops hissing and then explodes like a cherry bomb (NOT DRAMATIC like a landmine, but certainly enough to cause injury).

Link dashes through the cavern, hopping over small tendrils of fire left by the dodongo's spit attack. The two nearest him refuse to cross over the smoldering gel (despite the fact that their bodies are more than resilient enough); they are dissuaded by the SMOKE.

Link runs back to the giant dodongo's skull, coming face-to-face with the third dodongo. The creature launches a flaming spit attack against him, which Link narrowly dodges once again. The creature places itself between the boy and the dodongo skull.

NAVI hovers high up in the air, near the DODONGO SKULL'S EYE.

NAVI
"Hey!"

Link looks up; he cannot see the giant dodongo's skull for all the SMOKE accumulated against the cavern ceiling. Navi's BRIGHT BLUE BODY is, however, visible.

Close-up FLASH of LINK'S EYES; close-up FLASH of the FLOOR PLAQUE; close-up FLASH of the DODONGO SKULL'S EYES (from back before the smoke eclipsed it).

The dodongo blocking Link's path begins HEAVING; smoke pours out its ears.

NAVI rapidly shuttles down through the air from the dodongo's eye, leaving a TRAIL OF ELECTRIC BLUE SPARKS in her wake.

Link quickly dives against the ground, pulls up a FIRE FLOWER sprout from the cavern floor and LIGHTS the sprout with a nearby pool of dying fire. It SPARKS, then Link sets the small (two-inch) circular bulb of the plant in his SLINGSHOT; he eyes the path Navi left him and fires the 'live' plant through the air, arcing it perfectly along Navi's sparkling line until it lodges in the DEAD DODONGO'S EYE. It explodes with a loud pop; immediately following this is a loud, mechanical CLANKING sound, as of a SWITCH BEING TRIPPED.

The DEAD DODONGO'S JAW comes unhinged and falls to the cavern floor in a violent crash; we see several sets of CHAINS set into the jawbone at various locations; it is a GATE.

The jaw lands squarely on the dodongo blocking Link's path; the creature is flattened just before it can spew its fiery fluid. A messy mixture of animal innards and flaming fluid squirts out the edge of the fallen jawbone gate.

Enough flaming liquid lands on LINK'S TORSO to prompt the boy into a panicked STOP, DROP AND ROLL. Even then it isn't enough; panicked, the boy quickly SHEDS HIS SHIRT, leaving the garment to smolder on the cavern floor. The boy pats his bare upper body down, assured that he is not, in fact, on fire, and then he retrieves his undamaged LEATHER SHOULDER SASH (upon which all his personal effects reside), and slings it back over his body.

Link leaps up and races into the dodongo's jaw; there is a brief path beyond, but then a LARGE IRON DOOR, which is locked, blocks the way.

Navi catches up to the boy.

NAVI

"That... doesn't seem fair, does it?"

GROWLING sounds behind the boy.

Link turns and faces the other two dodongo, who now have the boy cornered at the sealed door. Link grits his teeth and unsheathes the ORNAMENTAL OYSTER KNIFE.

NAVI

"This is definitely not fair!"

The dodongos CLOSE IN.

CLOSE-UP on LINK, in profile, standing in defensive posture with his knife extended in front of him.

The dodongos continue advancing, SNARLING and WHIPPING OUT THEIR TONGUES.

Another CLOSE-UP on LINK in profile; the boy braces himself and lets loose a VERY LOUD 'WAR CRY'.

The dodongos stop their advance; each of them crouches low, then they move closer together. Finally both of them TURN ponderously on their axis and WADDLE off back into the shadows of the cavern.

Link stares after the creatures, MYSTIFIED. Eventually a self-satisfied SMILE graces his lips. Then the boy's NOSE WRINKLES and he coughs lightly: there is a NOXIOUS FUME coming from somewhere behind him.

Link CRANES HIS HEAD BACK as far as possible. CAMERA ON HIS POINT OF VIEW: a GORON WARRIOR is standing directly behind the boy (shown 'upside-down', per the boy's view), looking down at Link with a NASTY SCOWL.

The GORON is, essentially, a giant (appx. 8-foot-tall) 'rock monster': a four-limbed rotund creature comprised of extremely durable 'skin'.

Link MEEKLY SMILES up at the Goron.

Next we see the Goron CARRYING LINK roughly over one shoulder, bringing the struggling boy out past the dodongo skull and through the cavern towards the entrance. In its other hand it carries a LARGE, SMOLDERING STICK (like a giant torch, but spouting only black smoke and not fire).

Link's arms are basically pinned to his sides; the boy manages to struggle with one hand against his shoulder sash, FUMBLING with a pocket.

The Goron reaches daylight and roughly TOSSES Link to the ground. It begins TURNING AROUND to return to the depths of the cavern, but Link stands up quickly, STEPPING FORWARD defiantly. The Goron SNEERS and turns back to confront the child, STOPPING in his tracks quickly: Link is standing with his left fist extended, holding the INTERLOCKING TRIANGLE TRINKET given to him by Princess Zelda.

CLOSE UP on the Goron's face: it stares at Link CONTEMPATIVELY.

CLOSE UP on Link's face (with the TRINKET in the frame's forefront); the boy stares back at the Goron DEFIANTLY.

The Goron turns around and begins lumbering back into the cavern. It stops after a few feet and looks back at Link.

After a pause Link slowly approaches the Goron, coming to its side; the two of them then descend back into the cavern.

There are MANY MORE DODONGO gathered in the cavern by the giant dodongo's skull. They part as the Goron enters with its SMOLDERING STICK. Link SHIES UP to the giant, going so far as to HUG against its hip as they move through the cavern. The Goron looks down at Link and motions to one of the creatures with his massive head.

GORON #1

"Dodongo dislikes smoke."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Yeah: but what about the rest of them?"

Link and the Goron pass through the skull and beyond the iron door, coming to the path that leads directly into the GORON CITY.

INT. GORON CITY - EARLY EVENING.

An underground city comprised of 'adobe-like' huts. The terrain is rocky and irregular; the cavern ceiling is many, many stories up overhead. At city center is a DEPRESSION in the ground leading into DARUNIA'S CHAMBERS.

Link and the Goron walk through the city (Link now has a dun-colored CLOTH draped around his shoulders, covering most of his upper body); many Goron onlookers stare at the SOOT-COVERED boy curiously.

The city mood is dominated by GLOOM and DEPRESSION; FUNERREAL MUSIC is coming from Darunia's chamber, faintly echoing throughout the city (barely audible): this depressing, UNSETTLING music is GANONDORF'S DIRGE (NOTE: this song- the character's leitmotif- probably needs to be an ORIGINAL PIECE).

The pair comes to a small central fountain very near Darunia's chamber. The Goron directs Link to the water; Link sits on the side of the ornamental fountain and SPLASHES WATER over his face and parts of his upper body, scrubbing the DIRT, SOOT and GRIME from his torso. The Goron sits near the opposite edge. The Goron watches the boy as he washes, silently POINTING to several parts of its own face, indicating areas Link should address on his face. As Link finishes the Goron TAPS ITS OWN CHEST at the sternum.

Link looks down at his bare chest; we notice for the first time a VERY FAINT DISCOLORATION in the boy's skin at his sternum: it is a CROOKED, SOMEWHAT IRREGULAR-SHAPED TRIANGLE (again: FAINT). Link looks back up at the Goron and SHAKES HIS HEAD, rubbing two fingers against the 'café au lait' birthmark to demonstrate its permanence.

GORON #1

"My mistake. You are fine, then. Underdressed, maybe, but Darunia has never stood on formality..."

Link BLUSHES and again drapes the CLOTH over his shoulders, tying it off against his chest as a makeshift tunic.

GORON #1

"But then, Darunia stands on little else now, as it is. We Gorons live our lives with music in our blood. Our hearts beat in rhythm with bold, joyous ballads, but Darunia..."

The Goron looks across the small square at Darunia's Chambers.

GORON #1

"...Darunia: for several months now his heart beats only to the sound of a dreary dirge."

The Goron rises and MOVES OFF from the fountain; Link does likewise, LOOKING UP at the creature.

GORON #1

"Her Highness is worried about our King, is she? Well, so are we: our city— our people— are struggling under this blight. Without a leader— without the wise rule of a bold, joyous heart— we are all nothing but strays. Our spirits are faltering, just as our king's; our land is crumbling away, slowly, but more and more with each passing day; the dodongo rise up out of the dark depths of the earth where they belong and yet we are not even of the mind to stop them. We are all ultimately of the 'mind' of our king, and as long as his mind lies mired in misery so..."

The Goron looks down at Link, suddenly SELF-CONSCIOUS about its words.

GORON #1

"It is not proper to talk of such things with someone like you..."

The Goron walks towards Darunia's Chambers; Link follows by its side.

GORON #1

"You come on behalf of her Royal Highness. It's enough for me to admit you to his chambers. Still, I doubt that if Princess Zelda herself came into these caverns she'd be

seen by Darunia. Truthfully, I doubt he'd even recognize her."

NAVI
(to Link)

"We could've got that mask from the Happy Mask Shop to remind him of her—"

Link quickly GLARES at the fairy by his side.

The Goron shows Link through the small door leading into Darunia's main meeting room; KING DARUNIA is sitting near the far wall, bathed in shadow, with his back to the rest of the room. On the other side of the room a group of GORON MUSICIANS play various STRANGE INSTRUMENTS; two of the Gorons provide vocal support to the song (again: 'Ganondorf's Dirge') with a STRANGE, OSCILLATING VOCAL RANGE (typical of the people). They appear very ILL AT EASE, uncomfortable with the current, seemingly unending musical selection.

Goron #1 rips the golden trinket from Link's hand, handing it off to one of TWO GORON WARRIORS standing guard in the room. GORON #2 takes the trinket and looks at it thoughtfully, SCOWLING DEEPLY at Link, and then stomps across the room. It tosses the trinket in front of King Darunia on the floor.

Link watches Darunia's back INTENTLY; the king makes no movement.

Goron #2 notices this and turns toward Link with a SNARL; it PICKS THE BOY UP by the scruff and prepares to remove him from the chamber. Darunia BOWS HIS HEAD even further.

DARUNIA
(Sharp, curt command in the 'Goroni Language')

Goron #2 stops walking, turning back towards Darunia.

GORON #2
(Short, questioning phrase in the 'Goroni Language')

DARUNIA
(One-syllable reply in the 'Goroni Language')

Goron #2 carries Link back into the chamber, DEPOSITING the boy against the dark, far wall of the room before Darunia. Link rises and stands squarely before the king.

DARUNIA

(One-word, spoken in the 'Goroni Language')

The Goron King LOOKS UP at Link slowly. We see that his eyes are subtly unlike the other Gorons' eyes: instead of being PURE BLACK orbs they are an unsettling shade of GRAY similar to ADVANCED CATARACTS.

DARUNIA

"A messenger? No. A sapling... before willows..."

ATTENDANTS of Darunia's court stand in a far corner beside a rock-hewn table with their sober faces bathed in shadow; they look on at their king with SOMBER DEJECTION.

DARUNIA

"A body in its youth- a spirit in its spring- has no cause to steel itself within the earth. Despair cannot live in such young eyes; what pain could a sapling truly know? Go, little one: live your childhood..."

Link looks at Darunia COCKEYED. He waits for any other words from the King, but finding none he becomes UNCOMFORTABLE. The boy circles around the king, stepping slowly through the chamber; Darunia stops him with more words.

DARUNIA

"Despair, nonetheless, for the greenest sapling becomes the most brittle willow in the blink of an eye; in the breadth of a hair's width. Time... is a villain; there is not one thing everlasting. I look back on my life- on the whole life of my people, even- and all I see is futility; all I feel is despair..."

Darunia BOWS HIS HEAD once again.

NAVI

(to Link)

"I called you 'mopey' that day back out on the Castletown Trail; do you remember that?"

Link NODS.

NAVI

(to Link)

"I'm sorry about that, 'cause I had no idea what 'mopey' actually was..."

DARUNIA

"Stay with us a time, if you will— sapling messenger of the Princess— if despair is in your heart then you are most welcome among us."

Link MOVES AWAY from the king uncomfortably. He approaches the ATTENDANTS standing at the table near the other corner of the room; they EYE the child with unease.

Link next walks closer to the MUSICIANS against another wall and watches them as they play 'Ganondorf's Dirge': many of the Goron musicians appear to show utter CONTEMPT and DISGUST with their musical selection.

Link sneaks the MASK OF TRUTH off his leather shoulder sash and discreetly puts it on. With it he picks up VARIOUS THOUGHTS from both Darunia's attendants and the Musicians, all of them displaying EXASPERATED CONCERN with Darunia's current situation.

Link REMOVES the mask.

NAVI

(to Link)

"This is a very delicate situation: I don't know what this Darunia guy needs, but clearly we aren't equipped to give it to him. Anyway, even if we could help him it simply wouldn't do for us to disturb his court by—"

Link quickly ASCENDS the small musician's platform and KICKS OVER one of the musician's drums; it lands on its side with a thud, disrupting their performance and causing them to LOOK OVER at Link with surprise. The boy gets up on the drumhead and stares them down defiantly.

NAVI

"—making a scene."

The musicians continue staring at the boy in silence; after a long pause Darunia RAISES HIS HEAD and looks back at the

musicians. He NODS his head at them, then goes back to grousing in the corner.

The LEAD MUSICIAN again breaks into the main chorus of Ganondorf's Dirge; the other musicians and vocalists soon join in.

Link, still standing on the drumhead, GLARES at the musicians impatiently. The boy reaches around his back and retrieves the FAIRY OCARINA from his shoulder sash.

Link puts the instrument to his lips and PLAYS ALONG with the musicians, following them with a COUNTERMELODIC ACCOMPANIMENT, appropriate for the dreary dirge.

(NOTE: Per Zelda's prediction, the boy possesses an UNREALISTICALLY ADVANCED FACILITY with the instrument, as well as an understanding of music theory and improvisational melodic ability that are unrealistically atypical for a normal 8-year-old)

(FURTHER NOTE: Link's fairy ocarina is capable of producing TWO SEPARATE TONES at once— if the player chooses— allowing two different notes to be played simultaneously. Its DESIGN reflects this abnormal ability despite the fact that, admittedly, such an ability is likely impossible in reality)

After FOLLOWING ALONG with the dirge for some time Link begins to musically STEER THE TONE of the song (brighter, clearer playing; switching from minor to major key; drowning out the more 'drab' parts of the dirge with louder play). Ultimately the boy uses the dirge's sparsely-occupied bridge to completely HIJACK the song, seamlessly segueing into an entirely different piece: the bright, up-tempo SARIA'S SONG.

At this point Link is fighting with the rest of the musicians for the dominance of this melody; in the end the other musicians, ENLIVENED by the cheery tune, all join in with Saria's Song, providing full improvised accompaniment to the simple, catchy tune. The last musicians to be swayed are the VOCALISTS (including the LEAD MUSICIAN), who all ultimately provide accompaniment to Link's ocarina.

Darunia LOOKS UP and turns around, PEERING at the musicians through his shadows.

SLOW PAN around GORON CITY near Darunia's chamber entrance; many Gorons are pausing in their tracks and LOOKING UP, noticing the up-tempo music blaring from Darunia's chambers.

The ATTENDANTS in Darnia's Chamber are similarly ENLIVENED.

Link continually EMBELLISHES the song with various trills and tricks from his ocarina.

Darunia, still STARING DOWN at the dirt floor of his chamber, begins MUMBLING faintly.

DARUNIA

(whispering to himself)

"Melody... what a melody: a song of saplings. How fleet a song; how green... I can see the forest, feel the crunch of leaves..."

Out in the GORON CITY a pair of GORON CHILDREN CAVORT together in time to Saria's Song.

DARUNIA

(whispering to himself)

"Should I feel so fleet? Should I feel so green? I... want to, but I cannot..."

The MUSICIANS play on with more GUSTO.

DARUNIA

(whispering to himself)

"My heart is heavy, but still: how much lighter it is!"

EXTREME CLOSE UP on the TOP OF LINK'S OCARINA, where his lips meet the wooden mouthpiece. A SOGGY, SOUR NOTE ('wet' sounding) blurts from the instrument; a SNOT BUBBLE has bust from Link's nose and streamed down his face, along with TEARS from his cheeks.

The MUSICIANS STOP PLAYING abruptly, taking note of the boy; Link's SILENT TEARS give way to open SNIFFLING. The boy LOWERS HIS OCARINA and begins to WEEP OPENLY.

Darunia's HEAD COMES UP upon hearing the child's bawling. He TURNS his body and then STANDS UP and WALKS out of the

shadow of his corner. His eyes SOFTEN, dissolving from their GRAY state to a BLACKER hue.

Link SITS DOWN on the edge of the musicians' platform; he CARELESSLY TOSSES his ocarina aside and BUNCHES HIS LEGS UP, burying his face against them. He continues WEEPING against his legs.

Darunia STANDS BEFORE the boy, looking down at Link CONTEMPLATIVELY. His eyes are now just as BLACK and SHINY as his fellow Goroni.

CLOSE-UP on the discarded OCARINA on the floor with Link and Darunia in the background, out of focus. We get a better view of several FEMININE INTRICACIES in the ocarina, including design patterns around the finger holes and other subtle feminine touches (ie: this shot establishes that the instrument is almost certainly a GIRL'S OCARINA).

INT. GORONI PALACE - LATE EVENING.

A Spartan adobe meeting hall with pillars for walls, perched above city center and commanding a good view of the Goron City. The palace is flanked by many tables and massive Goron-sized chairs; one CENTRAL TABLE dominates this arrangement.

Link sits at this central table in a Goron-sized chair, bolstered by a LARGE BRICK serving as a makeshift booster seat. Darunia stands opposite the boy. His ATTENDANTS walk off to a polite distance, near the opposite edge of the palace, leaving a large mug of STEAMING LIQUID in front of Link and a small BLACK BOX in front of Darunia.

Link, still red-faced, SNIFFS lightly and DRINKS from the mug.

DARUNIA

(looking out across the city)

"It's been quite some time since I last enjoyed this view. It's been quite some time since I had a guest to view it with."

Darunia sets his MASSIVE STONE FISTS down on either side of the BLACK BOX on the table; he GROWLS angrily.

DARUNIA

"My last guest— a grand ambassador— came to me some time ago with cordiality and platitudes, but he left me with unending pain— pain given to me for his greater pleasure, I believe— a poison rotting my veins..."

CLOSE UP on LINK'S FACE; the boy looks up at these last words. A BRIGHT FLASH across the screen VERY BRIEFLY shows the boy standing in a meadow, staring up at an INCOMPREHENSIBLY MASSIVE oak tree. The tree appears to have some semblance of a FACE to it (or at least the carved APPEARANCE of a face). EXTREME CLOSE UP on one of its gigantic 'eyes' (with no actual eyeball in the socket, but with an undoubtedly INTELLIGENT look to it).

DARUNIA

"And now our princess sends her own messenger: a child coming to me with blind innocence, and stark gracelessness..."

NAVI

(hovering near Link's ear, speaking to Link)
"Uncoordinated, but super."

Darunia holds Link's FAIRY OCARINA in one giant fist.

DARUNIA

"...and that child took out the pain from my body, sure as if he sucked that poison from my wounds..."

Link STARES DOWN into his lap upon sight of the ocarina; Darunia notices this and CLOSES HIS HAND around it.

DARUNIA

"And in curing me, as it were, he took that poison on for himself. It wasn't your song that touched me, little one, but the pain that it put you through to play it for me. I am not so much elated by your music as I am shamed by your actions; what great strength of will it is to give pleasure to another at the risk of pain to oneself! Playing something as beautiful and uplifting as that: a song that at the same time guts the very strength from your innards and strikes at your soul with every beautiful note as sure as a hammer pounds a blade on a forge... That is something I could never ask of you; it is something that no one has the right to ask of anyone else."

Darunia SITS DOWN at the table across from the boy.

DARUNIA

"What pain could a sapling truly know? I learned that today, I think."

The Goron King SHAKES HIS HEAD, ashamed.

DARUNIA

"I feel so very green..."

Darunia flips open the small BLACK BOX in front of him; a GREAT ORANGE LIGHT emanates from within, but quickly fades to nothingness. Darunia LOOKS BACK UP at Link.

DARUNIA

"The Man in Black... is a dark shade, indeed..."

CLOSE UP on Link's face. As Darunia CONTINUES SPEAKING we see the same scene from pg. 41 (NOT accompanied by any flash): CRUEL-LOOKING BLACK RIDING BOOTS walking past a thatch hut entrance, the rest of the figure obscured by a drop cloth. A body STIRS in bed inside the hut, although this time we see more of the scene: the covers come away to reveal LINK in the bed, looking to his hut's door as the dark man passes. A FLASH again reveals the MASSIVE OAK TREE in a thunderstorm; ANOTHER FLASH reveals a strange, hideous face against a backdrop of darkness; suddenly a pair of thick, bony 'IRISES' open up to either side of the face to reveal a MASSIVE, BLOODY EYE leering out of the darkness (this eye belongs to the spider-monster GHOMA). ANOTHER FLASH reveals more of the creature's body, flying through the air in a CAVERN OF TREE ROOTS, soaring over LINK, who is standing on the floor. Ghoma spits a DISTINCTIVE GREEN SLUDGE at the child, but it misses. ANOTHER FLASH shows Link LANDING HARD on the floor, his legs completely ENTWINED in spider's webbing up to his waist. The boy SCRAMBLES FURIOUSLY, CUTTING HIS LEFT HAND on a very SHARP ROCK. Link takes the jagged rock in his hand. ANOTHER FLASH from GHOMA'S PERSPECTIVE, charging the boy from behind. Link quickly WHIPS AROUND, thrusting the jagged stone in front of his face; it COLLIDES with the camera. ANOTHER FLASH reveals the MASSIVE OAK TREE wilting, its LEAVES falling off in sickly cascades; LINK is ascending the meadow hill in the FAR BACKGROUND, LIMPING. CLOSE-UP on one brittle tree branch reveals Ghoma's GREEN SLUDGE dripping out the pores. ANOTHER FLASH reveals a ROPE BRIDGE over a lush green forest floor disappearing on either side into

woody knolls. Link races onto this bridge and FALTERS TO ONE KNEE (slight slow-motion from this point on); we see a small train of BLOOD gracing the back of his neck (the origin is up under his hair along his occipital bun). Two stray stones tumble lazily over the bridge (in 'pursuit' of the boy). Link CUPS HIS HANDS over these stones; he is on the verge of tears, but SCOWLS darkly instead (bright point-light comes through the forest canopy, illuminating only one-half of the boy's face). ANOTHER FLASH shows a GIRL'S HAND coming up behind the boy's back, CRADLING the small cut on the back of his head. A GREEN-HAIRED KOKIRI FOREST GIRL is kneeling by Link's side on the bridge; this is SARIA. She wears a dark-green headband to keep her hair up. She stares at the boy with SORROW; she is holding the FAIRY OCARINA over her chest. Link looks over at the girl (and, in doing so, his entire face comes into the light). ANOTHER FLASH reveals Saria RISING UP on the bridge, facing the way Link came; Link is no longer on the bridge. A MOB OF KOKIRI FOREST CHILDREN come bounding over the bridge (led by a FRECKLE-FACED REDHEADED boy named MIDO); some of the children carry SMOOTH STONES in their hands, but they all quickly stop before Saria, who STARES at the group with stern, but compassionate, eyes.

DARUNIA

(voice-over on entire previous scene; this line begins when the flashbacks begin and ends exactly when they end)
"His deeds are black as his heart. His mission is pain. And for what? For pain's sake? Deep in the shadows his black magic brews; deep in the fissures of his heart does he know the reason for these deeds. What reason could there be? What reason could there be for such misery... what reason could there be for such terror... what reason could there be for such pain?"

Link is holding onto his LARGE MUG with one hand against the table; that hand begins TREMBLING slightly. The boy brings that hand back into his lap with the other one.

DARUNIA

"The Man in Black... is a dark shade."

The Goron King looks up at Link; he removes a SMALL CRYSTAL TRINKET from the box. It is a naturally occurring orange jewel cemented in a platinum setting. The stone is of the irregular shape of a Goron's clenched fist. This trinket is the GORON'S HAND.

DARUNIA

"Reason itself must have little to do with his actions, but as for our defense I will trust the Royal Family and Her Highness, the Heir to the Throne of Hyrule. This is my own family's keepsake, and a signal of my support: the 'Goron's Hand'. Take this to Princess Zelda. My people and I would do whatever is necessary..."

Link reaches out slowly and takes the GORON'S HAND. It SPARKLES against the boy's face with a FAINT ORANGE LIGHT.

One of Darunia's attendants approaches the large table and HANDS Darunia a FLAT PACKAGE (of the type containing folded clothing). Darunia takes the box and places it on his lap (occluded by the table's edge).

DARUNIA

"And you, who suffered through pain in an effort to bring me joy: you have a strong heart, indeed..."

Darunia FIDDLES with the box; we see him remove a SPARKLING DIAMOND SASH (analogous to Link's own leather shoulder sash) as well as GLITTERY GOLDEN BUTTONS. He DISCARDS these, then brings the box up to level.

DARUNIA

"And if you go on any more dodongo hunts, my small friend, we'd do well to keep that strong little heart safe..."

Darunia SLIDES the box over to Link, who removes a CRIMSON TUNIC from the box (its design is somewhat similar to Link's green tunic, however it has variations— although not at all obvious this tunic is actually designed for a YOUNG GIRL'S use).

DARUNIA

"It is a garment for combat, as well as comfort, hewn of Goroni fiber: it does not burn, ever, and it is most slow to tear."

The boy LOOKS THE GARMENT OVER appreciatively, then looks up at Darunia, QUIZZICAL.

DARUNIA

"You wonder why it is that I have a Goroni war tunic made for the dimensions of a Hyrulian child?"

Link NODS.

DARUNIA

"That is between myself and the princess of Hyrule..."

Link has already shed the towel he's worn over his shoulders; the boy is busy buttoning the garment up over his chest. Darunia WATCHES this.

DARUNIA

"...and in any event I doubt Her Highness would disapprove."

Link SMILES at the Goron King, taking up the GORON'S FIST in one hand.

DARUNIA

"Go, little one: continue your journey."

Link ungracefully CLIMBS DOWN from the massive stone chair and lands on the ground. The boy walks off. CLOSE-UP on Link's face as he walks, with Darunia sitting in the background; the boy TUGS AT his new threads as he walks, adjusting them for comfort. Darunia calls after the boy.

DARUNIA

(chuckling)

"No: her highness wouldn't disapprove at all. After all, what's a knight without his armor?"

Link stops walking, his eyes QUESTIONING. He doesn't turn to face the chucking Darunia, though, but instead continues walking, leaving the confines of Goroni Palace with GORON #1 guiding him back out of the city and to the rock face of Death Mountain.

EXT. DEATH MOUNTAIN TRAIL - EARLY AFTERNOON.

It is 12 YEARS LATER. The sky is still blighted by sickly clouds.

Adult Link sits atop his horse and stares down the desolate Death Mountain Trail at humble KAKARIKO VILLAGE. Navi rests in his cowl.

LINK

"Seems safe enough, doesn't it, Navi?"

He SPURS his horse on, descending the trail slowly.

LINK

"Keep your eyes open, though..."

Link rides through the middle of the village; the old WINDMILL still dominates the view. Various people TOIL at routine work. Link is viewed SUSPICIOUSLY as he passes. As he passes one BOARDED-UP HOUSE there is a STRANGE SHUFFLING SOUND from within; a pair of eyes look out the RAFTERS at Link; the rest of the face is grotesque (this is the HOUSE OF SKULLTULA).

Eventually an OLD MAN in a ratty blue cloak approaches Link, blocking his horse's path.

OLD MAN

"You ride from Old Castle Town, my pale-cloaked friend?"

LINK

"I do."

OLD MAN

(bowing)

"I apologize: we had word of a rider setting out from Old Castle Town, but we last heard of that rider moving through Hyrule Field toward the Southland with his bulky cargo in tow. We are, therefore, ill-prepared to receive you in your radiance."

A BEARDED MAN silently climbs over a ROOFTOP alongside the pair; he slowly produces a large, primitive COMPOUND BOW and aims a broad-head arrow down at an oblivious Link.

LINK

"My 'radiance'?"

OLD MAN

"Inasmuch as you are blessed by his radiance, of course. As much as you are favored by the High King—"

LINK

"Who are you?"

OLD MAN

"My name is Shikashi: elder of Kakariko Village."

A PAIR OF CHILDREN— a boy and a girl— stand in the shadows at the edge of a decrepit house nearby, WATCHING this scene unfold. The scene CUTS between them and THEIR POINT OF VIEW— where Link and Shikashi are still speaking, though their words are inaudible— then CUTS BACK to the children: SHEIK is now standing directly behind the children, kneeling near their heads. Sheik's eyes appear more PURPLE than red this time. Sheik whispers to the children, who are STARTLED to see the warrior, but soon CALMED by Sheik's presence. They LISTEN to the warrior's words (inaudible to us).

CUT BACK to Link and Shikashi.

LINK

"How is it that you know about the movement of the King of Thieves' agents? Where do you get your information about his troops?"

The MAN ON THE ROOFTOP KNOCKS AN ARROW back in his bow, preparing to fire.

SHIKASHI

"Er... well, my liege, it is not so much 'information' as idle rumor and conjecture. We certainly have no organized structure for keeping tabs on the High King's movements: what right have we to do such things? What profit could we gain from monitoring our own glorious lord's business?"

LINK

"I could think of one, off hand..."

Shikashi COWERS, afraid, but soon the GIRL watching this scene unfold runs out to the old man and tugs at his cloak.

GIRL

"Elder, elder! The pale-cloaked rider is not a part of the Brotherhood of the Knuckle! He's an outsider: from abroad!"

SHIKASHI

(angry)

"And how is it that you know such a thing?"

The little girl looks back at the house she was hiding behind; the YOUNG BOY is still there, but Sheik is gone.

SHIKASHI
"Oh... I see..."

Shikashi faces Link again. He quickly CROSSES HIS HANDS over his chest.

The BEARDED MAN on the roof un-knocks his arrow and disappears down the far side of the roof.

Link NOTICES the man move away, being RETROACTIVELY ALARMED by it.

SHIKASHI
"Perhaps we could begin again, stranger?"

LINK
"No one can ever begin again, Elder. We can always try to fix our mistakes, though..."

INT. OLD INN AT KAKARIKO VILLAGE - AFTERNOON.

A rustic inn in its heyday; now a drab public housing project for Kakariko's indigents and refugees due to overcrowding in other houses in the village.

Link and Shikashi sit at the former bar of the restaurant section of the inn; Link is given a glass of water by a girl.

An EXTREMELY ODD-LOOKING OLD WOMAN totters past the pair; she wears STRANGE METAL GLASSES and a ratty, flaccid hat, stumbling through the inn in faded crimson robes. Upon seeing Link at the bar she PAUSES and turns in his direction. This is the FORTUNE TELLER.

FORTUNE TELLER
"An unfamiliar face, Shikashi..."

The woman GRIPS LINK'S CHIN in one hand; Link allows this examination.

FORTUNE TELLER
"And you— my young thing: what is it that you bring into this wretched, wretched land?"

LINK

(slow, deliberate)
"Goods and services, ma'am."

The Fortune Teller moves her other hand over Link's CHIN, just below his lips; when she draws away her hand we see that two of her fingers have DROPLETS OF BLOOD on them.

Link quickly MOVES A HAND over his chin, but he finds no blood on his face. When he again looks at the Fortune Teller's hand he finds her fingers, too, have no blood on them either.

FORTUNE TELLER

(smiling)

"If the 'service' is 'good' then so be it. But, then again, what good is a service when you don't know for whom it's being performed?"

LINK

"I travel under my own banner, woman."

The Fortune Teller's smile WIDENS and she CHUCKLES. She totters off.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Such a sad thing it is: a knight errant!"

Link watches the woman retreat.

LINK

"A strange old hag..."

SHIKASHI

"I apologize. But she has her good points: the lines on a palm are as easy a read for her as a child's primer is for me. She has a knowledge of things beyond the everyday visible..."

LINK

"Tell me this, Shikashi: who resists the rule of the King of Thieves?"

SHIKASHI

(laughing bitterly)

"Who resists? Ha!"

LINK

"Does no one?"

SHIKASHI

"Oh, indeed there are those that resist. You must have seen a great many of them in Old Castle Town. The dead resist our 'glorious lord'..."

Shikashi pounds his own chest.

SHIKASHI

"...as do hardened hearts. But living lips? No: not a one of those, let alone a living hand. What living hand would reach up to strike down a King favored by the Golden Goddesses themselves?"

LINK

"Blasphemy."

Shikashi SMILES warmly.

SHIKASHI

"I'm glad you think so. It warms my heart to hear you protest, but what I say is true, in part at least. Din favors him, and Din keeps him close to her burning hands..."

On the OTHER SIDE of the bar we see THREE SMALL ALTARS set up side by side against the wall; all three depict a small statue of a NEBULOUS, FLYING FIGURE (feminine in appearance) screaming up towards the sky with JET-LIKE PLUMAGE trailing behind them. Two of the altars (the one to the left side and the central one) have some fresh flowers and offerings at their bases. The one on the far right side, while constructed in nearly identical fashion to the other two, is covered in dust and has no offerings at its base. The STATUES at the center of each altar differ slightly: the neglected one has brightly painted colors on one FIST, while the other two have brightly painted colors on their CENTER CHEST (for the statue off to the right side) and its JET-LIKE PLUMAGE (for the statue in the middle).

The statue with the color on its FIST depicts the Golden Goddess DIN, while the statue with the color on its CENTER CHEST depicts the Golden Goddess NAYRU and the statue with the color on its JET-LIKE PLUMAGE (ie: the area around its rear) depicts the Golden Goddess FARORE.

LINK

"He may think so, but there's no way that the Goddesses of Old Hyrule could favor a monster like that. Not even Din Herself! What would any of the Goddesses gain by seeing Hyrule torn apart, bled dry of its life and its freedom? It makes no sense."

Shikashi rises and approaches the row of altars, stopping at DIN'S NEGLECTED PERCH.

SHIKASHI

"Just because it makes no sense to you or to me doesn't necessarily make it 'senseless'..."

The old man stands before Din's altar and makes a RESPECTFUL, RELIGIOUS GESTURE towards the statue.

SHIKASHI

"Din the Powerful- with her fiery hand- lay down judgment and the rule of law to all creation, embracing it in her holy, iron fist..."

The man moves to the CENTER STATUE- that of Farore- and makes an identical RELIGIOUS GESTURE.

SHIKASHI

"...Farore the Wise- with her swift tail of stars trailing radiant, like a bird's plumage, darting o'er the land just as swiftly as her thoughts come racing- imparted wisdom and knowledge to the entire world..."

The man moves to the next altar, that of NAYRU, and simply BOWS briefly.

SHIKASHI

"And, of course, Nayru the Irrational- with her radiant heart (NOTE: slight pejorative emphasis on this last word)- easily the least of her Sisters, but really no less important, who breathed the first breath for all those creatures who would be under her two Sisters' dominion..."

Shikashi FACES Link.

SHIKASHI

"Power and wisdom vie for dominance in a world like this one, and if the High King lacks 'wisdom' he certainly cannot be said to lack 'power'. Is it their will that he

reign? Perhaps, but who can really know for sure? After all: who could truly know the will of a deity?"

LINK

"Then you accept the King of Thieves' rule as legitimate?"

Shikashi TURNS and steps towards Link, IRATE.

SHIKASHI

"I would die before bowing to that scum! I would storm into his castle keep, sword drawn, to face down a legion of his agents in my last stand! I would curse his name and spit in his face though he dash me to a thousand pieces, one small cut at a time!"

The old man STARES across the inn; the TWO CHILDREN from before sit on a ratty cot, PLAYING at some game.

SHIKASHI

"But I would not have that happen to those who deserve to live, whatever the circumstance. I would die a thousand times to resist such a creature, but I wouldn't have one innocent heart stop beating on account of my pride. Life is what's most important, Pale Rider, and these days we may all be cowards, but we're living cowards."

Shikashi shakes his head dismissively and begins walking off.

LINK

"You say that only the dead resist the King of Thieves, Shikashi, so tell me this: is Sheik a ghost?"

The old man STOPS walking and turns his head.

SHIKASHI

"You're remarkably well-informed for a foreigner. Is Sheik a ghost? Well, he seems to think he is. He'll be one soon, at the very least. Sheik is more militant in his actions, yes, but still it is not 'resistance' that he displays."

LINK

"What, then?"

SHIKASHI

"He also believes that life is what's most important, but he differs in his approach."

The old man totters off.

SHIKASHI

"He lives apart from us, in the maze that is the Death Mountain Crater, where the King's agents cannot follow, always purging his soul amongst the smoldering rocks. He is reckless; he will die young, and then there will be even less reason to talk of resistance. There will be less to protect us from disaster. His efforts are ultimately futile."

Link calls after the retreating man.

LINK

"Why does he fight, then? Do you know?"

Shikashi turns around.

SHIKASHI

"Because the family he was bred to protect was wiped clean from this land over a decade ago; that's why."

The man SCOFFS BITTERLY.

SHIKASHI

"I suppose he thinks us cowards to be an acceptable substitute for his efforts. Beggars cannot be choosers, after all. I've never asked him 'why'. I'd rather not know; when he dies he can take his reasons with him. Less of him to mourn..."

Shikashi again moves off with Link staring at him, INCREDULOUS at the man's cynicism. The old man predicts Link's reaction.

SHIKASHI

"I've seen too much of death's handiwork, my friend, and I won't mourn the inevitable. And right now, stranger, I think I've seen too much of you. Good day, young man, and may the Golden Goddesses keep you in the palms of their holy hands. All of them, if possible..."

Link remains at the bar, STARING at the altars on the other side. NAVI peeks out from under his cowl.

LINK

"No: we don't need any of these peoples' help: they're useless, I think."

NAVI LOOKS UP at Link.

LINK

"Not Sheik, either. I don't think he'll jeopardize the village's safety to help us. And if he's not willing to go for the King of Thieves' throat— no matter the cost involved— then he's just as useless to me as the old man."

Link SMILES at the Goddesses' altars. NAVI still LOOKS UP at Link.

LINK

"What do we need? Well, if the old man is right about Din, then we've still got Farore and Nayru in play, don't we? That means— potentially— a two-against-one fight. Goddesses play the numbers just like we do, right? I wouldn't mind those odds, personally. Shikashi said that one of the High King's agents was moving south through Hyrule Field; it must be that knight in iron armor we saw back in Castle Town. Our first move should be to track that behemoth down: see what we can learn from him. If he's moving through the field then he probably crossed through ranchland. Maybe someone there saw which way he was heading. With the Goddesses' luck, we just might find out..."

Link looks back at the retreating SHIKASHI.

LINK

"But I don't give a damn if the Goddesses hold me in the palms of their hands..."

Link looks down at the HILT of Dhise Slaighre.

LINK

"Just so long as they hold that thing steady enough for me when the time comes."

EXT. HYRULE CASTLE GARDENS - VERY EARLY MORNING.

12 years prior to the previous scene.

A massive collection of exotic plant life nestled against the far stone wall of Hyrule Castle's rear-facing battlement (behind the hedgerow maze).

LINK and ZELDA walk slowly side-by-side through the garden with IMPA walking behind the pair, her ARMS CROSSED, separated from the children by a respectful distance. Link is still wearing the crimson tunic.

ZELDA

"I'm so glad that King Darunia liked your song! And I'm so very happy that it raised the darkness from his eyes. I'm sure that joy will return to the Goron Tribe..."

CLOSE-UP on IMPA'S HIP; the GORON'S HAND pendant dangles from a small chain on her mail shirt.

ZELDA

"...and with the health of their land comes their land's consent, and because of that Hyrule is that much safer."

Zelda stops walking; Link does likewise.

ZELDA

"But most importantly, my good friend is well again; I don't know how to thank you for that."

The pair continue walking through the garden. They pass by a GROUP OF RED-EYED CHILDREN standing by one of the castle walls with an adult INSTRUCTOR who also has red eyes; the children all look over at the princess as she passes. These children— boys and girls— all range in age from about 8 to 12 years of age (this shot is IDENTICAL to SHEIK'S IMAGE FLASH he imparted to Link on pg 16, however the 'boy' bearing an outward resemblance to Sheik is notably NOT in the shot). Four of these children (in two pairs) are SPARRING each other with WOODEN STICKS coated in colored paint (different colors for each stick), wearing DISTINCTIVE WHITE BATTLE DRESS. We see one child manage to strike another in the shoulder, leaving BRIGHT-COLORED PAINT on the child's clothes and prompting a POSITIVE REACTION from the instructor watching them. Some of the other children are attending to SMALL BUCKETS OF GREEN WATER, stirring them with long spoons. We see one stick emerge with a small, STRANGE RED WORM-LIKE CREATURE stuck to the spoon (these are the Sheikah 'MIND'S EYES').

The instructor and the children minding the buckets watch Zelda walk by reverently; the group only BOWS, however, as Impa walks by. The woman NODS in their direction.

ZELDA

"It was very dangerous for you to face those dodongo all by yourself; I'm so happy you weren't injured."

NAVI

(to Link)

"'Not injured'? I guess having your clothes set on fire while you're still wearing them doesn't count..."

The children move into the castle proper, walking through a plush-carpeted hallway with MASSIVE ARCHED WINDOWS commanding a view of the High Road below them; the TEMPLE OF TIME is visible in the background.

Zelda walks up to the window and STARES OUT across Castle Town. Link comes to her side, looking at the girl.

ZELDA

"Do you see that place down there? The structure made of stone, like the stones in this castle?"

Link follows the girl's eyes and NODS.

ZELDA

"It's the Temple of Time: a palace built to honor the Golden Goddesses who gave Hyrule life. At its center— deep in the innermost chamber— is the greatest wonder in all Hyrule: a plot of old earth that exists as it did at the very beginning of time. According to legend the three Goddesses walked the breadth of the entire world as they created it, each bestowing their individual aspects to the land as they went, and it was at that very plot of earth where the three Goddesses ended their journey; they united upon that hallowed ground before shuttling back off into the Sacred Realm. That's what the legend says, anyway. It means enough to my family that they tore the entire ground up from the faded shores of Old Hylia and transported it across the land when they founded the New Kingdom, here. That was over a dozen generations ago. The earth inside that temple is now the resting place of a great weapon of righteousness. No, that's not exactly correct: the prophecies don't call it a 'weapon' so much as a shield: a powerful defensive relic and the ultimate protection against all evil. They call it the 'Dhise Slaighre'."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD. EXTREME CLOSE-UP on his LEFT HAND; his fist clenches, involuntarily, as if grasping onto something tight. Link looks up at Navi.

NAVI

(to Link)

"Dunno what it means. Sounds like Old Hylia; and I mean older than Old Hylia: ancient..."

ZELDA

"It can't be wielded by just anyone, they say, and its vault can't be uncovered without the consent of the land..."

Zelda looks back at IMPA and the GORON'S HAND on her hip.

ZELDA

"The Goron's Hand... the ZORA'S EYE..."

She looks at Link.

ZELDA

"...and the KOKIRI'S HEART."

Link STARTS, surprised.

ZELDA

(nodding)

"That's right. The prophecy is very clear: it says

'the eye that sees, the heart that feels,
the hand that moves
unearths the blade that, vital, proves
the weapon for staying whatever disaster
for he who wields Dhise Slaighre as a master'."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Now that rhymes. That's catchy."

Zelda FACES the window.

ZELDA

(smiling)

"'Disaster'... The word in the ancient texts is actually 'cataclysm', but 'disaster' sounds better. I think it does, anyway. All three artifacts are required to access Dhise

Slaighre: the fiery strength of the Goron, the cold, impartial judgment of the Zora and the innocent purity of the Kokiri. My family is tasked as the lynchpin of this arrangement: vessels of this prophecy. We're even marked by the Goddesses: branded to remember our task. The female side of my family is, anyway. My mother, when she was alive, would often tell me about this."

Link looks down at his CHEST (around the area of the STERNUM) and SCRATCHES the fabric of his Goroni Tunic.

ZELDA

"Such a strange mark... all down the generations, and always in the same place, too..."

Link STEPS FORWARD a few paces, his eyes QUESTIONING.

Zelda immediately FACES the boy.

ZELDA

"That is none of your business!"

The girl RECOVERS from the outburst and then looks at Link INTENTLY.

ZELDA

"I really wouldn't forgive myself if you were hurt at Death Mountain. It was so reckless of me to ask you to go in the first place. Although I'm grateful I could never ask you to do any more. I can't let you, even: it's too dangerous."

Link looks off to one side, UNCERTAIN.

ZELDA

"We don't have the Kokiri's Heart, but I would never ask you to go back into the forest to retrieve it; I know that would cause you pain..."

The boy CLOSES HIS EYES.

ZELDA

"And the strange happenings in the Zora's old domain grow more serious: it's far too dangerous to send you into that deserted place."

Link LOOKS UP at Zelda, DEFIANT. He steps back and UNSHEATHES the ornamental oyster knife on his shoulder sash, holding it to one side in his left hand.

ZELDA

(smiling wistfully)

"You're so brave, but a small boy with an oyster knife is no match for whatever poison is infecting that land..."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Oyster knife? That's an oyster knife? Gah-hahahahahaha!"

Navi CIRCLES the boy's head manically. Link BLUSHES profusely.

ZELDA

"It's the job of the Royal Family to protect this land: I can't ask anything more of you. I wonder sometimes, how much simpler it would all be if it were like it was in the history books: if the Old Hylian Guard still stood at court, all of them waiting at beck and call for the slightest whisper of a command from royal lips..."

Zelda looks down at the CASTLE GATEWAY below them; some young CHILDREN OF THE KITCHEN MAIDS play ring-around-the-rosy while their parents hang out rags and linens to dry in the sun.

Zelda PUTS ONE GLOVED HAND to the window. The sunlight sparkles off a PETITE SILVER BAND on her wrist which depicts the Royal Family's crest.

ZELDA

"But, even more I wonder, sometimes, how much nicer it would all be if..."

The children outside COLLAPSE in a heap, all of them LAUGHING mightily.

The girl STARES DOWN and SIGHS. She remembers herself and looks up.

ZELDA

"The 'Man in Black': do you think it is Ganondorf?"

Link stares at the girl but does not answer; Zelda does not turn to face him.

ZELDA

"You do... so do I. I also believe he's the one you saw in the forest: he must have been responsible for the trouble there as well."

Zelda eyes the TEMPLE OF TIME through the window. Her eyes NARROW into slits.

ZELDA

"He's trying to cut-off our ability to retrieve the Dhise Slaighre. He will not succeed! I'm a member of the Royal Family. I'm just a servant, really: a steward for the safety of all Hyrule..."

Zelda faces Link.

ZELDA

"I'll do my best to live that part, somehow. But you've done enough already."

The girl steps forward, face-to-face with Link.

ZELDA

"I'll never forget what you've done for me, and for the land, but it's enough now: I'll live my part in all this through..."

The girl turns and faces the window, SOMBER.

ZELDA

"...you should go and live your childhood."

Link looks at the girl UNEASILY. He slowly steps forward, but Impa comes between the children. The boy reluctantly turns and heads down the hallway, with Impa close behind.

Impa shuttles the boy down the hall. They walk in silence for some time.

IMPA

"You feel that you've been discarded, don't you? Tossed aside? That my charge does not care about you?"

Link POUTS, but he does not answer.

IMPA

"You are young, and I can understand why you feel that's so, but the truth is quite the opposite, in fact."

The pair reaches the COMMON ROOMS of the castle: these are the less restricted areas, more open to all the daily comings and goings necessary for a regal castle's operation.

IMPA

"You feel yourself to be an abandoned stray, don't you? You were driven from your home, for whatever reason, and you feel that there is nowhere you truly belong. I think that's probably true: someone like you would seem to have a hard time 'belonging' anywhere. Despite this, though, you're not exactly an abandoned stray: someone has taken a great interest in 'collecting' you since you came here..."

Link LOOKS UP at Impa. The pair stop walking beside a LARGE OAK DOOR.

IMPA

"Your desire to play at reckless adventure betrays your feeling of loneliness: you think yourself to be dead, but you do have a life to live, I think..."

The OAK DOOR suddenly BURSTS OPEN; slamming into Link and sending the boy sprawling onto the floor with a GRUNT. MALON walks into the room, then looks down at the prostrate boy. She puts her HANDS ON HER HIPS.

MALON

"What part of 'stay and guard the cart' didn't you understand, Fairy Boy!?"

Impa looks first at Malon, then at Link, still lying on the floor.

IMPA

"...granted, around such people your life may be quite short..."

Link lies on the floor, staring at the ceiling and SMILING FONDLY.

EXT. LON-LON RANCH - EARLY EVENING.

A small ranch set apart from Castletown (which is visible in the FAR DISTANCE) by the vast plain of HYRULE FIELD; the ranch sits on a small hill in prime soil for the growth of food and livestock. It is dominated by a FARMHOUSE beside the MAIN GATE.

A window on the second floor of the farmhouse OPENS, revealing LINK, who looks out upon the ranch from a small guest bedroom.

NAVI perches upon the boy's ear, LOUNGING.

NAVI

"Whatcha thinking about?"

Link STARES DOWN at the farmland around them; his eyes move over in Navi's direction.

NAVI

"Yeah: I think it's nice here, too..."

Navi shuttles off the boy's ear and lands on HIS NOSE.

NAVI

"But that's not all you're thinking about, is it?"

Link goes CROSSEYED to look at Navi, then returns his focus to the land below them.

NAVI

"You are a sucker for pouty purple eyes; you know that?"

Navi FLIES UP to Link's head and rests on his hair.

Link LOOKS UP at her with his eyes.

NAVI

"Yeah, and I guess you're not totally ignoble, either..."

INT. LINK'S ROOM IN LON-LON RANCH - TWILIGHT.

A small, comfortable guest bedroom on the second floor of the farmhouse.

Link lies on a bed. He wears a REPLACEMENT GREEN TUNIC (the same color as Link's green KOKIRI TUNIC, but far less

ornate) with his SHOULDER SASH and the CRIMSON GORON TUNIC draped over a bedpost. He is also wearing a FLACCID GREEN NIGHTCAP.

The boy is asleep on his back and expressionless. SLOW ZOOM on Link's face from ABOVE.

A BRIGHT FLASH fills the screen. We see the DHISE SLAIGHRE briefly, rising in the darkness; below it is a GIANT SLAB OF STONE, quickly being RENT in two. ANOTHER FLASH reveals Link, standing in darkness, with his ARMS SPREAD; dazzlingly bright ORANGE LIGHT explodes from one of his fists while bright BLUE LIGHT explodes from his other fist. ANOTHER FLASH reveals the Dhise Slaighre again; SMALL RIVULETS OF BLOOD inexplicably begin cascading down the sword's blade. ANOTHER BRIGHT FLASH reveals HORSES' HOOVES tromping MADLY across rainy soil; ANOTHER FLASH reveals an EXTREME CLOSE-UP of PRINCESS ZELDA'S FACE, riding in the saddle with an adult, her head turned back and LARGE TEARS streaming down her face.

Link TURNS ON HIS SIDE once, and then he WAKES with a start, bathed in SWEAT: we hear the sound of HORSES' HOOVES and WHISTLING from far outside his window.

Link slowly pulls the NIGHTCAP from his head.

Navi is unconscious in Link's hair; her body BRIGHTENS as she wakes.

NAVI

"Startled up? Bad dream? You were back in the forest, weren't you? You were with her?"

Link stares into his lap; he SHAKES HIS HEAD.

Navi flutters down and hovers in front of the boy's face.

NAVI

"The sights, the smells in the forest: they're not really like they are here at all. It can make you feel isolated: alone. It can make you dream about sights that are comfortable, and smells that are comfortable. You start dreaming about people that make you feel comfortable..."

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD AGAIN.

NAVI

"You were. You were dreaming about Sar—"

The boy looks up at the fairy, SCOWLING DANGEROUSLY; he GROWLS. Navi says nothing for several seconds.

NAVI

"...maybe not. My mistake."

Link COCKS AN EYEBROW. He looks over at the window.

NAVI

"The brat woke you up; I think Malon's taking the horses out to exercise before bed."

The fairy YAWNS.

NAVI

"All these people outside the forest stay up way too late, and they get up way too early..."

Link pulls the sheets off his body and moves toward the door. Navi flutters after him.

NAVI

"Hey, listen..."

Link looks back at the fairy.

NAVI

"If you're going outside, you might want to wear your nightcap, huh?"

Link STARES at the fairy, confused.

NAVI

"It's kinda chilly. You could catch a cold, you know..."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD, incredulous.

NAVI

"It's a fact!"

Link TURNS FOR THE DOOR.

NAVI

"Alright, alright! Look: the real reason you could wear it is 'cause I like 'riding' on your head, you know, and it's easier to keep a hold of those slippery locks of yours if you're wearing a hat..."

Link faces Navi and CROSSES HIS ARMS.

NAVI

"What? It's a better way to travel! It beats the heck out of being jammed inside one of those smelly pockets on your shoulder sash!"

Link appears UNCONVINCED. He again turns to leave.

NAVI

(sighing)

"Your hair smells comfortable, okay? That's the reason. Frankly, of all the parts of a little boy to hitch a ride on, it's the most pleasant for me, anyway, and I just feel... 'safer' up there. Look: I can't explain it, and if it's really that weird to you then you can just ignore me. If you're that uncomfortable doing it then don't: I guess there's no reason you should go out of your way and make such a fuss just for your fairy, anyway..."

Link AGAIN FACES Navi; the boy ROLLS HIS EYES and rubs one hand over his forehead.

EXT. LON-LON RANCH - TWILIGHT.

Below Link's window a BARN contains many cows; behind this is a CORRAL where THOROUGHBREDS gait about, recently released from their STABLE by MALON; who lies in the center of this corral, prone, with a TATTERED BOOK before her on the grass. The girl is WHISTLING the refrain to the CHICK-A-CHUCKA SONG. The horses move about the pen at will, often even GALLOPING directly over the girl's body, however Malon shows no concern about this.

The girl is IMMERSED in her book; she occasionally removes a CARROT from the pocket of her tunic and holds it up to a horse as it passes near her, allowing the animal to bend down and take the carrot from her hand. A frosty MILK BOTTLE sits beside the girl on the grass; the girl takes a LONG SIP from it.

One SMALL FOAL mills around apart from the other horses. Each time Malon removes a carrot for one of the adult horses the foal STEPS FORWARD, hesitant, but ultimately does not move toward the girl.

Eventually Malon LOOKS UP at the foal, SMILING.

MALON
"Epona..."

The girl produces another CARROT and wags it; the foal moves slightly closer, but pauses as an ADULT HORSE comes up to Malon and bends down to take it in its teeth. Malon shoots the adult horse a WITHERING STARE and it backs off. She again WAGS the carrot for the foal.

MALON
"Epoooooona..."

The foal SHIES CLOSER, but does not brave the throng of adult horses to reach the girl.

Malon's SMILE BROADENS. The girl launches into more WHISTLING; this time she is whistling EPONA'S SONG.

The foal RESPONDS to this song; ultimately it BRAES and tromps over to the girl, who supplies the foal with a carrot.

CLOSE-UP as Malon feeds Epona the carrot. SLOW PAN.

Malon's HEAD TURNS SLIGHTLY; the girl then goes back to feeding Epona.

MALON
"Epona is really timid. Sometimes I wonder if she'll ever be brave."

SLOW PAN continues until we see Link standing about ten feet away from the prone girl, off to the side. He is wearing the FLACCID GREEN NIGHTCAP on his head.

MALON
"After all: you can't be a knight's horse if you aren't very brave."

Malon looks back at Link.

MALON

"Epona's really good stock, Fairy Boy. Two months ago— when she was newborn— a foul wind crept through the farm from the Westland: there was a chill, big solid black clouds and everything. Chickens stopped laying eggs, parts of the field out in the fringes of our land rotted away and all the horses came down with a really bad case of the strangles."

Malon PATS Epona's muzzle and looks down at the ground.

MALON

"The big horses came through alright, but all the foals died, except her; Epona's the only one who was spared. She's not just strong, I think: she's special. Someday, when she's big and strong, I know she's gonna do special stuff. She's... noble; know what I mean? A horse like that isn't cut out for farm work, no: I think she's destined for more than that."

The girl NUZZLES Epona's mane affectionately.

MALON

"This girl's not the kind of horse to carry bales of hay, or fat tourists come out from town looking for 'folksy' thrills. I know that when Epona grows up she's gonna be a valiant steed. Someday she's gonna carry around a grand knight on his adventures to faraway places and go on strange quests with him."

Link SITS DOWN on the grass beside the girl.

Malon TURNS HER HEAD to face the boy. She NODS slightly.

MALON

"I'd miss her, yeah. Of course I would. But, you know, when a great knight does come looking for her, and all, he could always take me along with him. I wouldn't really mind that, too much..."

Malon stares down at A PAGE IN HER BOOK: it depicts 'New Hylian Language' text on one side of the page and bears an illustration of a KNIGHT IN ARMOR on the other side.

Malon LOOKS UP at Link, self conscious and blushing; she GLARES at him.

MALON

"Hey: what're you looking at, Fairy Boy?"

Link quickly LOOKS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRETION.

Epona has RETREATED since the boy sat down beside Malon; Link stares at the foal, eventually removing the FAIRY OCARINA from his back. He brings the instrument to his mouth, THOUGHTFUL, and after a moment he launches into a SLOW, spot-on mimic of EPONA'S SONG.

SLOW-ZOOM on Link playing his ocarina with his EYES CLOSED. After he finishes we see the boy's head being NUDGED from somewhere off-camera; PAN-OUT reveals the foal NUZZLING Link's ear.

MALON

"Heh! She likes you, Fairy Boy! She's playing nice with strangers: that's the first step to bein' brave, isn't it? Oh, she'll be a knight's steed yet!"

Malon SLOWLY returns her attention to the book.

MALON

"They used to be everywhere, you know. The knights, I mean. They weren't like us— like most of the people in Hyrule, today: if you wanted to be a knight then you had to be a Hylian. You had to have pure blood from the old shores of the world: where civilization was born. Nowadays almost no-one has that kind of blood. Yeah: the Royal Family's got it, but even their servants— the Sheikah— don't. I've heard that the Sheikah are more related to the Gerudo Race than they are the Hylians. Isn't that weird? But the Hylian Knights, they didn't just have different blood: they were a crazy-devoted group. They had all kinds of privileges: they could waltz right through almost any part of Hyrule Castle unchallenged. They were trusted, entirely. When they met with their lords and ladies— the people at court— they didn't have to say a word: they didn't even have to introduce themselves by name. Everyone knew they were knights, and everyone knew that they were there to do a job, no matter what that job might be. They'd never refuse a request, or even question a command..."

(NOTE ON PREVIOUS: SLOW ZOOM on Link's face beginning at the THIRD SENTENCE ('They weren't like us...') and ending with the line 'no-one has that kind of blood').

Malon rests her CHIN IN HER HANDS, spacing out.

MALON

"They didn't have any 'attachments', or 'relationships': no weaknesses! They'd go to the deepest pits of the earth and back for their lords... or for their ladies..."

The girl CHUCKLES faintly. She gets off her stomach and sits on the grass beside Link. She picks up the MILK BOTTLE and places it between herself and the boy; Link TAKES IT UP and DRINKS DEEPLY.

MALON

"I like to dream, sometimes, Fairy Boy. I know I'll never be a grand lady at court, and I'll never meet a knight, I guess. What would happen to the ranch without me, anyway? Profits would disappear and we'd be evicted! No, I don't think so: Talon would probably lose the place in a card-game within a week. Heh! The big ol' lazy oaf needs me to pull him out of the pub before he gets too confident. I guess that kinda makes me his knight, huh?"

The girl LAUGHS, then eventually grows more quiet.

MALON

"I guess everyone needs a knight, sometimes..."

A TALL, GAUNT MAN with a spindly-black handlebar moustache walks out of the STABLES. This is INGO. He is balancing two filled water cans on a pole over his shoulders; one of the horses careens past him, sending him spinning into the fence and spilling much of the water on himself.

INGO

"Ghaaaaaaah!"

The man picks up the WOODEN BEAM he was using to balance the water cans.

INGO

"Pebble-brained, knock-legged galoot!"

He swings the pole WILDLY and INACCURATELY at the retreating horse. Ingo speaks with a THICK, 'SOUTHERN' ACCENT.

MALON
"Ingo!"

Ingo STARTS and DROPS the stick. He looks over at Malon and Link and bows obsequiously with a FORCED SMILE.

INGO
"Oh! Uh: so sorry, Miss Lonni! Churlish horses do like to play at games, don't they, now?"

MALON
"It's all in good fun, Ingo."

The man FORCEDLY LAUGHS and STALKS OFF, MUTTERING under his breath.

INGO
"'Good' fun until someone gets 'good' and wet and then looks 'good' and foolish and comes down with a 'good' cold and gets 'good' and sick... I'd just as soon have some 'good' horsemeat on my table..."

Link notices a PLUCKED FLOWER on the ground beside Malon: it is a PALE LILAC-COLORED ROSE. Link picks it up, noticing a DEEP RED 'STAIN' of color near the stamen at the base of each of its petals.

MALON
"We don't really have the thumb for roses, here: that's one of our little freak hybrids. Talon made it by accident once when he tossed a load of rose hips into a compost pile, if you can believe it. It's the 'Eighteen-Day Blusher'; that's what I like to call it, at least..."

Malon takes the rose from Link's hand and MOTIONS to the red stain at its center.

MALON
"It's lilac-colored, but it's also got a little red stain. When the flower matures— over eighteen days, or so— that red color spreads to the tips of every petal. In eighteen days these things become respectable, bright red roses..."

Malon looks over at Link, hesitant.

MALON

"We... haven't talked about things lately, Fairy Boy: you've been with us just a few days less than that, but you've already paid off our window, you know, so you're not our slave anymore, or anything—"

NAVI peeks out from under Link's GREEN NIGHTCAP.

NAVI

(to Link)

"That might be the sweetest thing anyone's ever said to us..."

Malon sets the ROSE back on the ground.

MALON

"—and, you know it's nothing, and all, but you're not really worthless to have around, you know: no matter what kinda job we have for you, you seem do it really well..."

The girl BLUSHES and looks off to one side.

MALON

"I mean, you don't really have a home, do you? So, then who's to say you shouldn't stay on as a farmhand, huh? I mean, I'm sorry that you don't have a home, but at least then you'd have a job... a roof over your head, hot meals and a bed... it would kinda be like if you did have a home—
"

The girl FACES LINK quickly.

MALON

"—but you wouldn't, of course, 'cause you'd be here to do a job. But still: it'd be nice to work with someone who pulls his own weight once in a while, you know?"

Link STARES DOWN AT HIS SHOES while Malon speaks. He appears PENSIVE, but he does not speak.

LONG PAUSE.

Malon's face slowly reddens. The girl JUMPS UP quickly.

MALON

"Oh, fine! I'm sorry: I forgot! You're too high and mighty for that, aren't you? After all: you've got such great friends at the castle, don't you? That's my mistake, Fairy Boy: I should feel honored that you even walk around amongst us commoners! Well, that's fine, then: you can just go and play with your pretty princess, an' have little balls, an' eat crumpets! Never mind us peasant hicks!"

The girl STORMS AWAY in TEARS.

Link STANDS UP during this diatribe. He watches Malon run off with an extremely PUZZLED LOOK on his face.

NAVI hovers near his ear.

NAVI

"What the heck is her problem? And for that matter what the heck is a 'crumpet'?"

MALON is moving off for the farmhouse; Link removes the MASK OF TRUTH from his back and begins pulling it over his head. He STOPS before he can fit the mask over his face, though, WATCHING Malon run off with his own eyes. The boy slowly removes the mask and holds it in one limp hand. Eventually he DISCARDS the mask in the dirt of the corral and walks off, slowly, in the same direction as Malon.

The boy STOPS beside a CORRAL POST; NAVI lands on top of it, eye-level with the boy.

NAVI

"Whatcha thinking about?"

The boy looks at the fairy with SORROW.

NAVI

"Yeah, I know: it's nice here, but we can't stay..."

Link walks up to the FARMHOUSE DOOR.

NAVI

"We can probably get to the Zora's Font in two days, if we set out first thing in the morning... and if we can find some decent transportation along the way..."

FADE OUT as Link opens the door and enters the farmhouse.

EXT. ROAD TO LON-LON RANCH - EARLY EVENING.

It is 12 YEARS LATER.

A depressing, scrub-infested road through a field of DARK BUSHES and withered trees leading up to Lon-Lon Ranch's farmland. There is a thick fog.

Link rides in the saddle, DOZING, with his horse moving at a TROT. Soon his head COMES UP, slowly, and his horse's pace LESSENS.

Link LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, eyeing the withered field beside him; several DARK SHAPES in the field move unnaturally.

Link MOVES HIS CLOAK and SETS HIS HAND on the hilt of Dhise Slaighre.

A FIGURE rises in the fields; someone completely enshrouded in a VERY DEEP PURPLE CLOAK- their face invisible for darkness.

Link very slowly MOVES DHISE SLAIGHRE'S BLADE one inch out of the scabbard, making a LOUD, 'RUSTY' SCRAPE.

The cloaked figure TURNS TO ONE SIDE and RAISES AN ARM; the arm is entirely encased in the purple robe save for part of the hand, covered in a SHINING SILVER GAUNTLET.

Many other CLOAKED FIGURES rise up out of the field; they MOVE OFF into the distance, several of them KEEPING WATCH on Link as they walk backwards. They soon disappear into the fog.

Link keeps his eyes on that field as his horse moves even slower. He RELEASES Dhise Slaighre to fall back into the scabbard with a CLANK. Many seconds pass.

Link finally SIGHS, quizzical, and continues down the road at a TROT.

EXT. LON-LON RANCH - EARLY EVENING.

Lon-Lon Ranch's layout is similar to its 12-year-old counterpart, however the BARN and CHICKEN-COOPS are in a state of EXCEPTIONAL DISREPAIR (although they each still hold a reduced number of cows and chickens, respectively).

The CORRAL is maintained largely as it was in the past, and the GROWING FIELDS behind the ranch are GREATLY BUILT-UP compared to their 12-year-younger counterpart, with many intricate trellises and STRANGE FRUITS growing on DARK VINES. The ornate field surrounds a parcel of SEEMINGLY EMPTY LAND at its center; the color of the vineyard grows progressively DARKER as its reaches this central, vacuous point. The vines immediately around this area are ALMOST BLACK.

Adult Link rides past the Ranch's MAIN GATE. He dismounts from his horse and approaches the farmhouse.

Navi peeks out from under Link's dun-colored cowl.

LINK

"I'm not particularly looking forward to this, Navi."

INT. LON-LON RANCH FARMHOUSE - EARLY EVENING.

The first floor of the farmhouse is dreary and empty in a 'Dickensian workhouse' sense. INGO sits at a decrepit table in the corner, illuminated by a STARK WHITE CANDLE. He is counting out RUDDY COPPER CURRENCY and writing figures up in a RED LEDGER. Behind him a BUSTED WINDOW overlooks the black vineyard.

Ingo LOOKS UP as the farmhouse door CREAKS OPEN. Link enters, SURPRISED to find Ingo at the table. Link LOOKS AROUND dutifully, and then slowly pulls the cowl down from his head.

INGO

(greatly annoyed)

"Eh! What business do ya' bring me, stranger?"

Link steps forward.

LINK

"What other business is there in this land? I bring his business..."

Ingo puts down his quill and leans back, SMILING.

INGO

"Oh-hoo? His business? Is that right, now? And what 'business' do you bring from our blessed High King?"

LINK

"A question. You run a tight operation, here, don't you?
And you know everything that happens on this land..."

Ingo TOUSLES his moustache idly.

LINK

"...on your land."

INGO

"It certainly pays to have eyes and ears, my curious-
lookin' friend."

LINK

"So you doubtless saw a rider in black armor come through
your land, recently?"

Ingo GRINS UNSETTLINGLY and leans forward.

INGO

"Hahaha! What amateurish snooping is this, buffoonish
galoot? It pays us people to have eyes and ears, but the
High King of kings doesn't need 'em to keep track of his
Brotherhood. You are not a member of his court anymore than
I'm a Stalfos mutant—"

LINK

(with narrow, threatening eyes)
"I ride from Castle Town, sir—"

INGO

"You ride from Kakariko Village, to there from Castle Town,
to there from the Petrified Forest, and to there from parts
unknown. You are a foreigner, Pale Rider, and you seem a
tad too curious for your own good..."

LINK

"Your eyes and ears are quite keen."

INGO

(waving a hand, dismissive)
"Heh! Don't need 'em— either one:"

Ingo briefly LOOKS OUT his window at the dark vineyard and
its DESOLATE CENTER.

INGO

"Learned about you through the grapevine..."

LINK

"Then what am I to you, exactly?"

Ingo stares at Link derisively.

INGO

"A dead man walking. Not that it makes any difference to me. Whatever time he gives you, he gives you. Don't count on more'n that, though. After all: who could truly know the will of one so great 'n mighty as he, huh? Doesn't matter: anyone who interferes with the High King's business finds the same end—"

LINK

"And what does that mean to you?"

INGO

"Anyone who interferes with the High King's business interferes with my business. That's all it means to me, stranger."

LINK

"You'd help bring me to that end, then?"

Ingo SCOFFS.

INGO

"Death is never good for business, Pale Rider: my task is to tend His Lordship's land, not to pull up his 'weeds'..."

The man WAVES THE QUILL in his hand dismissively.

INGO

"Meantime, you want supplies? Water for your horse, grain for your belly? Take what you want, within reason. I wouldn't begrudge a dead man some final comforts. Take it an' get outta my sight: I've got business to attend to."

LINK

"His business?"

Ingo attends to the RED LEDGER on the table.

INGO

"What other business is there in this land?"

Link WATCHES Ingo for some time, and then finally turns to leave the farmhouse. INGO calls out to him as he reaches the door.

INGO

"I've got a message for you, too, stranger. It's something I'd be darn keen on heedin', if it were me. 'Course, I'm not a fool galoot, either."

LINK

"A message?"

INGO

(slow, deliberate)
"Leave Hyrule'. Now."

Link SCOWLS.

LINK

"And where does that message come from?"

Inigo SMILES shrewdly.

INGO

"From the grapevine, of course. Where else?"

EXT. LON-LON RANCH - EARLY EVENING.

Link passes the farmhouse and enters the DECREPIT BARN. Many of the wooden slats of the barn are ROTTED, allowing ruddy, cloudy light to enter. Much of the place, however, is bathed in shadows. COWS line the far side of the place, slightly SICK-LOOKING but not outright diseased. In another far corner there is a COT, small WASHBASIN and MIRROR, along with a CLOTHESLINE spanning much of the far wall upon which several articles of FEMALE CLOTHING hang. Link wanders over to a SMALL TROUGH containing DIRTY ICE and MILK BOTTLES.

Link picks up one such bottle and slowly untwists the cap. SLOW PAN around his head as he brushes-off some grime from the sides of the rim and prepares to drink it; during this SLOW PAN we see A PETITE, 22-YEAR-OLD WOMAN standing a few feet away from Link behind him, her green eyes piercing through the darkness. This is ADULT MALON. She has a large,

half-matured (ie: about one-half red-stained) EIGHTEEN-DAY BLUSHER in her hair.

MALON
"It's soured..."

Link JUMPS, startled, and he faces the woman, staring at her with ALARM.

After a slight pause Malon continues.

MALON
"It comes from the cows that way. It always does, no matter what, these days. The land here is 'off' for grazing. We tend to certain crops for the High King's needs. They thrive, but they salt the soil: the cows get sick so very often..."

The woman approaches the trough and TIDIES UP the area that Link disturbed.

MALON
"It wasn't always so: we— this farm, I mean— it used to have some very fine milk: rich and nutritious. People used to come from far and wide to drink it; it tasted of sweet grains and—"

LINK
(whispering)
"—honey."

Malon looks back at Link, SURPRISED.

LINK
"I... I only imagine that such a milk would taste of honey."

The woman nods.

MALON
"The milk is still nutritious, though: enough to be vital to the people. Children, especially, need such nourishment..."

LINK
"You ship this milk to Kakariko?"

MALON

"As much as we're allowed."

LINK

"`Allowed?`"

MALON

"Depending on their behavior. The villagers might fail to pay proper tribute to the High King one month, or disobey some minor rule of his law, or perhaps hide a fugitive from the Silver Gauntlets..."

LINK

"`Silver Gauntlets`?"

MALON

"The Hyrule resistan—"

Malon CUTS HERSELF OFF abruptly.

LINK

"Shikashi told me that no one resists the King of Thieves."

MALON

"The villagers mostly ignore such organizations, for fear of their lives. When they do disobey the King they are stricken with such awful shortages; they need our grain and our milk to compensate for their own diseased farmland, but when the High King demands it we slow our supplies— less milk, less grain— until told otherwise."

Malon FINGERS a few of the milk bottles, contemplatively.

MALON

"There's always spare room in the carts, of course. I often try to hide a few more casks here and there, as often as I can, but..."

LINK

"But not always, because you fear for your own life, right?"

Malon looks back at Link.

MALON

"Not especially. Being caught isn't so traumatic, really, but sometimes..."

The woman stares at the barn floor, SORROWFUL.

MALON

"...Ingo abuses the horses, so. He can be so terribly angry when the High King's wishes aren't followed to the letter. When he uses that hickory stick on the animals... it's so heartbreaking..."

Malon WALKS DOWN THE TROUGH LINK, slowly, her fingers moving over several of the ice-cold milk bottles. We see a SMALL PART OF HER BACK exposed via bunching on her dress; there are multiple scarred-over WHIP MARKS.

Link GRITS HIS TEETH.

MALON

"Any other punishment isn't so terrible a thing, but that sight I can't stand."

LINK

"I'm... sorry--"

MALON

"Why would you be sorry? It isn't your fault."

LINK

"I meant for doubting your bravery--"

MALON

"I'm not brave; none of us really are. The people of Hyrule are all attached to each other, in one way or another; these links used to make us such a very strong people, but since the High King came to power these same links are used to weaken us. To enslave us."

LINK

"You don't strike me as the kind of person who'd be anyone's slave..."

MALON

(Smiling)

"I know you don't know me, but would you say I have a gentle heart?"

LINK

"Absolutely. Very gentle."

MALON

"Well, a gentle heart is not so difficult a thing to enslave. You think differently because you don't have any attachments here, do you? No relationship to the land? No reason to really care about our plight. Personally, I mean..."

Navi stirs in the BACK OF LINK'S COWL, angry, but Link chinches the hood to conceal her.

LINK

"That's right: I don't have any attachments. I'm... I'm a foreigner—"

MALON

"You're the Pale Rider they've been talking about."

Link NODS.

LINK

"I need... information, but I don't want to get you into any trouble—"

MALON

"You'd be willing to do so, though: wouldn't you?"

There is a PAUSE. Link eventually SHAKES HIS HEAD and TURNS to leave the barn.

MALON

"You're looking for one of the Brotherhood of the Knuckle, aren't you? The one in black armor moved south of here not too long ago: it was heading for the Southeast Dale Road, probably moving for the Great Forest and the Lost Woods."

Link FACES Malon.

MALON

"They do not move across the land without a purpose, but I don't know what the iron soldier is doing in the woods."

LINK

"I don't want you to get in trouble for speaking with me—"

Malon LAUGHS.

MALON

"Everyone's in 'trouble' these days; a little more of that isn't such a big deal, is it? Right now you're probably the only one who isn't in trouble."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD.

MALON

"He knows you're here, but he isn't doing anything about it. I don't know why. You should leave Hyrule as soon as possible; don't follow the High King's agents around. It will end very poorly for you..."

LINK

"I'm okay with that, so long as it ends very poorly for him, as well."

MALON

"You're an assassin, then?"

LINK

"I'm just a man with no attachments, and no relationship to the land, like you say. Have you heard of a man called Sheik?"

MALON

"Sheik? Yes. I've never met him, though. He fights for the people of Hyrule, or so I've heard, at least..."

The woman WALKS FORWARD.

MALON

"But if you just want to kill the King of Thieves, without regard to the cost of it all, you should find the Silver Gauntlets: that's their mission."

Malon WALKS OFF, heading to the barn door.

MALON

"They don't really give a damn about the people of Hyrule, either."

Malon LEAVES the barn, leaving Link alone.

NAVI emerges from Link's cowl and PERCHES on his shoulder. Link WHISPERS after the retreating woman.

LINK

"I'm- I'm so sorry, Malon... I'm so sorry."

EXT. RIVER GORGE ENTRANCE TO THE ZORA'S FONT - MIDMORNING.

12 years prior to the previous scene.

This is the East-by-Southeast terminus of Hyrule Field, north of the Great Forest; a small tributary of the LAKE OF LEAGUES winds through a LARGE, RIVER-WORN CANYON. The land is narrow and treacherous, here; it is the gateway to the old haunt of the Zora People: the ZORA'S FONT.

CLOSE-UP on LINK'S HEAD, BOBBING UP AND DOWN in the frame with clear blue sky behind him.

ZOOM-OUT reveals Link PIGGYBACKED upon a man's shoulders (legs draped down around his neck). Link is still wearing the GREEN NIGHTCAP and the crimson GORONI TUNIC. He is holding the man's MOSTLY-SHAVED HEAD with both hands for support. The man is thin, gaunt but very physically fit. This is the RUNNING MAN. He is running across Hyrule Field at a very fast clip.

RUNNING MAN

"Ah, killer- little guy: killer! A fifty-pound backpack: just what I needed to max-out my workout and kick-up the ol' endurance! And not just that, but a living backpack!"

The man accidentally TRIPS over a stone in the middle of the path; he CLUMSILY corrects, and Link FLAILS his body in such a way to COUNTERBALANCE the man and keep him on his feet, going so far as to GRAB HIS EARS while pulling his own body as far back as possible. The man REGAINS HIS BALANCE and continues on.

RUNNING MAN

"Ha! What other kind of backpack can correct for road hazards, huh? Wooooo!"

The man slows, then finally STOPS at the narrow CANYON ENTRANCE.

RUNNING MAN

"This is your stop, little guy: Zora's Canyon. They say it's the source of the Lake of Leagues, if you can believe that!"

Link SLIDES DOWN the man's back and faces the canyon.

RUNNING MAN

"Course, I've never been one for swimming, so what do I care, huh? Well: take care, little guy, and if you do see any Zoras in there be sure to prime those legs..."

The man again TAKES OFF at top speed, continuing his CIRCUIT around the massive Hyrule Field.

RUNNING MAN

"... 'cause you'll find yourself running from a ghost!
Wooooooo-hooooo!"

The man's ENTHUSIASTIC SCREAMING fades as he runs off.

NAVI emerges from the GREEN NIGHTCAP on Link's head.

NAVI

"Remember when I mentioned that thing about finding some 'decent transportation' to the Zora's Font?"

Link LOOKS at Navi and NODS.

NAVI

"That wasn't it."

The boy LOOKS at the CANYON ENTRANCE with DETERMINATION. After a dramatic pause he STEPS FORWARD and promptly FALLS ON HIS FACE with a PAINED GRUNT (camera remains STATIONARY at head-level, focused on NAVI).

NAVI

"Be careful- by the way- 'cause you were riding on that guy's shoulders for hours: your feet may have fallen asleep on you..."

Off camera Link GROANS slowly.

EXT. ZORA'S CANYON - MIDMORNING.

A winding, narrow canyon with a river at center, cutting through the land in WEIRD FORMATIONS and rugged terrain. Link and Navi move through this deserted land.

NAVI

"Whaddya think we're gonna find in here, huh?"

Link SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS.

NAVI

"Who do you think is causing all this commotion? Think it really is Ganondorf?"

Link SHRUGS.

NAVI

"Whose bright idea was it to force the Royal Family to get 'consent' from some long-dead race to power-up their ultimate weapon, huh?"

Link SHRUGS.

Navi flies SLIGHTLY CLOSER to the boy's head.

NAVI

"An' who do you like more, huh: Princess Zelda, or Malon?"

Link SHRUGS; the boy's eyes quickly DILATE and he FLUSHES.

NAVI

"Hehehehe-hahaha!"

Link SCOWLS. He JUMPS UP to swat at the fairy and MISSES; Navi 'DIVE-BOMBS' the back of Link's head, after which the boy quickly GRASPS at the fairy, knocking her from her course. The pair SHUTTLE down the riverbank after each other, Link bearing a LARGE SMILE.

Eventually they round a CURVE and run smack into an ANCIENT IRON FENCE, long ago rent in two. Beside the fence a MORBIDLY OBESE MAN lies on the ground (with generally 'piggish' features), his back to the fence, CHOMPING on STRANGE-COLORED beans. This is the MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Eh... ah... oh..."

Link SLIDES TO A HALT before the man, AGHAST at his grotesque appearance.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Gooooh... zat a customer, izzit?"

The Magic Bean Salesman takes a LABORED BREATH before continuing.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Ahhhhh: wanna buy some 'magic beans', sonny? Good for what ails ya': good for growin' in any soil. Weathers the bleakest of winters in spades. Nutritious, sonny. Good for what ails ya'. Nutritious, at that!"

NAVI

(to Link)

"Given what they've done to him they might be a little too nutritious..."

The Magic Bean Salesman extends a fat arm out to the boy, holding one MAGIC BEAN. Link slowly takes it and looks the thing over, putting it to his nose and SMELLING IT, then quickly RECOILING.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Eh... ah... pungent, sonny: very pungent. Don't get 'em near your eyes, neither."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Or your stomach, for that matter..."

Link 'WEIGHS' the bean in one fist, then looks over at Navi.

NAVI

"I know what you're thinking: you wanna bring a sample back for Malon and Talon to look over, don't you?"

Link SHRUGS.

NAVI

"Well, that's very sweet of you, but you don't have a rupee to your name, you know..."

Link looks down at the Magic Bean Salesman, his eyes PROBING.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Ahhhh... three beans, fifty rupees, sonny. Fixed price. Fair price."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Ha! Really? That's only 'fair' if he's got diamonds hidden in the seeds."

FAR OUT shot of this scene from ACROSS THE RIVER; Link stands before the Magic Bean Salesman. In the water there is a reflection of this scene (the reflection is rippling and is NOT OBVIOUS to make out). Instead of a grotesque, pig-faced man sitting at the fence in the reflection there is another being: a LITHE-BODIED AND BLUE-SKINNED CREATURE (somewhat similar in appearance to a human-sized version of Navi, but with some obvious differences), leaning against the fence. This is the Golden Goddess NAYRU. This shot lasts only as long as Navi's previous line ("Ha! Really? That's only 'fair' if...")

Link again 'WEIGHS' the bean in one hand and finally brings his other hand behind his body: he retrieves the FAIRY OCARINA from his sash and hands it over to the obese man.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Guuuuuugh... ocarina... wood... dual-tone capable... child-sized configuration... worth ten rupees, give or take..."

The obese man continues TURNING the instrument over in his hands.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Aaaaahhh... forest wood... Koikiri craftsmanship... fairy ocarina... a rare thing... eh... ah- forty rupees."

NAVI

(to Link)

"Woah! Woah! Woah! You're gonna sell her ocarina?"

Link shoots the fairy a WITHERING STARE.

NAVI

(gulps)

"Oookay: you're gonna sell her ocarina..."

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Eh... ah... geeeh... close enough!"

The Magic Bean Salesman hands Link TWO ADDITIONAL BEANS to go with the one in Link's hand. The boy pockets the beans in the compartment of his sash beside his SLINGSHOT.

Link walks past the Magic Bean Salesman, who sets aside the fairy ocarina and goes back to MUNCHING on his beans. He calls out after the boy.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Ehuhhhhh... nice havin' customers: always nice. Zora ain't buyin', that's for sure. Ha-huuuu! Even that guy in the black cape didn't buy anything!"

Link STOPS WALKING, briefly, before pressing on down the canyon.

DISSOLVE CUTS as the boy passes through the canyon and into the ZORA'S FONT.

EXT. ZORA'S FONT - MIDDAY.

This is the Western terminus of the Zora's Domain (that is, its border with Eastern Hyrule). The Zora's Font itself is a DEEP MOUNTAIN POOL beside a LARGE RIDGE.

It is EXCESSIVELY QUIET in this area, unlike the previous canyon area, where BIRDS CHIRPPED and wildlife could be heard, there is no noise save for the GENTLE ROLL of water in the deep lake.

Link walks across the DIRT GROUND near the water, as he walks he notices ANOTHER SET OF FOOTPRINTS in the dirt, these much larger, adult shoes with CRUEL-LOOKING CLEAT TREAD PATTERNS to them, similar to the design of Ganondorf's RIDING BOOTS.

Link looks up ACROSS THE LAKE; there is a CAVERNOUS HOLE against the large ridge across from him. Most of this ledge is COVERED IN BOULDERS. The entire face of the ridgeline is covered in greenish moss, but a SMALL SURFACE above the cavern opening is, instead, a SMOOTH STONE SURFACE (as if it was recently demolished to produce the landslide now covering the cavern opening).

Link sits on the edge of the water and KICKS OFF HIS LEATHER BOOTS. He REMOVES THE NIGHTCAP and tucks it into the front of his shoulder sash.

The boy jumps in the water and SWIMS (modified doggie-paddle) through the water.

CAMERA VIEW from deep, deep beneath the water, near the bottom of the lake, looking up at Link (The boy is a SMALL SPECK crossing the water).

Link climbs out of the water on the opposite side of the pool. He climbs up the rockwork on the ridge and, with effort, reaches the SEALED CAVERN ENTRANCE.

Link slowly moves into this hollow in the rock and stares at the BOULDERS in his way. He looks back at Navi, QUESTIONING.

NAVI

"Yeah, I'm afraid so. That's the only way into the Old Domain. If such a jewel as this 'Zora's' Eye' thing ever did exist you can bet it'd be somewhere in there."

Link walks CLOSER to the rubble.

NAVI

"So... no Zora's Eye for us, that's for sure. 'Course, on the plus side, that means no danger, either. You'd be out of your mind to go in there, clear path or no! I can't imagine what kinda nightmare Ganondorf might've sealed up inside this place to guard it from 'interference'. That spider in the Deku Tree was bad enough, wasn't it?"

The pair both STARE INTO THE CAMERA (that is, straight ahead at the rubble). Link CROSSES HIS ARMS.

NAVI

"Heck of a landslide, though. I wonder how a single person could manage to—"

LINKS BARE LEGS are violently ensnared by a THIN, AQUA-BLUE TENTACLE lurking behind him; the boy is dragged backwards, instantly FALLING ON HIS FACE, whereupon ANOTHER TENTACLE comes around his ARMS AND CHEST, wrapping around Link's torso multiple times. ANOTHER TENTACLE ensnares LINK'S NECK and, as he is quickly dragged out the cavern entrance, a FINAL TENTACLE ensnares the boy's JAW AND MOUTH, pulling his head back with force. This tentacle abruptly cuts-off the boy's FRENZIED SCREAMING.

LONG DISTANCE shot (WAAAAAAAY long distance) of the cavern entrance and the mountain pool; PART OF A LARGE CREATURE'S BODY is on the pool surface, RADIATING TENTACLES. Some of those tentacles emerge from the cavern carrying Link through the air and into the water with UNSETTLING SPEED.

Link is helplessly DRAGGED DOWN in the water by a massive LIONFISH-LIKE ANIMAL; it possesses MANY AQUA-COLORED TENTACLES and a CENTRAL EYE in its massive head protected by VERTICLE, BONE-LIKE EYELIDS (similar to Ghoma's). This is JABU-JABU.

Link STRUGGLES WILDLY in the water, BUBBLES exploding from his exposed nose.

LONG DISTANCE shot (WAAAAAAAY long distance) of Link being dragged down by the SLOWLY SUBMERGING Jabu-Jabu; far below the pair in the abyssal distance is the ORNATE TOWER of a long-ago submerged ruin; this is the WATER PALACE.

Link manages to get his POINTY BABY TEETH around the tentacle covering his mouth; he BITES DOWN violently and WAGS HIS HEAD like a dog. The tentacle first TEARS, and then RUPTURES, spewing a GREASY-PURPLE SLUDGE through the water with the force of a jet stream.

Again (and identical to the last) a LONG DISTANCE shot (again, WAAAAAAAY long distance) of this massive jet stream; Jabu-Jabu's tentacles all RECOIL AWAY from Link's body. Jabu-Jabu SCREAMS through the water (sound like an IRATE HUMPBACK WHALE).

Link, meanwhile (a small speck in the shot) FLAILS WILDLY upward, swimming to the surface far above him.

The boy EXPLODES ABOVE the water's surface near the rocky shoreline, COUGHING UP WATER and then INHALING deeply. Link SCRAMBLES up the rocks, immediately pursued by MULTIPLE TENTACLES. He jumps atop a nearby rock and FACES the water, SNARLING. As soon as the lead tentacle ENSNARES THE BOY'S WAIST Link ATTACKS it with his ORNAMENTAL OYSTER KNIFE. The resulting JET-STREAM EXPLOSION of purple gunk throws Link back (SCREAMING) and prompts another IRATE SCREAM from beneath the water. ALL TENTACLES DISAPPEAR beneath the water.

Link sits up, COVERED IN PURPLE GOO; the boy GRINS with satisfaction.

Jabu-Jabu's BODY suddenly BEACHES itself on the rocky shore.

Link SETS HIS TOP TEETH ON HIS LOWER LIP, as if he's about to use a word with a very strong initial fricative (that is, a word that starts with an 'f'). Immediate CAMERA CUT AWAY before any sound (other than the initial 'ffffff' noise) is actually made.

The creature forces itself up the crags far enough to quickly ENVELOP the lower half of Link's body in its MOUTH; it GUMS at Link, and the SCREAMING boy pulls himself up and out of the creature's TOOTHLESS MAW; his lower body is coated in TRANSPARENT SLIME. Link races up the rocks and towards the SEALED-UP CAVERN with Jabu-Jabu FLAILING its body further and further up the rocks. At one point Link picks up a SMALL STONE and AIMS it in his SLINGSHOT; firing it at the creature's SINGLE LARGE EYE. Jabu-Jabu's BONY EYELIDS come closed, DEFLECTING the rock with ease.

MORE TENTACLES explode from the water (where part of the creature's body remains submerged). One of them quickly plucks Link up into the air, ARCING, and then moves back to the creature's head. Link STRUGGLES in the tentacle's grasp, then STOPS and EXAMINES the tentacle's position CALMLY. The boy, still holding his oyster knife, SWIPES at a section of tentacle in FRONT of him (his back is to Jabu-Jabu); the resulting JET of gunk propels the boy directly onto Jabu-Jabu's FACE. Link recovers quickly and MERCILESSLY STRIKES the center of Jabu-Jabu's eyelids with the OYSTER KNIFE; the eyelids RESIST opening, however Link PRIES them apart with the knife as if shucking an oyster; there is an UNHEALTHY CRACKING NOISE and the eyelids come apart, exposing Jabu-Jabu's BLOODSHOT PURPLE EYE.

The creature instantly BUCKS ITS BODY, throwing Link onto a nearby pile of boulders.

CLOSE-UP of Jabu-Jabu's EXPOSED EYE; it appears highly DISORIENTED and IRRITATED by the full, bright sunlight.

Link races back up to the CAVERN ENTRANCE.

CAMERA CHASE from Jabu-Jabu's point of view ('messy', 'chaotic', purple-hued camera tones). Camera view RISES and SWINGS RIGHT, suddenly revealing Link standing beside the cavern on some boulders, his slingshot PREPPED AND AIMED at the camera. Link fires directly at the camera.

One of the MAGIC BEANS impacts dead-center in Jabu-Jabu's eye, exploding in a cloud of NOXIOUS BROWN SILT; the creature ROARS LOUDLY and its body SLAMS INTO the cavern entrance, DISLODGING many of the boulders blocking the way. Jabu-Jabu FLAILS WILDLY and falls back into the water, submerging beneath the surface quickly.

Link is THROWN to the ground by this violent impact; rolling into the cavern entrance where he is nearly crushed by several dislodged boulders. The boy lies PRONE, hands over his head on the ground, now with ROCK DUST and pebbles dotting his head as well as the purple gel on his body and transparent sludge on his waist and legs.

The entrance to ZORA'S DOMAIN is now visible in front of the boy (a few DISTANT, MASSIVE WATERFALLS can be discerned in the darkness of the cavern) and a 'SWEET', CHIMING NOISE rises from within. When Link finally looks up he is greeted with a pair of eyes staring at him from the cavern entrance.

A JUVENILE FEMALE ZORA is standing at the cavern entrance (appx. the same height as Link); this is PRINCESS RUTO. She has an overall humanoid appearance with a deep blue body, large head and multiple sets of FINS (this is a creature both capable of bipedal motion outside the water and blisteringly fast swimming while in the water).

Link stares at the girl in WONDER, slowly rising to his feet.

As Ruto emerges from the cavern— moving slowly— more sunlight comes into contact with her body. We see that she is actually TRANSPARENT and SHINING (in a 'ghostly' sort of way).

Link NOTICES this, first with UNEASE, then SORROWFUL REALIZATION.

Ruto step closer to the boy and stares down at his chest, noticing the INTERLOCKING TRIANGLE PENDANT dangling from

his shoulder sash. She looks Link in the eyes, SMILING MISCHIEVOUSLY. Ruto slowly brings her own hands up to take Link's hands; the boy at first SHIES BACK, at which point Ruto stops, but after a pause Link allows the girl to hold his hands in hers. Ruto comes closer to Link, face-to-face, as if to speak; Link leans forward, EXPECTANT, but Ruto quite suddenly PUCKERS HER LIPS and closes in to KISS the boy.

Link CRIES OUT and falls backwards quickly, landing in the rock dust with a thud. When he looks up again we see that Ruto has vanished, although a BRIGHT BLUE LIGHT is still shining in the cavern. Link holds one hand up, revealing a BRIGHT BLUE GEMSTONE set in a platinum fixture. The gemstone is vaguely reminiscent of an eye and it is, in fact, the ZORA'S EYE.

NAVI comes liling into the cavern behind the boy; Link rolls over to a prone position to face the fairy and dangles the gemstone before her, GRINNING with self-satisfaction.

Navi immediately DIVE-BOMBS the boy's head multiple times (as many times as there are EMPHASIZED WORDS in the following dialogue), forcing Link to SHIELD his head with both arms.

NAVI

"Of all the stupid, reckless, ridiculous, idiotic things I've ever seen in my entire life..."

EXT. HYRULE CASTLE - AFTERNOON.

Several days since the events at Zora's Font.

Several CASTLE GUARDS stand watch at the MAIN ENTRANCE to Hyrule Castle.

Link walks up the COBBLED ROAD beneath the main gate, approaching the guards HESITANTLY. One of the guards TAKES NOTE of the boy, but neither man reacts as Link walks under the gate and into the castle.

INT. HYRULE CASTLE CORRIDORS - AFTERNOON.

The opulent main chambers of Hyrule Castle. There are many window-lined corridors, bright with many TAPESTRIES and PLANTS at regular intervals.

A PALACE GUARD leads Link through these corridors. At one point he EXTENDS A HAND back at Link, bidding the boy wait against the wall.

Two other PALACE GUARDS come walking through the corridor, escorting two ANCIENT-LOOKING WOMEN gently through the corridor. One of them bears a strong resemblance to KOTAKE; this is the Gerudo witch KOZUME. The other woman is, in fact, the Gerudo Witch KOTAKE. Link stands in a SMALL ALCOVE in the wall shielded by a large BIRD OF PARADISE plant; neither woman takes note of the child.

The PALACE GUARD with Link nods his head as the ancient women pass.

PALACE GUARD #1

"Prince Ganondorf was lunching with the king earlier. But there's his entourage; the prince must have gone ahead of them, back to his guest quarters."

The guard MOTIONS down the corridor.

PALACE GUARD #1

"You can find your own way down the line: it's the second door on the left. Lady Impa is on her way to meet you from there. Few guests can move unescorted through that section of the castle; frankly Her Highness has never had playmates with the ability to come and go in such a manner."

The guard SCRATCHES HIS CHIN.

PALACE GUARD #1

"In point of fact, Her Highness has never actually had any-
"

The guard CONSIDERS Link, then quickly stands back at attention.

PALACE GUARD #1

"It's not for me to discuss such things. Anyway, I doubt you can cause too much mischief along the way."

Link WALKS down the corridor slowly. Soon he comes to an ORNATE DOOR— the second on the left— along one side of the corridor. The door's latch unexpectedly CLICKS.

PRINCE GANONDORF comes through this door suddenly, fast enough that Link cannot get out of the way; the boy bumps headlong into the prince's waist, hitting his head on a LONG BLACK DAGGER— sheathed in a macabre sheath— and tumbles before him on the floor.

Ganondorf stares down at the child, first with SURPRISE, and then with a SLY, KNOWING SMILE. He READJUSTS the black dagger on his waist.

GANONDORF

"Wherever doest thou wander, o very little thing?"

Link is GETTING UP when PALACE GUARD #1 comes racing up the corridor; he forcibly DRAGS the boy to his feet.

PALACE GUARD #1

"Apologies, prince Ganondorf! This is just one of Her Highness's playmates— attendants— come to wait on the princess."

Ganondorf stares down at Link CONDESCENDINGLY. His SMIRK widens and the man brings a BLACK-IRON GLOVE up to the boy's face, SCRATCHING Link's cheek (he does this DURING the next line of dialogue). The boy expresses OBVIOUS DISPLEASURE, but he does not recoil.

GANONDORF

"A little playmate for the Princess of Hyrule? How very sweet! But he seems so out of place in these halls, like a 'sapling before willows'..."

Link's eyes BULGE at these words; Ganondorf's GRIN spreads.

GANONDORF

"Hopefully there's nothing 'fishy' about him..."

Link's face CONTORTS with UNDISGUISED HATRED.

Ganondorf STEPS AROUND the boy; the palace guards escorting the prince also follow him.

GANONDORF

"After all, playmates playing at games is only natural, but I'd hate to think he's playing at some very dangerous game with the princess. Small children, you know, can be so very insufferable..."

Ganondorf STALKS OFF down the corridor, his BLACK CAPE trailing behind him and two palace guards following at a respectful distance.

Link WATCHES the man retreat, SCOWLING.

SLOW PAN from one side of Link's face to the other; IMPA'S MIDSECTION inexplicably appears in the background from one angle to the next.

Impa COUGHS.

Link spins around to face the woman.

IMPA

"My charge is changing. She will not see you."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD at Impa, INCREDULOUS.

IMPA

"She would see you, I know, but it's for the best that she does not. For her sake. Your 'business' together is concluded, as you know. For my charge to see you again: it would bring her pain, I believe."

Impa TURNS AWAY from the boy.

IMPA

"This is a dangerous game, after all, and lately I'm overtaxed, following all the whispers and rumors within these walls. Something is happening, and whether my charge's visions are related I cannot say, but I will not prolong her pain by showing you into this castle without cause—"

A JINGLING NOISE behind Impa distracts the woman; she faces Link, who is dangling the ZORA'S EYE from a silver chain.

IMPA

"What is that?"

Link TOSSES the pendant to the woman; Impa snatches it out of the air and holds the ZORA'S EYE up to her face.

IMPA
"Oh: I see..."

She looks down at the boy.

IMPA
"Cause'."

INT. PRINCESS ZELDA'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS, ROYAL FAMILY ROOMS
- AFTERNOON.

A large, ornate sitting room laden with all manner of creature comforts and articles befitting a young princess's room. Ancillary rooms bud off from the sitting room like spokes off a wheel: bedroom, washroom, servants' passages and others.

Link stands beside a large, frilly settee, OBVIOUSLY UNEASY. Beside him is a large, ornate OAKWOOD WARDROBE CLOSET. The princess's washroom is at '12 o'clock' in the room's configuration, graced with a POROUS STONE FLOOR. The girl's voice ECHOES from around a corner in the stone wash-chamber.

ZELDA
"You're fantastic: really you are! I can't believe you did that! It's absolutely incredible!"

Link SMILES MODESTLY. Looking down to one side he notices a CHILD-SIZED WHITE BATTLE DRESS wedged amongst clothes in the wardrobe (identical to the one from pg. _____); it is stained with PAINT in several places.

Impa notices the boy staring at the garment and promptly SHUTS the wardrobe.

There is a WOODEN STICK with paint on its tip beneath a coffee table next to Link (although it is NOT easy to see). Link does notice some SHINING OBJECTS on the table and picks one up: it is the tip of a BROADHEAD ARROW.

ZELDA'S VOICE again echoes from the washroom.

ZELDA

"I'm sure that the Zora are at peace, again. I hope they stay that way for the rest of time; the dead really ought to be allowed to sleep forever."

Zelda walks from one end of her washroom to the other, briefly passing by the narrow entryway; she is nude, save for a towel wrapped around her body. Notably, the girl bears several VERY SMALL, HEALING BRUISES along her shoulder and near her side (in an arrangement befitting that of SPARRING INJURIES). Part of this towel slip briefly as she passes, allowing Link (though not necessarily the audience) to see part of the girl's rear (upon which a faint TRIANGLE SHAPED CAFÉ-AU-LAIT BIRTHMARK rests; again, it is not entirely necessary that the audience see this).

Link is notably SHOCKED by this.

Impa immediately stands before Link and GLARES at the boy; a BRIGHT FLASH fills the screen, immediately followed by a SEPIA-TONED IMAGE: Zelda again walking by the washroom door, although this time her towel remains modestly in place over her whole body.

Link STEPS BACK from Impa, seemingly DISORIENTED; he blinks, wags his head and then GRUNTS.

Zelda emerges from the washroom; she is wearing FEMININE, CALF-LENGTH PANTS (basically a version of upscale capris) with an INTRICATELY-DESIGNED TANK TOP and her INTERLOCKING-TRIANGLE HEADSCARF on her head. She stands before Link, smiling.

ZELDA

"You're a real hero, do you know that?"

A FEMALE SERVANT enters through the servants' passage; she appears to be in her mid-20's. She whispers to Impa, then BOWS in Zelda's direction and retreats. Impa approaches the princess.

IMPA

"Your father wishes to see you in half-an-hour, at the northern greenhouse."

Zelda nods. She looks at Link.

ZELDA

"He's very cross with me, right now. My father has planned one final event with the crown prince, soon, to wish him a safe journey home to the Gerudo Valley: an intimate dinner party at the hanging gardens above our castle keep. It's not like all the other ceremonies so far. There will be too few people there for my absence to be overlooked; my attendance will be mandatory."

The girl rests her hands over her chest SORROWFULLY.

ZELDA

"I... don't want to attend."

She LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, then back at Link.

ZELDA

"I'm... afraid, even. That's such an unseemly thing for a ruler, isn't it? Even for a very young one. Don't you agree?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD back and forth.

Zelda SMILES WISTFULLY. The girl then looks back at Impa.

ZELDA

"Impa, could you keep an eye on Kotake and Kozume's actions this afternoon? The castle guard is watching the prince well enough, but I worry about those two: they make me very ill at ease."

Impa first looks at Zelda, then at Link. The woman NARROWS HER EYES at the boy, and then she nods.

Zelda steps forward, closer to Link.

ZELDA

"Kozume and Kotake are the two old women traveling with Ganondorf: they're his mothers, actually..."

Link NODS, but then he quickly SCRUNCHES HIS FACE in puzzlement. Navi is perched upon the boy's EAR.

NAVI

(to Link)

"Now, I really don't know how that would work out..."

Link LOOKS AT Navi out of the corner of his eyes; he then notices that Impa is no longer standing beside him; she has DISAPPEARED from the room.

The Female Servant again enters from the passage.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Will it be the lavender dress for lunch, Your Highness, or perhaps the auburn frock?"

NAVI

(to Link)

"Huh: royals are so fancy that they don't just wear pretty clothes..."

The fairy BUZZES closer to Link's face.

NAVI

"They eat 'em, too."

Link INACCURATELY SWATS THE AIR beside his head.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Or shall I send for your wardrobe attendants to assemble an outfit for you?"

Zelda BOWS HER HEAD; Link notices the girl GRIT HER TEETH in annoyance, but when she looks back up she is COMPOSED.

ZELDA

"Please leave me, just for a moment: I'm not quite finished with this one."

The girl MOTIONS to Link.

The Female Servant bows.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Of course, and I'll be right outside, Highness, but please understand that your father would rather you don't make him wait..."

Zelda NODS at the retreating woman, then she wanders over to a NARROW WINDOW after the woman leaves the room.

ZELDA

"It's... a really funny thing: I always wonder how someone can be surrounded by so many people, but still feel so alone..."

Link SLOWLY APPROACHES the girl.

Zelda turns to face the boy, bearing a MISCHIEVOUS SMILE on her face.

ZELDA

"Before— when we first met— I told the castle guards that you weren't a kidnapper; do you remember that?"

Link MOVES HIS EYES TO ONE SIDE with unease. He looks back at the girl and NODS.

Zelda APPROACHES the boy, hesitant.

ZELDA

"Would you... like to be one? Temporarily, at least..."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD, quizzical.

Navi produces a VERY NERVOUS SQUEAK.

EXT. ROYAL FAMILY STABLES - AFTERNOON.

Giant wooden stables set apart from the rest of the stonework of Hyrule Castle inside the main courtyard.

An ELDERLY HORSE TRAINER toddles out of the stables leading two ADULT RIDING HORSES by the reins (a STALLION and a MARE). One of the horses (the mare) has a SMALL BUNDLED SACK on its back.

HORSE TRAINER

"Here we are: both to order for ya."

The man SQUINTS DOWN at Link.

HORSE TRAINER

"Ye sure ya can ride, child? These're willful beings, they are. 'Specially this one, here."

The Trainer motions to the MARE carrying the BUNDLE.

Link CROSSES HIS ARMS, SCOWLING.

NAVI hovers near the boy's green nightcap.

NAVI
(to Link)

"We can probably handle it, inasmuch as a horse is like a giant spider monster, a dodongo, or a tentacle-bearing killer fish from the gates of hell..."

Link LOOKS at the fairy.

NAVI
(to Link)

"If it's any different, though, we might be in trouble..."

The boy IGNORES Navi and CLAMBERS up the side of the stallion; he is unable to reach the saddle without assistance from the trainer, which Link appears to RESENT.

HORSE TRAINER
"There, now: close enough. Not quite a master, are ya'? Ah, but you're young, yet, and mastery takes precious time, don't it? Oh, so many things a body needs to be a master! The wisdom of age, innit? Hehehe! Ya' don't have that!"

The Trainer PATS one of Link's scrawny legs in the stirrup. Link SCOWLS at the man's condescension.

HORSE TRAINER
"And a touch more power to put all the rest into play! Hahaha! Well: you're certainly courageous enough, though, aren't you? An' I've never seen such prize thoroughbreds go out of the grounds so quickly, and into such inexperienced hands: you must certainly have your friends in the Royal Family, to boot!"

NAVI
(to Link)
"Do me a favor and give him your boot..."

Link PULLS HIS FOOT BACK, pausing while staring at the Horse Trainer's head (temptingly at 'foot level'). The boy eventually uses that foot to gently spur his stallion onward. He passes the Horse Trainer, who still CHUCKLES.

The boy moves his horses under the STONE ARCHWAY leading out beyond the castle walls. TWO CASTLE GUARDS stand watch,

eyeing the boy suspiciously. Link passes by slowly until one guard blocks his path.

CASTLE GUARD #4
"You: boy! Hold up!"

The guard CIRCLES Link slowly, GLOWERING at the child.

CASTLE GUARD #4
"Odd thing: one small rider taking two royal steeds out an' about..."

CLOSE-UP on the BUNDLE attached to the mare.

CASTLE GUARD #4
"One would think you were up to something..."

The guard passes the bundle slowly.

CASTLE GUARD #4
"One might even think..."

The guard SPINS AROUND quickly and cuts away the binding on the bundle; a mess of BLANKETS bulge out from the bundle.

The guard RUMMAGES around these, finding nothing else. He scratches his head and again GLOWERS at the boy.

CASTLE GUARD #4
"...that one might be mistaken."

The guard curtly motions for Link to proceed; the boy spurs his mount on, GLARING at the man with a snide look.

CLOSE-UP ON LINK, from the front, as he passes under the stone archway. The archway becomes NARROWER and the ceiling possesses LOWER CLEARANCE as he moves through it. The ceiling is eventually just a meter or so above Link's head.

NAVI darts out from Link's green nightcap.

NAVI
"Just as well: they'd have certainly tossed your rear in the dungeon if they found out about this little stunt. As for Her Royal Highness: that girl's planning is a bit off, isn't it?"

MAINTAIN close-up on Link.

A pair of GIRL'S LEGS suddenly dangle just above the boy's head.

NAVI

"'Just leave it to me'? Ha! It was a dumb idea, anyway, and it's really for the best that she couldn't pull it off..."

Princess Zelda suddenly falls down from the archway, landing gracefully right behind Link in the saddle; the boy LOOKS BACK with a start at the same time that his stallion launches into a QUICK TROT, spurned on by the unexpected new weight on his back.

Zelda peeks around the boy's shoulder and SMILES at him.

Navi produces a VERY NERVOUS SQUEAK.

Link rides out into the fields behind Hyrule Castle. Eventually Zelda COAXES the mare up beside the pair. Link WATCHES as Zelda readies the mare's saddle for herself, despite the fact that they are still moving at a fast trot on the stallion. Link TURNS HIS BODY to assist the girl, but then Zelda suddenly SLINGS herself off the stallion and lands directly in the mare's saddle. She takes the reins and GRINS at the boy, spurring her horse into a FAST GALLOP.

ZELDA

"He-yah!"

Link WATCHES as Zelda's mare disappears over a dandelion-covered hill, leaving a CLOUD OF WHITE DUST.

Navi perches on the boy's ear.

NAVI

"Your track record against little girls is getting even worse, isn't it? Best to get moving, shall we?"

Link looks back over at Zelda's dandelion cloud and SMILES DEVILISHLY. With a SIMILAR CRY to Zelda's the boy spurs his stallion on in pursuit of the princess.

EXT. ROYAL ORCHARDS - LATE AFTERNOON.

A copse of large fruit trees beside a small artificial pond. The back of Hyrule Castle is visible in the distance. The sun is READY TO SET on the horizon.

The children's mounts are TETHERED to a nearby apple tree. Link and Zelda sit side-by-side on a sloping limestone rock, their feet skirting the pond water.

Zelda BALANCES a RED APPLE on her kneecaps and SIGHS with contentment.

ZELDA

"It's so seldom I ever get to come out here, and never like this. Thank you."

The girl HOLDS THE APPLE in front of her face, then she HANDS IT over to Link; the boy takes the apple in one hand and ROTATES it around playfully.

ZELDA

"Whenever I do get to come out here— with all the servants, and the attendants, and the matrons, and the wait staff, and the honor guard, and everything else— everything feels so artificial, so cold..."

The girl LOOKS at Link.

ZELDA

"But they're always there. And... and I always kinda feel that 'artificiality': that 'coldness'..."

Link SETS THE APPLE DOWN between the princess and himself. Zelda LOOKS AWAY from the boy and SWALLOWS uncomfortably.

ZELDA

"I shouldn't speak of my loneliness: it couldn't make sense to you. You're the one that has all the cause to complain. I couldn't imagine being driven from my home like that, being left to wander all by myself. I can't think of how alone you must feel..."

Link LOOKS AWAY from the girl.

Zelda PICKS THE APPLE UP and TURNS it in her hands.

ZELDA

"We have a job to do, you know: we're going to save Hyrule,
and that's all that matters..."

The girl SETS THE APPLE DOWN beneath her bunched-up legs
and looks over at the boy.

ZELDA

"Our feelings don't really matter compared to that. But,
still: it's kinda nice, I think, that we could be lonely
together, at least for a little while..."

Link MEETS ZELDA'S GAZE; the children give half-smiles to
each other.

After a moment there is a NOISE rising from the direction
of the castle: many RIDERS are approaching the orchard from
the distance, still a great distance away and barely
discernable in the sunset's HAZE.

Zelda slowly STANDS UP; Link does likewise.

ZELDA

"The Royal Guard."

The girl looks at Link SORROWFULLY.

ZELDA

"I didn't think they'd track us down so quickly."

Zelda LOWERS HER EYES and BOWS HER HEAD. Suddenly she
RAISES her head.

ZELDA

"Oh! But wait!"

The girl RUMMAGES through a small SATCHEL she brought along
for the trip; eventually she retrieves a DEEP-PURPLE HUED
OCARINA; this is the OCARINA OF TIME. Zelda holds it up
carefully.

ZELDA

"I told you I play, remember? This is the ocarina King
Darunia gave to me."

Zelda TURNS the instrument over in her hands.

ZELDA

"He gave it to me a long time ago. It could be very lonely for a small child in such a large castle. Darunia gave me this ocarina and told me never to cry for my loneliness.

'This ocarina', he told me, 'has the power to unite the most devoted of hearts wherever they roam'."

The girl puts the mouthpiece to her lips and begins playing a SLOW, LILTING TUNE on the ocarina; this song is ZELDA'S LULLABY.

When she finishes Zelda holds the instrument closer to her face, SMILING AT IT FONDLY.

ZELDA

"My mother used to hum that song to me, usually to get me to sleep. I've always liked it: it makes me feel safe, as if that song could pick up all my worries and cast them away, while gathering up all the things that could keep me safe and linking them together in a tight, unbreakable bond that fit snug around me. I've always thought that my mother's song sounds best through this ocarina..."

Zelda EXTENDS HER HANDS, holding the Ocarina of Time out to Link. The boy stares at the girl with SURPRISE. He takes a STEP BACKWARD.

ZELDA

"Please? I'm not a princess giving you a command, but please..."

Link does nothing for several seconds, then he STEPS FORWARD and carefully takes the instrument from Zelda's hands.

ZELDA

"This ocarina has the power to unite the most devoted of hearts, wherever they roam..."

(NOTE: Link had accepted the ocarina WITHOUT TOUCHING Zelda's hands; as Link holds the ocarina Zelda slowly MOVES HER HAND over the top of the instrument, bringing her fingers into closer contact with the boy's; she is interrupted by the Castle Guard BEFORE she can touch Link's hand)

The sound of MANY HORSES' HOOVES and MEN SHOUTING rise; the Castle Guard swarms through the orchard trees.

Zelda is on the VERGE OF TEARS.

ZELDA

"Don't worry: I won't cry for my loneliness. But I'm sorry that we never got the chance to play that duet..."

One of the LEAD CASTLE GUARDS swoops in on his steed, SCOOPING UP the girl as he passes.

CASTLE GUARD #5

"Beg pardon, Highness."

He gently deposits the girl in the saddle in front of him and quickly DEPARTS back towards Hyrule Castle with half-a-dozen other guards flanking him.

Several other horse-mounted guards lag behind the group, including CASTLE GUARD #3, who moves his horse up near Link and SNEERS DOWN at the boy.

Link GLARES UP at the man; the boy makes a fist and then makes as if to PUNCH the man's foot in the stirrup. Castle Guard #3 STARTS and makes a pained shrieking noise, PULLING HIS HORSE BACKWARDS. The man again SNEERS at Link before RIDING OFF with the other guards.

Link STARES DOWN at the Ocarina of Time as the sound of horses' hooves FADES. The boy brings the mouthpiece up to his own; it still GLISTENS in the sunset with trace spit from Zelda's use. The mouthpiece is ODDLY DESIGNED, with an INTRICATE AND ORNATE arrangement of delicate wooden prongs. Link SETS HIS LIPS to the mouthpiece, closing his eyes, and pretends to play though ZELDA'S LULLABY (mimicking the finger positions).

SLOW PAN on the previous shot; panning beyond Link's head shows that Impa is inexplicably LEANING AGAINST THE APPLE TREE in the background; she is holding the APPLE that Link and Zelda were toying with.

IMPA

"That was not a wise thing to do."

Link JUMPS and SHRIEKS with surprise. Navi BURST out from the boy's nightcap.

Impa TAKES A BITE out of the apple.

NAVI

(to Link)

"How in the hell does she do that?"

Link SPINS AROUND to face the woman.

IMPA

"Are you surprised that we could find you so easily? It's not so difficult a thing to track my charge; she is a very clever girl, but she's also an 8-year-old. The fact that she came out of her washroom wearing her riding clothes was a subtle hint..."

NAVI

(to Link)

"This is another reason why nobody ever puts absolute power in the hands of little kids: they're rather stupid..."

Impa STEPS FORWARD.

IMPA

"She will not be returning to her chambers; I am personally keeping watch over her for the time being. A shadow is falling over the castle. Ganondorf is to leave Hyrule very soon, but I am certain he will make his move before long..."

Impa walks past the boy and STARES at the setting sun.

IMPA

"There's too much to do, and too few people to do it. There's too much to protect with too little time, now. So many pieces on the board, and so many choices: which to salvage, and which to sacrifice? I've known so many hard choices in my time with the Royal Family, so many trials..."

Impa LOOKS OFF TO THE SIDE, her eyes UNSTEADY.

IMPA

(whispering)

"...so many Zeldas..."

Link has been watching the woman; he NODS at these words, but then quickly LOOKS UP with ABJECT PUZZLEMENT on his face.

The woman LOOKS BACK at Link.

IMPA

"This one is precious to me, though."

Impa turns to Link and KNEELS DOWN, coming eye-to-eye with the boy.

IMPA

"I'd give up more pieces on the board than I should just to keep her safe, but I'm confident that she is vital for the survival of Hyrule. I am not. Nor are you."

Impa RISES and turns away.

IMPA

"My job is to do what I can to protect my charge. If you believe that you still have a part to play in all this then I suggest you do your part..."

The woman begins WALKING OFF. Link starts to follow, but then notices a JINGLING NOISE at his hip: the GORON'S HAND and ZORA'S EYE dangle from his waist on a chain.

IMPA

"You're no master, I know, but at the very least you can help protect our artifact for its use by more... 'capable' hands. As long as Dhise Slaighre remains safe under the Golden Goddesses' sun people like Ganondorf have no cause for confidence, no matter how black their hearts roil, and no matter what darkness they manage to inflict."

She FACES Link once again.

IMPA

"Little one, I- you should know..."

The woman LOOKS TO ONE SIDE. There is a LONG PAUSE.

IMPA

"In the darkest night- when there's nothing to be seen for a mile, let alone your hands right in front of your face- when one's despair is snapping at one's throat- there is a

light. There is always a sunrise. Sometimes it can be the darkest of times: the hour just before dawn. Sometimes one cannot see the sun before it crests, before the light shines so radiantly."

Impa STARES AT LINK purposefully.

IMPA

"Like the sand falling through an hourglass, or colored fall leaves strewn over a path; seawater breaking the beach at high tide, or the shadows..."

Impa CLENCHES ONE FIST OVER HER BREAST and stares down, melancholy.

IMPA

"...the shadows lingering— so very long— where they do not belong: on the fringes of the light."

Impa LOOKS UP again.

IMPA

Tell yourself this: 'all that, and more, will pass as sure as the darkness gives way to the dawn'. That, I think, should give you strength enough..."

The woman stares down at Link intently.

IMPA

"Sand, Leaves, Water and Shadow: all that, and more, will pass."

Impa CROSSES HER ARMS and SMILES.

IMPA

"It's waiting for you in the Temple of Time, little one. I truly think that it has been, too, for so very long. But, of course, even if you wanted to remove the Dhise Slaighre from the temple you'd need to know that you have the heart..."

Link looks down at the CHEST of his tunic.

IMPA

"...or the stomach to play your part through, at that. But then I don't think that's your problem, is it, little one? Guts, I mean?"

Link LOOKS BACK UP, but he finds that Impa has vanished. He stands silently for a time, then he RECLINES AGAINST AN APPLE TREE, sitting contemplatively at its base, and watches the sunset. Link slowly brings the Ocarina of Time into his lap.

NAVI sits on the boy's shoulder.

NAVI

"Well, that's just dandy, isn't it? Zelda's the lynchpin that'll save Hyrule— and all that— and she's got Impa to look after her; Zelda's little family heirloom is gonna help her protect the land, and that little family heirloom has you to protect it. But let me ask you this: who's gonna watch out for your backside in all this, huh? Who's gonna 'pick up all your worries and cast them away', huh?"

Link LEANS HIS HEAD against the apple tree. He puts the OCARINA OF TIME TO HIS LIPS, CLOSING HIS EYES, and he plays a slower version of ZELDA'S LULLABY.

EXT. TERMINUS OF THE SOUTHEAST DALE ROAD - EARLY MORNING.

It is 12 years later.

A paltry dirt path, leading through a mess of sickly-looking scrub and bushes. Much further on, however, is the true greenery of the LOST WOODS and the KOKIRI FOREST.

There is pitch blackness. A FAINT BRIGHT FLASH reveals YOUNG LINK standing with his ARMS SPREAD; bright ORANGE LIGHT radiating from one fist and bright BLUE LIGHT radiating from the other fist. Another color— bright GREEN LIGHT— begins welling up from all directions around the boy. ANOTHER FLASH reveals an EXTREME CLOSE-UP ON DHISE SLAIGHRE'S HILT, PANNING DOWN fast.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on Adult Link's closed eye; it OPENS as the young man GASPS.

Adult Link is sleeping on the side of the road, his horse tethered to a bush in the background. He bolts upright, instantly bringing the glistening DHISE SLAIGHRE up out of the folds of his dun-colored cloak. He pushes the blade up against the neck of a figure standing over him in the darkness.

The figure STUMBLES out of the darkness, uncoordinated, NICKING THEIR CHIN on Link's blade as they wobble (not a serious injury). As they stumble into the light it becomes apparent that the figure is a YOUNG FEMALE CHILD (appx. 8-years-old in appearance) in a GREEN FOREST DRESS: a KOKIRI GIRL. Her clothes are TATTERED and SINGED and her eyes are VACANT.

Link quickly DROPS Dhise Slaighre to his side; the girl FALTERS and FALLS FORWARD, landing hard on her side in the dirt.

Link KNEELS beside the girl, ROLLING HER onto her back. He EXAMINES HER with ALARM; she is GASPING like a fish and bears an OBVIOUSLY PAINED look on her face. The girl continually CLUTCHES at her heart, DIGGING HER NAILS into the fabric of her dress around her chest, unable to speak for pain and constriction.

LINK

"Hey... hey! Hang in there. Stay with me, alright? Stay with me!"

NAVI flies out of LINK'S COWL but Link quickly SNAPS HER OUT OF THE AIR (into his hand) before the Kokiri Girl can see her; he deposits her back in his COWL.

LINK

(to himself)

"Ummm... breath and blood: salt and salve!"

Link RACES INTO THE TREELINE, quickly moving amongst the shrubs until he finds certain COLORED BERRIES. He COLLECTS these, along with SCRAPINGS from the bark of some trees and RACES BACK to the roadside.

When he returns he finds SHEIK on his knees LEANING OVER the Kokiri Girl; he has his own FOREHEAD pressed to HERS and one GLOVED HAND on her chest, directly over the girl's heart. MAGICAL RED LIGHT gums-up the gaps between their bodies.

Link RUNS UP to this scene just as Sheik PULLS AWAY from the Kokiri Girl; Sheik stumbles away from the child UNSTEADILY.

Link KNEELS DOWN beside the Kokiri Girl. He is FRANTICALLY SORTING the ingredients he collected when he notices a change in the girl: her breathing is SHALLOW, BUT REGULAR and her face bears a look of TRANQUIL PEACE (analogous to a morphine-induced stupor).

LINK
"Hey, there..."

Link GRIPS THE GIRL'S CHIN, but he gets little response.

LINK
"Hey!"

The girl stares STRAIGHT UP, peaceful, and then her CHEST slowly stops moving. She lets out one last LONG SIGH OF CONTENTMENT, and then she stops breathing.

Link GENTLY SHAKES the girl's chin.

A BRIGHT PINK PINPOINT OF LIGHT slowly emerges from the NECKLINE of the Kokiri Girl's dress: it is her FAIRY. The creature FLIES UP erratic, for a moment, and then quickly loses all color and while FALLING out of the air it DISINTEGRATES into ASHES and scatters over the dead girl's face.

NAVI again emerges from Link's cowl and lands on his shoulder.

Link TOYS with a very small RED EARRING in his RIGHT EAR. He GRUNTS. CLOSE-UP on LINK'S FACE, contemplating the dead girl's body with HORROR. Sheik is in the frame's background leaning beside a tree with his back to Link.

Link's look of horror soon turns to ANGER; he rises—bearing Dhise Slaighre— and FACES Sheik.

SHEIK
(labored and fatigued)
"Would you so slaughter a defenseless wanderer?"

LINK
"What did you do to her?"

SHEIK
"Little, really... I did what I could—"

LINK

"That seems like low praise, to me. You murderous toad—"

SHEIK

"I served her as best I could—"

LINK

"You just killed her!"

SHEIK

(shouting)

"She killed herself!"

There is a LONG PAUSE after these words, broken only by the FAINT NOISES of distant wildlife.

CLOSE-UP on SHEIK'S FACE (Link in background); Sheik's RIGHT EYE has a massive, CRIMSON TEAR training down his right cheek (this is the remnants of one of Sheik's MIND'S EYE worms, now dead, dripping out his eye). The eye itself is IRRITATED and red, but no longer BRIGHT RED like its counterpart: it is obviously a SHADE OF VIOLET underneath all the irritation. The PATCHWORK SCARVES that normally cover his lower face dangle LOOSELY in the breeze.

SHEIK

"She is a Kokiri. She left the forest. No Kokiri can ever leave the forest— on pain of their lives: they're bound to it. She knew that she couldn't survive. And she didn't..."

Sheik KNEELS DOWN quickly, as if in PAIN, and then VOMITS a thick, black SLUDGE onto the ground. He soon regains composure and STANDS. Sheik COVERS the right side of his head with his scarves and TURNS; he LOOKS OVER at the dead forest child.

SHEIK

(whispering)

"...they never do."

Link slowly DROPS Dhise Slaighre to his side. He KNEELS beside the dead Kokiri Girl, FATIGUED.

LINK

"You're a hard man to track down. Do you know that?"

SHEIK

"You have been looking for me?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"Had been, yeah. Not anymore, though."

SHEIK

"You hunt much bigger prey now; don't you, traveler?"

LINK

"An armored knight, and his cargo..."

SHEIK

"What would you accomplish by catching-up to it?"

Link NARROWS HIS EYES.

LINK

"What wouldn't I accomplish, huh? I could do more than nothing, at least."

Link GETS UP and DUSTS HIMSELF OFF; he sheathes his sword and moves to untether his horse.

SHEIK

"The iron-skinned warrior is in the Great Forest, traveler. You wanted to know this, didn't you?"

LINK

"I already knew that. And I have a good idea where he's going, specifically."

Link GAZES OUT across the road, eyeing the thick FORST far in the distance.

LINK

"There's a strange place deep in those woods— the Sacred Forest Meadow. At its center is an ancient ruin— the Kokiri Forest Children called it the 'Forest Temple'; it's the heart of the woods..."

Link MOUNTS his horse.

LINK

"If you wanted to drive a knife through the last vestige of the forest's power, that's where you'd go: that's the place you'd target."

SHEIK

"Tell me, traveler: why would the King of Thieves care about such a thing? Hasn't he had 12 years of rule to strike the forest down, if he so chose?"

Link STARES AT HIS LAP and nods.

LINK

"Yeah: I've been thinking about that, too: if he's been ruling for so long, why would his desire only now bring him to this place?"

SHEIK

"And your answer?"

Link GLARES DOWN at Sheik. He MOVES HIS CLOAK to reveal the hilt of Dhise Shaighre.

LINK

"The Dhise Slaighre— this sword that I wield— it is not an instrument that can travel this land unnoticed. That's why, Sheik."

Sheik CROSSES HIS ARMS.

SHEIK

"Do you mean to throw my own words back at me? And if he is truly acting because of that sword's presence then he is forced into action: he believes that he must entirely obliterate any semblance of power from Hyrule, lest the rocks themselves sing out with the praises of Dhise Slaighre—"

LINK

"I've found this thing to be a pretty ordinary sword, Sheik; it isn't particularly amazing—"

SHEIK

"Granted. But, then, you are not particularly 'masterful'."

LINK

"Maybe so, but I'm all it's got, right now. Or do you want to have a go with it? Should I give it to you?"

Sheik stares at Link, then down at the sword at his side.

SHEIK

"You use that sword as you will, traveler."

Link scoffs and begins TROTting off on his horse. Sheik calls after him.

SHEIK

"Strange, that the King of Thieves would choose that remote temple, above any other; one might assume you had a connection to it: something that he may be exploiting—"

LINK

"No. Not especially. I'm not a Kokiri. Obviously..."

SHEIK

"Do you ride for the Southern Forest Road?"

LINK

"Naturally."

SHEIK

"It's impassable."

LINK

"Not if I detour through the Forest Glen: the Kokiri Village—"

SHEIK

"Is vacant; a mire of swamp water and black vines have overtaken the Glen where the village stood. For many years now only the Brotherhood of the Knuckle can move freely through that place; all others, even those on horseback, fall to it. The forest children's village is gone and its former inhabitants have all fled."

Link STOPS his horse. There is a VERY LONG PAUSE.

LINK

(whispering)

"'Fled'?"

SHEIK

"Yes."

LINK
"To where?"

SHEIK
"Some to the depths of the Lost Woods; others out here—
beyond the forest borders— like this girl—"

Link TURNS in the saddle and faces Sheik.

LINK
"Impossible! They would all—"

SHEIK
"Yes. And they do. This child's case is no rare occurrence.
Most who've come out of the forest don't even make it to
the Old Castletown Road. And, as for all the rest, none
much farther than that."

Link FACES FORWARD again, away from Sheik; he bears a
PAINED LOOK on his face.

SHEIK
"The others— sunk deep in the Lost Woods— have their own
problems, of course. Becoming a Skull Kid is no easy thing;
I suppose those children that leave the forest consider
their fate to be better than that."

LINK
"Are there no others?"

SHEIK stares at the ground. There is a VERY LONG PAUSE.

LINK
(screaming)
"Are there no others?"

SHEIK
"I am not omniscient."

Link COOLS OFF, then GRITS HIS TEETH. He FACES Sheik.

LINK
"If that's the case, then I've got some advice for you:
don't damn-well act like you are."

Link CUTS HIS HORSE'S PATH across the road, moving through thin scrub and into deeper foliage. NAVI peeks out of his cowl.

LINK

"The Southeastern Pass, Navi: through the Stoneheart. It'll put us a little closer to the forest center, anyway. That's how we reach the Sacred Forest Meadow."

As Link's horse trots through the brush he passes Sheik, who is inexplicably standing in the background.

SHEIK

"You're so set on tracking this trouble down, despite the probability that he is waiting for you?"

LINK

(to Navi)

"How the hell does he do that?"

Sheik WALKS beside the horse in the background, matching pace with Link's horse.

SHEIK

"Traveler, I said that this girl's appearance is no rare thing, but we have not had a very recent case of any forest children fleeing out of the woods like this. The ones that have done so recently have all shown signs of transfiguration: poisoning from their time spent wandering through the Lost Woods. This girl is— at least she was— unblemished..."

LINK

"Because there are others out there that haven't fled into the deep woods. That has to be why. And if an unblemished Kokiri Girl committed suicide like that— trying to escape from the forest— that must mean that all the pure Kokiri left in the forest must be in trouble..."

SHEIK

"You would assist them, then?"

LINK

"No. I'm just here to kill the King of Thieves, Sheik— that's all— and if you won't help me do that then you can leave me alone..."

SHEIK

"I would. I would prefer to, certainly. But, if you do insist upon pursuing this course of action, it's quite possible that we may meet again..."

Sheik produces a SHINING MARBLE; he drops it and a massive CLOUD OF SMOKE erupts. When it clears he is gone.

Link LOOKS AROUND THE SCRUB LAND with grit teeth. He SNARLS.

LINK

(shouting)

"You're a disgrace to your people: you know that? The Royal Family would've been disgusted with you!"

Link LOOKS AROUND again. Finally he SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

(whispering)

"Zelda would've been as disgusted with you as you are with her..."

Link's horse GALLOPS OFF into the distance.

EXT. THE STONEHEART - MIDMORNING.

A narrow gully between two dense walls of rock and foliage; the area is all but impassable except for a narrow passageway between the forest walls. A MASSIVE WHITE ROCK (different from the dark rocks all along the gully) hangs about twenty feet above the crevasse, suspended by an ancient-looking arrangement of vines that rise up into the dense canopy far overhead. This gigantic stone is (vaguely) in the shape of a heart.

At one time (in the past) the Stoneheart was completely suspended in the air; now, however, it rests on its side above a messy rubble of FALLEN STONES. All throughout the rubble are DISCOLORED VINES poking out at various intervals; they are nearly, but not quite, totally black.

Link DISMOUNTS from his horse and steps forward; the scant sunlight streaming through the canopy highlights his FACE. The ghostly, echoing sound of CHILDREN PLAYING fades in and out as Link steps forward, facing the stone rubble wall.

NAVI sets down on Link's shoulder.

LINK

"Those fissures on the ground: you'd have to be a housecat to slither through them. Or a child, I suppose. You know, I always knew that it would never be easy coming back..."

He LOOKS OVER at the fairy.

LINK

"But I didn't think it'd be that difficult, either."

Link smiles, but NAVI CROSSES HER ARMS and SCOWLS at the young man.

LINK

"Right: never mind..."

Link APPROACHES the rock wall; he puts on a pair of dun-colored GLOVES and then gingerly grips some of the stones. He starts making his way up the rock wall, pausing to PUSH several throbbing vines out of the way.

After rising about ten-feet off the ground he is violently GUT-CHECKED by a vine that shoots out of a dark nook in the rocks. Link goes flying backwards, SCREAMING, and lands hard on the forest floor, right in front of his horse.

Link GROANS and looks up; we see Link's horse staring down at the man (upside-down, per Link's view). The animal SNUFFS loudly.

LINK

(hoarse with pain)

"Yeah..."

Link STUMBLES to his feet, clutching his chest, and RECLINES against a nearby rock, PANTING. He stares up at the rock wall, eyeing all the black holes and vines.

NAVI again flies up to Link's shoulder.

LINK

"This might not be as easy as I thought."

Link's gaze again wanders over to the STONEHEART resting on top of the rubble wall. The echoing sound of CHILDREN PLAYING again rises and falls.

Link SNAPS OUT of his reverie, looking down at Navi, DISORIENTATED.

LINK

"Nothing, Navi... just some ghosts. Now let's get the hell out of here: there's too many ghosts for my taste..."

Link STANDS UP and walks back to his horse; Navi hovers near his head.

LINK

"No: I didn't hit my head..."

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - EARLY EVENING.

Link RIDES INTO the village.

Several RICKETY WOODEN CARTS sit at the village center bearing VARIOUS ITEMS from Lon-Lon Ranch which villagers dutifully unload. Link and Shikashi WALK past this scene, Link with his COWL firmly cemented over his head and most of his face.

SHIKASHI

"Yes: the poison rotting this earth extends even into the Great Forest, but it is of a 'wild' type out there..."

LINK

"'Wild'?"

SHIKASHI

"Uncontrolled. Here- in the heartland of Hyrule- it behooves him to have control of it, of course, and he does. Without it our crops might flourish. Without it we might live independently. Without it... we might be free."

LINK

"He... controls the vines?"

Shikashi nods.

As the pair move past the cart Link notices MALON up at the reins, covered in a white robe. She notices Link out of the corner of her eye, but then appears to ignore the man.

SHIKASHI

"The 'grapevine'. A gift to him. Gerudo witches are so very handy with their horticulture, after all..."

LINK

"Kozume and Kotake, you mean?"

SHIKASHI

"Just Kotake. Her gift to him."

LINK

"He has a funny way of showing his appreciation; she was cast out and abandoned to the petrified wastes."

Shikashi LOOKS OVER at Link.

SHIKASHI

"Yes. I believe she disappeared from her old haunt very recently, did she not? Perhaps that's something you'd know of?"

LINK

"I believe she was killed."

Link LOOKS OVER at Shikashi.

LINK

"But, then, I'm new around here— I'm just assessing the lay of the land, that's all— so why should I know of such things?"

SHIKASHI

(laughing)

"The High King is so very all-or-nothing in his personality. When the witches came to him with their 'coronation gifts' he evaluated both of them. Kotake's gift, I suppose, just didn't measure up."

LINK

"What did Kozume give him, anyway?"

The old man looks at Link FORBODINGLY.

SHIKASHI

"The Brotherhood of the Knuckle."

LINK

(staring down to one side)

"What good is a plant... compared to an animal'?"

SHIKASHI

(laughing)

"I'd hardly call the Brotherhood 'animal'... I'd hardly call the Brotherhood 'alive'..."

LINK

"What, then?"

Shikashi takes a few jugs of milk from a cart.

SHIKASHI

"Nightmares come awake, and grown teeth."

LINK

"Shikashi: I need to find a way into the Great Forest. I need the help of someone— anyone— willing to give it to me."

SHIKASHI

"Why don't you speak to—"

LINK

"He isn't interested in helping me."

SHIKASHI

"I see..."

Link MOVES CLOSER to the old man, his eyes PROBING.

LINK

"What do you know about the 'Silver Gauntlets'? Would they be able to help me?"

SHIKASHI

(shrugging)

"Able? Yes, perhaps. The Gauntlets are quite masterful at getting through all manner of impediments— like 'thieves' in the night— naturally, but willing? That's different."

LINK

"We have the same goals, from what I hear. They will at least listen to me."

SHIKASHI

"The last time we had any interaction with those cloaked bastards was when one of the Gauntlets stumbled into town after an aborted siege on the High King's castle; they were wounded badly, and delirious— kept muttering nonsense about 'flesh', 'iron' and 'bone', on and on and on. They died that night, despite our care..."

Shikashi RUNS ONE HAND over some of the goods in the cart.

SHIKASHI

"...and then— for two months thereafter— there wasn't a drop of liquid or morsel of grain to be had from his ranchland. We adults weathered that famine with knotted stomachs and pained hearts, but we lived. Some younger ones— especially the babies— weren't so strong in their constitution..."

Link STARES DOWN at the ground. He nods.

LINK

"You're unwilling to risk the lives of your people, I know, but think of how many of them will die in your lifetime under that monster's 'care', even if you obey all his whims to the letter. I'm willing to bet that if you really thought all this through you'd realize that the cold embrace of a coffin is more desirable than the shackles of his slavery."

Link TURNS to leave.

SHIKASHI

"That's such an easy thing for you to say, isn't it? Go and speak with Sheik, Pale Rider—"

LINK

"He won't help me—"

SHIKASHI

"He knows more than you can imagine, though a reckless fool he may be. If he thinks you meeting the Silver Gauntlets is wise then he can manage it. Sheik is most... 'sensitive' to any and all happening in Hyrule around him, even though most of the time he's confined behind a smoldering volcanic

crater. I told you that the Golden Goddesses favor the High King in many things, but at least some of them must favor Sheik, as well, although he'd be the last to admit it..."

Link WATCHES Shikashi unloading a cart for awhile, and then he STALKS OFF. Shikashi calls after him.

SHIKASHI

"Tell me: just why are you here? Is it for mere 'assessment', or perhaps action? We deserve to know, lest you bring us all to ruin..."

Link IGNORES the man.

SHIKASHI

"Which is it, Pale Rider? Assessment, or action?"

Link TURNS and faces the man.

LINK

"Atonement."

He turns and MOVES AWAY, disappearing amongst a row of run-down buildings.

EXT. STAIRWAY TO THE TEMPLE OF TIME - EARLY MORNING.

It is 12 YEARS PRIOR to the previous scene.

The main marble staircase leading up into the Gothic-themed cathedral.

Young Link stands in front of the imposing building. Navi emerges from his nightcap, perches on his shoulder, and then both boy and fairy EXCHANGE GLANCES.

Link WALKS UP the stairway.

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - EARLY MORNING.

Link's measured FOOTSTEPS echo throughout the cavernous marble great hall (this shot is IDENTICAL to the one from pg. 1).

Link APPROACHES a set of MARBLE STAIRS; beyond this is a MASSIVE MARBLE ALTAR. Behind the altar is a MARBLE WALL (hewn of darker stone than all the rest). This wall spans

the entirety of the cathedral, rising over five stories to the ceiling and spanning nearly half a football field. There are various INTRICATE PICTOGRAPHS and writing all along the wall (all written in 'Ancient Hylian').

NAVI flies off Link's shoulder as they approach the altar.

NAVI

"Ooooooh, where to start here? First, we don't have that Kokiri's Heart thing that we're supposed to have— never mind the fact that I've lived in the Great Forest forever and I've never even heard of it. Second, Impa herself admits that you probably can't use Dhise Slauchre even if we could get to it and, third, yes— that Ganondorf is one nasty character, and he's up to his neck in no good— but who's to say that some scatter-brained 8-year-old princess's 'mystical vision' about how to solve this problem is at all accurate?"

Navi hovers near the BACK OF LINK'S HEAD.

NAVI

"Zelda could be wrong about how to take care of all this; surely you've considered the possibility that she's stark-raving nuts—"

Link TURNS HIS HEAD quickly to face the fairy, SCOWLING DANGEROUSLY.

NAVI

"Or not..."

FAR OVERHEAD SHOT as Link approaches the PICTOGRAPH WALL.

The boy STANDS before the wall; he crosses his arms and GLANCES impatiently at Navi. The fairy SWOOPS CLOSER to the wall.

NAVI

(sighing)

"It's Hylian, but not like the altar over there; the stuff on this wall is ancient Hylian. Okay, let's see..."

The fairy slowly FLIES IN FRONT of the wall, ILLUMINATING different sections of pictures and writing as she goes.

NAVI

"Umm, 'the waves that crash, that breach the dream, threaten nightmare's untoward scheme... a one-man-band, born to seek... and wake the... the... uh: 'air-trout'?"

Link COCKS AN EYEBROW.

NAVI

"Or... 'wind-fish'... maybe... 'from its sleep'."

Navi FACES Link.

NAVI

"Whatever. Obviously that verse doesn't apply to us..."

Navi continues FLYING IN FRONT of the wall.

NAVI

"Let's see... 'to gain his ground, brave Thunderbird's breath, to wake the dreamer from her death'— sheesh, everyone's always sleeping in ancient prophecies, aren't they?"

Navi continues FLYING IN FRONT of the wall.

NAVI

"Here's... some kinda recipe for turtle soup— no, wait: rock. 'Turtle Rock'. Sorry..."

Link FOLLOWS the fairy with CROSSED ARMS, ROLLING HIS EYES as the fairy speaks.

The fairy STOPS before a certain part of the wall, very near the CENTER of the temple.

NAVI

"Ah, wait! Here we are:

'For evil's bane— a devoted heart—
earth and rock are sure to part
Pure intent— born of a wish—
for his charge's benefit:
the eye that sees, the heart that feels,
the hand that moves
unearths the blade that, vital, proves
the weapon for staying whatever disaster
for he who wields Dhise Slaighre as a master'."

Navi FLIES UP near LINK'S HEAD and hovers.

NAVI

"There's your prophecy. So... what now?"

Link SLOWLY DETACHES the Zora's Eye and Goron's Hand from his belt; the jewels are GLOWING faintly— blue and orange, respectively.

NAVI again flies near the wall.

NAVI

"Are there... like, depressions, anywhere, or anyplace to put the jewels... like they're keys, or something?"

Link STEPS FORWARD; he is STARING at the wall with an UNSETTLINGLY FOCUSED gaze. Link slowly puts one jewel in EACH of his hands. The boy's BREATHING becomes more intense.

NAVI

"This is ridiculous: there are three jewels in the prophecy. We need three jewels before we can try anything—"

LONGSHOT from behind Link as the boy stands before the wall.

Link CLOSES HIS EYES, takes a BREATH, and then he holds the two jewels out in his fists on either side of his body.

After several seconds both of the jewels in Link's fists ERUPT with their respective colors, followed by a HIGH-PITCHED CHIMING 'SQUEAL'.

NAVI CIRCLES Link's body, nervous, as the colors erupt all around the boy.

A THIRD COLOR eventually comes into the mix: a nebulous ball of BRIGHT GREEN LIGHT flames up over LINK'S CHEST. This color— along with the blue and orange from the other jewels— EXTENDS OUT and washes over the wall in front of the boy.

There is a loud noise like an 'ENERGY WEAPON' POWERING UP; suddenly a radiantly bright WHITE LINE OF LIGHT shoots out vertically across the pictograph-covered wall at its center (directly in front of Link). When the light quickly

DISAPPEARS there is another loud noise: that of BRICK SLAMMING INTO BRICK. The entire wall SHUDDERS very faintly and a mess of DUST slides out from where the bright white light had been: it is a SURGICALLY-CUT FISSURE in the wall.

Both the jewels in Link's fists immediately LOSE THEIR COLOR; the BRIGHT GREEN ORB of light swirling over Link's chest also DISAPPEARS.

Close-up on the marble floor; the Zora's Eye and Goron's Hand both land hard on the floor with a CLANK, completely BLACK as if they were, in fact, OBSIDIAN GLASS, and not precious jewels.

Link's body FALLS FORWARD, completely limp, and the boy FACE-PLANTS on the marble floor.

Navi FLIES DOWN to Link's side.

NAVI

"Hey! Hey! What the heck was that?"

Link lies PRONE on the floor with his head to one side. His eyes are GLASSY; the boy is not breathing.

The PICTOGRAPH WALL begins SLOWLY SLIDING APART from its center with a very loud scraping noise. The entire temple RUMBLES and dust BILLOWS everywhere around the moving wall.

Navi flies near LINK'S NOSE, inspecting the boy.

NAVI

"Wha... wha... Hey, come on: get up. Hey... hey: breathe. Hey! Hey! Breathe!"

Navi DIVE-BOMBS the boy's vacant face, slow and gentle at first, but then with rising DESPERATION.

NAVI

"D- don't fool around! C'mon! Wake up... wake up!"

The PICTOGRAPH WALL continues SLIDING APART.

NAVI

"P- please! C- C'mon!"

Navi resorts the SLAMMING INTO Link's face with all her might, basically PUNCHING the boy.

NAVI

"Hey! C'mon! We'll get you some Lon-Lon milk! Cases of it! Malon'll give it to you, you know! All you gotta do is ask! All the milk you could drink! I'll... I'll get you some roast beef in Castle Town, too; promise! Lots of it! All you can eat! Lots! You can have whatever you want! Just wake up! Please wake up! Please wake up! Please!"

Navi continues DIVE-BOMBING Link and SCREAMING at him, tearful.

The PICTOGRAPH WALL has finally moved away in both directions, revealing a VERY LONG EXTENSION to the temple behind it; the LOUD SLIDING NOISE ceases and all RUMBLING in the temple stops.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the Zora's Eye and Goron's Hand, both still resting on the marble floor; the COLOR slowly returns to each stone.

Navi has resorted to TEARFUL SOBBING over Link's body.

SLOW-ZOOM on Link's vacant, pale face. All at once the boy SPASMS on the floor and GETS TO HIS KNEES, RETCHING. He leans forward, COUGHING up a small yellow-green puddle of BILE.

The boy FALLS BACK on his rear and sits SPREAD LEGGED, in a DAZE. Navi flies near the boy's face; Link looks up at her with CONFUSION.

NAVI

"You... were asleep. Now you're not..."

Link WAGS HIS HEAD and looks past the fairy: the LONG HALL beyond the wall ends with a very high-ceilinged NAVE. There is one SKINNY WINDOW (far too thin to accommodate a person) very high up above a CENTRAL PLATFORM of STONE EARTH. This is a circular disc of earth, perhaps fifty meters across, and at its center is a VERY LONG ARMING SWORD set into the ground, vertically.

This is the DHISE SLAIGHRE, however unlike its 12-year-older counterpart the blade is COMPLETELY WHITE and free of

any bloodstains. Bright light from the window SHINES on the sword.

Link APPROACHES the sword, cautious, and is particularly HESITANT as his feet meet the disc of earth. As the boy moves over the ground he notices a PAIR OF FOSSILIZED FOOTPRINTS in the earth, very faint; the footprints are 'off' in a way that strongly implies that the individual that made them is not entirely human.

SLOW ZOOM OUT as Link crosses the ground toward its center; there are TWO OTHER sets of footprints along the other parts of the disc, all converging near the place where Dhise Slaighre is anchored (they are, however, difficult to see, and not at all obvious to pick-out).

Link reaches the sword and CIRCLES AROUND IT slowly. The boy goes so far as to TOUCH the hilt, QUICKLY RECOILING in anticipation, but nothing happens.

NAVI flits around the blade, at first very cautiously like Link, but then more curiously.

NAVI

"This... is it? This is the hidden power behind the Royal Family's rule? But... I don't feel..."

Navi lands on Link's shoulder.

NAVI

"...I don't feel anything. In point of fact I feel quite the opposite; this sword makes me kinda sick, actually, just from looking at it. Weak, even. How very strange..."

Link STEPS UP close to the sword (the hilt comes up to the boy's chin).

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on Dhise Slaighre's HILT; Link's bare hands grip the dull metal base of the blade (where the blade is not yet sharp).

Link BRACES HIMSELF.

The boy PULLS UP, HARD, but nothing happens; the sword does not move.

NAVI

"Maybe you do need some more milk..."

Link SHRUGS the fairy off him.

NAVI

"Well: the prophecy does say something about 'earth and rock' being ripped open for a 'devoted heart'; maybe you gotta prove your 'pure intent', you know?"

Link LOOKS at the fairy quizzically.

NAVI

"Think about what you wanna do with Dhise Slaighre— if you were to use it, which I know you're not: think about Hyrule, and how you'd want to protect it. Imagine that you're using it to slash-up some really bad guys..."

Link CLOSES HIS EYES— a 'BAD-ASS' look on his face— and again wraps his hands around the BASE OF THE SWORD'S BLADE; the boy PULLS UP again, GRUNTING this time, but nothing happens.

NAVI

"Ooookay... um, try to think really hard about that rotten Ganondorf, and how nice it'd be to face him down with this thing— wipe that smirk off his face— and finally send that thug packing back into the desert. Try that."

Link CLOSES HIS EYES and again wraps his hands around the BASE OF THE SWORD'S BLADE; the boy PULLS UP again, GRUNTING, but nothing happens.

The boy pulls so hard that he WINDS himself; he steps away from the podium PANTING and FRUSTRATED.

NAVI

"Hmmm: either we're got a defective sword, or a defective boy..."

Link FACES AWAY from Dhise Slaighre, awash in LIGHT from the tiny window overhead. The boy STARES DOWN at his shoes; his eyes happen to glance over the INTERLOCKING TRIANGLE TRINKET given to him by Zelda. The boy looks OVER HIS SHOULDER at the Ocarina of Time, dangling from the back of his sash.

NAVI

"You'd think the Royal Family would have more specific instructions on how to get the darn thing out of there. Why couldn't they have just put it behind some safety glass, or something?"

Link LOOKS FORWARD with a more SERENE expression.

The boy TURNS around and again APPROACHES the sword. He SLOWLY GRIPS the base of the blade, his face much more 'ZEN', CLOSES HIS EYES, and VERY GENTLY pulls upward.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the STONE EARTH FLOOR where the blade is sunk-in; after several seconds there is MOVEMENT. The sword is slowly drawn out.

FAR DISTANCE SHOT of Link (silhouetted in the bright window's light) fully withdrawing the sword from the stone floor. The boy stands with the sword HELD-UP above his head for a moment, then the boy's KNEES WOBBLE and, with a SCREAM, Link FALLS BACKWARD and hits the floor hard, with Dhise Slaighre's hand-guard landing on his head.

INT. LON-LON RANCH FARMHOUSE - EVENING.

The cozy downstairs den of Malon and Talon's house, complete with a roaring fireplace.

Link sits at a TABLE before the fireplace with a SMALL BAG OF ICE on his head; when the boy removes it we see a SMALL GASH (OBVIOUSLY similar in appearance to the SCAR that Adult Link carries on his forehead).

DHISE SLAIGHRE lies on the table; Talon cursorily INSPECTS the blade with his hands.

TALON

"My, my, my... there's truly more to you than meets the eye, isn't there, my boy?"

Malon sits beside Link; the girl STARES DOWN at the blade.

MALON

"It's... pretty, Fairy Boy, but it seems pretty ordinary to me."

TALON

"Ah, it's anything but that, honey. Assuming our gabby little friend here did take this thing out of the Temple of Time then there's no debating it: it's gotta be this— what was it?— 'Dhise Slaighre' thing. Or the 'Master Sword', as we common-folk might call it. That's the name I remember from all the legends and tall-tales I heard as a child. Tch! I first heard those stories when I was younger than either of you."

Talon LOOKS at Link.

TALON

"I suppose Her Highness'll want to take delivery of this blade soon, huh?"

Link LOOKS OFF TO THE SIDE, then back at the man, UNCERTAIN.

TALON

"She hasn't thought that far ahead, huh? I see..."

The man STANDS UP, picking up several MILK GLASSES from the table.

TALON

"Well, I suppose you'll get your marching orders soon enough, won't you? Naturally you're at Her Highness' beck and call, and she wants you to sit tight with this thing for a time. It wouldn't do for you to disobey the Princess, would it? Nobility must be served, after all..."

Talon carries the milk glasses to a SINK on the other side of the room. At his words Malon LOOKS at Link with a WOUNDED expression; she gets up and STALKS OFF, wordless.

EXT. LON-LON RANCH - LATE AFTERNOON.

The next day, at the HORSE'S CORRAL.

A new wooden slat barrier is nearly complete; one board on the fence top juts out from the others. Link BALANCES on the top of the fence and STOMPS the stray board into place. The boy is wearing a SQUARE BANDAGE on his forehead over the gash left by Dhise Slaighre's handle. Talon and Ingo STRUGGLE with a particularly large tree plank, which Link helps GUIDE into another notch in the fence. It goes in with a snap and both men SIGH, mopping their heads; Link

WOBBLES and FALLS off the fence (into the background). Ingo SNICKERS at this, but then the foal EPONA head-butts him from behind, causing the man to BUMP HIS HEAD on the front of the fence.

INGO
"Gheaaaaa! Galoot!"

All three of them retreat to a shaded portion of the corral where there are FLASKS of cold water. Talon and Ingo LEAN against a small stone wall while Link SITS on it in the background. Talon produces a pack of SELF-LIGHTING CIGARETTES. Ingo STRIKES the head of his against Link's SHOULDER SASH, Talon against Ingo's TOOLBELT and Link (who has taken one of the cigarettes from the pack) strikes his against the STONE WALL he's sitting on. Link puts his cigarette between his lips before Talon immediately (but gracefully, in cadence with the elegant motion of the whole scene) REMOVES it from the boy's mouth and adds it to his own mouth.

Link SULKS.

TALON
(said DURING the previous cigarette-lighting scene)
"It's a funny thing- wouldn't you know it- but I feel a foul wind creeping up. Can't say why; all this sunshine, and all this pleasant weather, but all I feel's a storm comin' on. And strong, too..."

INGO
"Tarnation! 'Sunshine' means 'heat' anyway- wouldn't you know it- an' the fields at midday are powerful-hot as it is. I wouldn't so much mind a little bit 'o shade, I dare say! We're do a spot of rain, anyway!"

TALON
(sighing)
"Mmm. No crops without rain; no sunshine without the occasional shadow..."

Talon LOOKS BACK at Link.

TALON
"No day without a night, isn't that right?"

The HORSES are parading around in their corral. All at once EPONA leapfrogs off a bent fence post and goes GALLOPING out of the corral.

Ingo begins RUNNING OFF after the foal.

INGO

"An' no peace and quiet with such dad-gum crazy piss-head galoot horses!"

The man's IRATE SHOUTS fade as he runs.

Talon LAUGHS. He EXHALES SMOKE from his cigarettes and LOOKS OVER at Link.

TALON

"Y'know, my little friend, nobility must be served, like I said, but so do a person's own dreams and desires. What you're doin' for the princess is downright admirable— let it never be said it ain't— but you're no slave. Not to us, and not to her, you understand? Point I'm trying to make is, well, when these days're done you have to chart a new course, and I want you to think about that. When you bring Her Highness that sword you'll have a choice to make— whether you've done enough for the girl, or not— and that's where things get interesting..."

Talon LEANS CLOSER to Link.

TALON

"You know how I feel about the job you do, here. Hell: you're damn-near 'indefatigable', as they say. On top of that, you 'n Malon are the only two people in Hyrule that can hand-feed Epona without getting' your fingers chewed off and your noses busted open. And— of course— you know that Malon doesn't exactly hate you, either..."

Link BLINKS IN CONFUSION at this ironic statement, then he FLUSHES.

Talon PATS THE BOY'S LEG and starts MOVING OFF.

TALON

"Well, I'd better go help Ingo track Epona down before she winds up on the shores of Old Hylia, or someplace farther off, yet. You just take your time in thinking, my boy:

there's no rush. Such things are important decisions, after all, aren't they?"

Link WATCHES Talon walk off; the boy bears a CONFLICTED LOOK.

Talon follows Ingo FAR OUT into the fields (camera stationary near Link's rock wall).

Link slowly DESCENDS from the wall; he still appears DEEP IN THOUGHT as he presses the OCARINA OF TIME against his lips. He slowly plays EPONA'S SONG.

EPONA comes into the shaded area from the other side of the field, gently NUZZLING against Link's side.

NAVI moves out of Link's nightcap and LANDS on EPONA'S FOREHEAD; the horse tolerates this.

NAVI
(to Link)

"I know what you're thinking: you don't know what you're thinking, right?"

Link looks OFF TO ONE SIDE.

NAVI
"It's usually so easy to know, and from you of course, but right now even I can't tell..."

Link LOOKS BACK at THE FAIRY (Epona's head comes up to Link's, so both boy and fairy are clearly visible in the shot).

NAVI
"What're we gonna do, huh?"

Link BLINKS, COCKS HIS HEAD, STARES AT THE GROUND, and then (after a good fifteen seconds) LOOKS at the fairy.

NAVI
"You sure?"

The boy NODS.

NAVI
"Okay... then that's that..."

NAVI FLIES OFF Epona's head and lands on the BOY'S SHOULDER; she lies prone on the green fabric.

NAVI

"Easy enough, making such an 'adult' decision like that: isn't it?"

Link FACES FORWARD, EXPRESSIONLESS.

Navi (chin in her hands) NODS SOMBERLY.

NAVI

"Yeah: I don't think so, either..."

EXT. CASTLETOWN - LATE AFTERNOON.

The same dirt roadway leading up to the moat and main drawbridge of Castletown (Link passed through this area on his first visit into the city).

The sky is covered in CLOUDS, THICK AND DARK, growing blacker over time.

Link is WALKING up the Hyrule Field Road towards the drawbridge. EPONA walks beside the boy; he loosely holds her rein in his hand. A BUNDLED PACKAGE is slung over the foal's back; it is obvious that this is the DHISE SLAIGHRE.

THUNDER rumbles in the distance.

Link approaches the DRAWBRIDGE only to find it RAISED; the boy is PERPLEXED at this.

Suddenly, as the boy and his horse approach the bridge, a METALLIC CLANK sounds and the drawbridge FREEFALLS down, SLAMMING into the bank near Link with a THUD.

Link recoils and COUGHS at the DUST kicked-up in this event; the sound of HORSE'S HOOVES, distant at first, quickly overtakes all other noises. The boy SQUINTS through the dust, grows WIDE EYED and quickly DIVES out of the way; a horse comes GALLOPING across the bridge, missing Link by inches. IMPA is at the reins.

Link LANDS HARD beside the drawbridge; EPONA NEIGHS and goes RUNNING OFF in some random direction. Link looks after

the horse that nearly ran him over; a SMALL PERSON, bundled in a DARK CLOAK, is sitting up in front of the woman; the figure WHIPS THEIR BODY around to look back at Link. It is Zelda; the girl is almost entirely shrouded in the black cloak. Her face bears a GASH along one cheek and there is a SMALL RING OF BLOOD (not her own) around the girl's LIPS. She is WEEPING HYSTERICALLY and looks back at Link, DESPERATE.

Link gets into a SITTING POSITION and watches Impa's horse speed away through the fog; the boy CONTEMPLATES this event for a moment.

Link GETS TO HIS FEET, still staring into the fog; SLOW PAN around HIS HEAD reveals the massive SNOUT of a black horse. The horse SNUFFS a loud breath, ruffling the back of Link's head and sending the boy SPRAWLING FORWARD with surprise. Link looks behind him to see Ganondorf mounted atop a fearsome black horse. The Gerudo Prince wears FORMAL CLOTHES (not battle garments); they are stained with BLOOD in several places. A few small TRICKLES OF BLOOD are visible on the corners of the man's MOUTH.

Ganondorf STARES DOWN at Link with a WIDE GRIN. It gets even WIDER before he speaks.

GANONDORF

"Wherever doest thou wander, o very little thing?"

The man RAISES HIS RIGHT HAND, slowly, fingers spread.

Link SNARLS at the man and UNSHEATHES his oyster knife; he deliberately moves to BLOCK the black stallion's path.

Gannondorf quickly CLOSES HIS FIST and RAISES HIS HAND in one cruel, quick motion.

Link's body is suddenly and violently SUSPENDED off the ground, brought about six feet into the air; the boy's limbs are FULLY SPREAD and he CRIES OUT with pain. The OYSTER KNIFE falls out of his hand and lands in the dirt of the road.

NAVI ROCKETS towards Ganondorf; the man HOLDS OUT his left hand and SNAPS his fingers. There is a 'WHOOSHING NOISE', followed by a streak of BRIGHT PURPLE LIGHT; Navi suddenly

LOSES ALL COLOR and falls to the dirt road like a limp housefly.

Ganondorf returns his attention to LINK; the boy's arms down to the elbow are now PINNED to his side. His head and neck are CONTORTED uncomfortably. The boy WHIMPERS in pain.

Ganondorf GRINS SADISTICALLY and SLIGHTLY ADJUSTS the position of his raised right hand.

CLOSE-UP on LINK'S THROAT: a DEPRESSED GROOVE sinks into his flesh, as if an INVISIBLE CORD were wrapped around his neck. Link clothes and exposed arms and legs show similar perturbations.

The boy RAISES HIS HEAD upward, GASPING for breath.

GANONDORF

"You may have just seen a certain Sheikah whore come tromping through here, recently, hmm?"

Ganondorf DRAWS HIS HAND closer to his face; Link COMES FORWARD through the air like a marionette.

GANONDORF

"Well, my very little thing: that certain Sheikah whore was carrying a most special little cargo. A most special little thing..."

Link SQUIRMS mightily.

Ganondorf ADJUSTS his hand position; Link appears to be caught TIGHTER in the invisible bonds. The boy CRIES OUT with pain.

GANONDORF

"You would call her your lovely little princess. As for me? I would call her my lovely... little... servant-girl!"

Link's face CONTORTS with anger.

GANONDORF

"Who else but such a helpful little girl would go to all that trouble and remove the Master Sword from its rightful seat of power; the one thing that stood in my way?"

Link GLARES at the man.

GANONDORF

(Laughing)

"Oh, but that's right! I'm sorry. You must still be operating under a small misconception, hmm?"

Ganondorf again ADJUSTS his hand position; Link moves even CLOSER to the man, within a FEW FEET of him.

We finally see that the GROUND beneath Link's suspended body is RENT, as if something invisible had RISEN UP from it.

GANONDORF

"I'm sorry: what am I thinking, using such very large words with someone so very small? Let me explain: when I say 'misconception' I mean that you have acted most stupidly for yourself, but most brilliantly for me. Dhise Slaighre is an archaic weapon, little child: it existed for use by the knights of the Old Hylian Guard. Those that can use it 'as a master'. No one alive today has that ability, my very little thing. For generations now the Master Sword has served a very different purpose..."

Ganondorf LEANS FORWARD, grinning.

GANONDORF

"You see: it is a ravenous blade. It draws its breath from all across this devil-cursed land— sucking it dry like some noxious lamprey— and do you know what it drinks, little thing? Do you know what manner of drink quenches the Dhise Slaighre's unrelenting thirst?"

Link STRUGGLES.

Ganondorf CLENCHES his fist tighter; Link SPASMS in the air, CRYING OUT. The RUPTURE in the ground beneath Link is WIDER.

GANONDORF

"Magic. The sword saps it up, and greedily. But now the blade has been loosed, hasn't it? Now it thinks that it's ready for action. It's done drinking up all the magic of the land. It's ready to use all the power it has stored up over the ages, waiting for some great knight of the Old Guard to wield it, waiting for someone who will never arrive!"

Ganondorf EXTENDS his right hand; Link RISES UP in the air and MOVES BACK a bit. He SCREAMS as he is forced SPREAD-EAGLE.

GANONDORF

"The princess of Hyrule has just given me a very lovely gift..."

Link's WRISTS are both TIGHTLY ENSNARED by invisible bonds; his hands are TURNING BLUE. The boy hears THUNDER and EXPLOSIONS in the distance beyond Castle Town's wall; he looks up briefly (BRIEFLY) to see Kozume and Kotake in the distance over the city FLYING on broomsticks, RAINING DOWN lightning and VARIOUS TERRIBLE THINGS on the city.

GANONDORF

"...her kingdom. And I must say, little thing, that she couldn't have done it without her 'special friend'... her little 'knight errant'..."

Ganondorf's SMILE WIDENS.

GANONDORF

"...her 'playmate'!"

Link STRUGGLES MIGHTILY, LOWERING HIS HEAD as he fights the bonds.

Ganondorf SCOWLS and GRIPS HIS RIGHT HAND tight.

Link's body STIFFENS. His head is FORCED BACK, as if the bonds are PULLING HIS FOREHEAD taut.

GANONDORF

"If you ever want to live to see another 'play date' with anyone ever again you'll tell me which way that Sheikah whore went on that horse of hers..."

Link GLARES at Ganondorf defiantly.

Ganondorf's SCOWL DEEPENS; he ADJUSTS his hand position.

Link's FLESH AND CLOTHING CONTORT in various places as the invisible bonds TIGHTEN and MOVE over him. The boy WHIMPERS. There is a NOTABLE MOVEMENT of bonds over the boy's CROTCH.

Link GRITS HIS TEETH, TEARS welling up in his eyes.

GANONDORF

"You can speak well-enough, I think, so I'll ask you one last time: which way did they go?"

The invisible MOVEMENT over Link's CROTCH is more pronounced.

SPIT forms in the corner of Link's mouth. The boy OPENS HIS MOUTH, slowly, and finally lets loose a PIERCING, TORTURED SCREAM. This scream lasts as long as the boy has the breath for it. He quickly grows HOARSE.

In his struggle two of the remaining MAGIC BEANS fall out of Link's shoulder sash; they BOUNCE over the invisible vines that ensnare the boy as they fall to the ground, DISRUPTING the vines' function (forcing them into 'visibility' in the places they come into contact) and sending Link TUMBLING TO THE GROUND, prostrate.

Ganondorf's SCOWL turns into a FAINT SMILE.

Link kneels there, prone with his legs bunched up (ie: rear in the air), in AGONY.

Ganondorf brings his horse up BESIDE THE BOY, staring down at the child condescendingly.

GANONDORF

"But— then again— what kind of ruler is totally without 'mercy'? Hahaha! Especially when a ruler's subjects so grovel at their feet! I shouldn't so much condemn you as bless you, little thing: without your 'expert' help I would never have seen this moment come to fruition."

Ganondorf MOVES HIS HORSE PAST Link, CHUCKLING.

GANONDORF

"Go with your ruler's blessing, little thing, and live your childhood..."

The man TURNS BACK and looks at Link cruelly.

GANONDORF

"...after all: it's bound to be a very short thing!"

Ganondorf DIGS HIS BOOTS into the side of his horse and gives a CURT YELL; the animal REARS, NEIGHING, and then sets off across Hyrule Field at a GALLOP.

NAVI'S body again BRIGHTENS in the dirt road; she FLIES up, wobbly, beside Link, who eventually FALLS OVER onto his side in the dirt. The boy looks up at the fairy with TEAR-SOAKED EYES.

FADE OUT on this scene.

INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM OF THE OLD INN AT KAKARIKO VILLAGE - EVENING.

It is 12 YEARS LATER.

A decrepit attic space in Kakariko Village's old inn; now a makeshift STOREROOM for some of the village's supplies.

A SERIES OF BRIGHT FLASHES reveal several SMALL, JUMPING SCENES: houses afire in Castle Town; locusts swarming farmland fields; an EXTREME CLOSE-UP of a barbed-wire fence with a child (gender unrecognizable) huddled-up beside it and people in the background; Child Link STUMBLING over uneven terrain- dirty and sweaty- leading the foal Epona through a SWAMPY MARSH. The boy TURNS HIS HEAD to face the camera, which FAST ZOOMS on his eyes.

Another FLASH reveals ADULT LINK'S eyes in their place.

Link is BEDDED-DOWN in the attic storeroom with his few PERSONAL EFFECTS lain out in a corner by a partially boarded-up window. Link sits atop a RATTY BOX, MOONLIGHT shining on his face as he SMOKES a cigarette. The TWO CHILDREN from earlier (the boy and girl) sit before him on the floor.

LINK

"But the Goblin King, he was very wrong, you see..."

BOY

"About the sword, right? It did have power, an' it did kill the Goblin King, right?"

Link SMILES WISTFULLY and shakes his head.

LINK

"No, not about that. The king told the little boy that his childhood would be a very short thing: that it would end 'soon'..."

Link STARES OUT THE WINDOW.

LINK

"...but the truth is the little boy's childhood ended that very day, at that very moment. There was no more innocence—no more purity of heart— he was only left with the realization of what he had done, and his helpless inability to fix any of it..."

GIRL

"Why'd the Goblin King let the little boy live, do you think?"

Link STANDS and SHAKES HIS HEAD. He DROPS and CRUSHES OUT the cigarette with his boot and then SURES-UP the loose parts of his dun-colored cloak and cowl.

LINK

"I suppose he was very grateful that the boy acted so stupidly, or maybe he wanted to taunt the boy: to make him witness what he had truly done..."

Link moves toward the ATTIC STAIRS.

LINK

"It's very late: you two need your sleep. Be good and go back to your beds."

The boy STANDS UP.

BOY

"What happened to the little boy, though? How does the story end?"

Link STOPS. He doesn't face the children.

LINK

"The boy... he died."

GIRL

"But—"

LINK

"The rest of that story's written by people without 'innocence' or 'purity': there's no more room for someone like that foolish child in a story like this. As for how it ends..."

Link begins TROMPING down the stairs.

LINK

"...I haven't thought that far ahead, yet."

GIRL

"When you do, will you tell it to us?"

Link STOPS AGAIN.

LINK

"I probably won't be... around to do that. I'm sure that someone will tell you, though..."

Link again MOVES DOWN THE STAIRS.

LINK

(whispering)

"They can even wait until you're old enough, if need be..."

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - EVENING.

Link steps out into the dirt path that cuts through Kakariko, passing the OLD WINDMILL. The decrepit structure SQUEAKS forlornly as the ratty windmill blades spin far overhead.

Link LOOKS AROUND in all directions; he RUMMAGES in his dun-colored cloak and retrieves the OCARINA OF TIME from under his clothes. The instrument's purple hue is FADED and it is covered in SCRATCHES and BLEMISHES. Link puts it to his lips, CLOSING HIS EYES, and softly plays EPONA'S SONG.

There is a NEIGH from across town (ie: source unseen). Eventually Epona (Link's horse) comes trotting around a building.

Link MOUNTS Epona; NAVI emerges from his cowl and perches on the horse's forehead.

LINK

"You can take us as far as the crater ridge, Epona; from there I think it'll be too hot for horses."

NAVI stares up at Link with **CROSSED ARMS**.

LINK

"Oh, I'm not worried about you at all, Navi: you're icier than a snowball, aren't you? You should be able to last all day up there, I'm sure."

Link **SURPS** Epona on with a **SHOUT**; the horse goes **GALLOPING** out of town and up the **DEATH MOUNTAIN TRAIL**.

EXT. DEATH MOUNTAIN CRATER - BEFORE DAWN.

A sunken crater of hellishly rough terrain that sits beyond Death Mountain's peak. The rocks are deep crimson and many small fonts of steam seep out of the unstable earth. The air is **GREENISH** with sulfuric emissions.

Link and Navi move through this wasteland, **PAUSING** ever so often to get their bearings. At one point **NAVI** flits over to a certain **PASS** in the rocks. Link **SHAKES HIS HEAD** and motions to a **DARKER, MORE CLOUDY PATH**.

LINK

"It's this way..."

Navi **FLIES UP** near Link's head, her face **SKEPTICAL**.

LINK

"I just know, alright? Trust me: it's over here."

The pair moves through a **DENSE LABYRINTH** of fulminating geysers and rock formations. Eventually Link comes to a **SMALL PLATEAU** set deep inside this maze.

SHEIK is sitting near the center of this place, cross-legged on the rock earth. Before him (twenty meters or so) is a **SHARP RISE** in the rock, complete with a **WATERFALL** of molten rock cascading down into the depths below the plateau. His back is to Link.

Directly in front of Sheik is a **POOL** of **GREEN WATER**; several **MIND'S EYE** worms swim in the steaming brine.

Link APPROACHES the man silently, although Sheik detects his movements.

SHEIK

"For a man who is no longer searching for one, you have a very odd habit of turning up on one's heels..."

Sheik has part of the intricate web of wrappings over his body pulled back, baring his RIGHT SHOULDER and part of his ARM. He holds a DISHEVELED CEREMONIAL DAGGER in his left hand and has just completed DRAWING the tip down part of his shoulder, leaving a HALF-MOON SHAPED CUT in his flesh.

SHEIK

"...and it's so very rude to step on one's feet, so."

LINK

"I'm not here to pester you; all I want is some information."

Sheik moves the blade down his arm and makes another small INCISION along his forearm. By the light of the volcanic flow we see many small HEALING SCARS on Sheik's exposed flesh similar to the cuts he's made on-screen.

SHEIK

"Information?"

Link moves in a small SEMI-CIRCLE around Sheik, coming to an '8 o'clock' position at his side.

LINK

"Before you bleed out and lose consciousness, preferably. What in the Goddesses' names are you—"

SHEIK

"Blood carries life, but it can carry sin, as well. Blood grows back in the body after it's been loosed; sin fades slightly over time: like the color of a carpet left lying in a sunbeam. It's a stain. Loosing the blood is like bleaching the fabric: it makes a body more pure, so slightly more worthy, no matter how unworthy it is to begin with..."

LINK

"Bleaching? It makes it more white, then. Well, before you make yourself as white as a ghost I need you to tell me how to find someone."

SHEIK puts away his dagger and RISES; he doesn't face Link.

SHEIK

"Your friend, perhaps?"

LINK

"I have no friends in Hyrule--"

Sheik TURNS HIS HEAD in Link's direction; his right eye is again BRIGHT RED with a Mind's Eye worm, even redder than his left.

SHEIK

"Its princess, perhaps?"

LINK

"You've got a real set of ears on you, huh?"

SHEIK

"One hardly needs them."

LINK

"Damn it: look, I know that you're a Sheikah, and I also know that you were born too young to do anything for the Royal Family, but--"

SHEIK

"But it seems that-- in your youth-- you did more than enough for that sniveling little bitch of a 'noble'. Using you to remove Dhise Slaighre... she was an idiot, and even worse--"

LINK

(growling)

"She was a child. So was I. Our intentions were pure. Hers were, anyway..."

SHEIK

"And yours weren't? What were your intentions, then?"

Link STARES OFF TO ONE SIDE.

SHEIK

"It doesn't matter, now, I suppose. So now you want to find your old friend..."

LINK

"I met Zelda very briefly, and only a few times; I didn't say she was my friend."

SHEIK

(nodding)

"Of course, and I apologize; why would someone claim friendship with one so manipulative, yet so utterly foolish—"

Link STEPS FORWARD, angry.

LINK

"No: because she is the Princess of Hyrule and it's not my place to call her a 'friend'. She was nobility; I'm just a commoner..."

SHEIK

"Do you really think her breeding made her a superior specimen? Blood doesn't make one noble, traveler."

LINK

"Only sinful, huh? It doesn't matter I'm not looking for Zelda, anyway, Sheik: I don't have any specific loyalties to the princess of Hyrule. Look: I want you to put me in touch with the Hyrule Resistance; tell me how to contact the Silver Gauntlets."

SHEIK

"What business could you have with them? They wouldn't work with you, anyway."

LINK

"I need their cartography skills, assuming they've got any. The last time I was in Hyrule it was slightly less infested with demonic hellspawn, wouldn't you know. And why wouldn't the Gauntlets help me, huh? Because they're cagey?"

Sheik FASTENS all the scarves over the exposed parts of his body; he LOOKS OVER HIS SHOULDER at Link.

SHEIK

"Because... they are racists."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD.

LINK
"What?"

Sheik has CEASED ALL MOVEMENT, even breathing; he stares over Link's shoulder with an UNSETTLING FOCUS. Link DRAWS BACK, unnerved by the man's rigid and creepy posture. Link finally LOOKS OVER HIS SHOULDER, seeing nothing. He looks back at Sheik.

LINK
"What? What is it?"

Sheik does not answer for many seconds.

SHEIK
"The Princess of Hyrule— being the High King's whore that she is— she... I can only imagine that she would have been honored to call you a friend, Traveler..."

There is a LOUD CRASHING NOISE from far away in the distance below the crater, like thunder, along with the faint sound of SCREAMS. Link TURNS around with a start, and when he turns back to face Sheik he finds that the man has VANISHED.

Link TURNS around again as the THUNDEROUS NOISES in the distance continue. NAVI emerges from his cowl.

LINK
(whispering)
"Kakariko!"

Link RUNS back through the crater labyrinth.

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - SUNRISE.

People are FRANTICALLY FLEEING about town as a VULGAR, BRIGHT SUNRISE silhouettes their forms. There are shouts and SCREAMS.

The BEARDED MAN (from pg. _____) fires an ARROW from his bow; the arrow goes sailing into the sunlight (consequently BLINDING the audience and washing out any colors or shapes). Immediately before impact the camera's ZOOM IN avoids this blinding sunlight and reveals a HIDEOUS,

SKELETAL CREATURE milling over the ground. It has a cumbersome, JAGGED SWORD for a right arm in lieu of a wrist or hand. This is a STALFOS MUTANT: Stalfos #1.

The Bearded Man's arrow HITS the creature's forehead; despite the thing's skeletal appearance this wound GUSHES FLUID (chartreuse blood) and the Stalfos FALLS onto the earth with a STRANGLED CRY. It STANDS AGAIN, very unsteadily, as ANOTHER TOWNSPERSON comes in with a sword and pierces the creature's SHOULDERBLADES.

As many residents FLEE in the background the Boy and Girl from earlier SKULK behind a row of supplies from Lon-Lon Ranch, laid out alongside the road. The children creep through the mess of boxes and past the rotted House of Skulltula. They barely make it to the next house unseen as a Stalfos passes. They go through the empty domicile, carefully avoiding the windows, until they reach the front door and exit, attempting to reach the safety of the OLD CONVERTED INN across the road.

They cautiously step out onto the porch, STARING at each other wordlessly; the Boy finally goes first, but a Stalfos suddenly DROPS DOWN from the porch overhang and SNARLS before him. This is Stalfos #2. The Girl LEAPS IN FRONT of the Boy and holds him back; she quickly PUSHES the Boy backwards.

The Stalfos LUNGES AT the retreating children and STABS the Girl through her LEFT SIDE, prompting a SCREAM OF PAIN from her.

The Boy SCREAMS also.

The Girl FALLS to the ground with the Boy KNEELING at her side as the Stalfos PREPARES TO STRIKE again. It brings the blade down but it is KNOCKED ASIDE by the Boy, who uses a DISHEVELED FRYING PAN to deflect the blade; it lands beside his leg, KNICKING the flesh of HIS CALF and prompting another SCREAM from the Boy.

The creature again RAISES ITS BLADE and brings it down; this time it is BLOCKED by a CRESCENT-MOON-SHAPED BLADED WEAPON in the hands of Sheik; who is now standing between the children and the Stalfos.

Sheik brings a SECOND BLADED WEAPON up to KNOCK the Stalfos' arm aside; as the creature REELS BACKWARDS Sheik's EYES SPARKLE and a BRIGHT FLASH fills the screen.

Inexplicably, both the children and Sheik are now on the WIDOW'S WALK above the House of Skulltula.

The Girl is lying on the boy's legs, pale and GASPING IN PAIN. Sheik looks down at the opposite house and watches as the Stalfos moves outside in pursuit of them.

Sheik KNEELS beside the Girl and LIFTS UP her shirt to reveal the wound: it is HEMORRHAGING a large quantity of blood. Sheik REMOVES THE GLOVE on his right hand and presses his hand against that wound while CRADLING DOWN over the girl. FAINT RED LIGHT gums up the gaps between their bodies; this light slowly turns BRIGHTER, and then GREENER. When the LIGHT FADES and Sheik REMOVES HIS HAND the Girl's wound appears SCARRED OVER and LESS PRONOUNCED, although a large amount of BLOOD still mars her torso and clothing.

The Girl's head falls back into the Boy's lap; she loses consciousness, BREATHING DEEPLY and REGULARLY.

Sheik STANDS UP and LOOKS DOWN at Stalfos #2 as it approaches the house below them (Sheik's eyes are now almost completely VIOLET instead of bright red); he takes ONE STEP towards the edge of the widow's walk but then FALTERS TO ONE KNEE. Sheik BURPS, pained, and quickly EXPOSES HIS LOWER FACE where a small TRICKLE OF BLACK SLUDGE has escaped the corner of his mouth; he SPITS OUT a mess of sludge and STANDS up again, looking down at the Stalfos with NARROWED EYES (NOTE: the patchwork scarves that cover his face remain DANGLING in the breeze, still largely eclipsing his face).

Sheik quickly SOMERSAULTS over the railing and lands on the ground in front of the house; the Stalfos LUNGES at him and Sheik PARRIES a thrust of its sword, knocking the creature BACKWARDS. As Stalfos #2 falls Sheik quickly KNEELS and VOMITS BLACK TAR; ANOTHER STALFOS (Stalfos #3) joins the fight. Sheik PARRIES this newcomer's attack but is STRUCK in his shoulder; he SCREAMS and uses his SECOND BLADED WEAPON to slash at the Stalfos's belly, cutting it open and sending STEAMING HOT GOO cascading out. Sheik's blade goes SAILING OFF, wild, into the grass in front of the house.

Stalfos #3 FALLS BACK to where the first one landed and then both creatures regroup and come after Sheik.

Sheik STEPS BACKWARD, FALTERING to one knee before standing again, and then he DISAPPEARS into the House of Skulltula. Both Stalfos quickly PURSUE HIM.

INT. HOUSE OF SKULLTULA - SUNRISE.

A decrepit ruin of a home, as if long ago gutted by fire. There are no windows and nothing inside but unspeakably ROTTED and DECAYED debris.

The two Stalfos, making OMINOUS, SINISTER GRUNTING NOISES, slowly move through the debris of the home, warily LOOKING for Sheik. Steam still rises over Stalfos #3's face from the gaping disembowelment wound along its belly. Both Stalfos follow a TRAIL OF BLOOD on the floorboards that leads to a mess of FALLEN ROOFBEAMS; part of Sheik's PATCHWORK WEB OF SCARVES ruffles from the darkness of this nook.

Stalfos #2 SCREAMS and STABS AT this dark area, LUNGING FORWARD; Sheik suddenly DROPS DOWN from the ceiling and SPLITS OPEN the head of Stalfos #3 with his bladed weapon (consequently LODGING the blade in its head). Sheik is now clad only in his gray FORM-FITTING BATTLE DRESS. Stalfos #2 turns and PREPARES TO STRIKE at Sheik, only to be ATTACKED by a HIDEOUS-LOOKING SPIDER CREATURE with a partially HUMAN FACE on its thorax (this is the CURSED MAN). The Cursed Man SNARES Stalfos #2 with webbing before being THROWN OFF and sent into one of the far walls of the house; Sheik HITS Stalfos #2 with a WOODEN BEAM, sending the creature STUMBLING BACK OUT the front door.

As Sheik moves to FOLLOW the monster Stalfos #3 (moving blindly and madly, like a chicken with its head cut off) manages to SWIPE AT Sheik's exposed back, SLICING INTO his flesh and prompting a SCREAM from Sheik. Sheik ATTACKS the creature with hand-to-hand techniques, causing the monster to land on the floor, and then he REMOVES his bladed weapon from the creature's head; he leaves Stalfos #3 lying on the floor, unmoving, to pursue Stalfos #2 outside.

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - SUNRISE.

Sheik RUNS OUT the front door and GRUNTS, THROWING his bladed weapon through the air. It HITS Stalfos #2 in the chest, sending the monster down onto the grass. Sheik still RACES towards the supine monster and PICKS UP his first blade from the grass (where it had previously been cast); he LEAPS THROUGH THE AIR and comes to rest atop Stalfos #2. Sheik VICIOUSLY SLASHES at the monster's chest, neck and head, causing copious GREEN BLOOD and STEAMING GOO to erupt from the creature, bathing Sheik in the slime; Sheik stops only after the Stalfos has STOPPED MOVING for several seconds.

CLOSE-UP on Sheik's face; the man PANTS openly and CRINGES IN PAIN. After about fifteen seconds Sheik suddenly GRUNTS and TURNS.

Stalfos #3 has emerged from the house and attacks from behind; Sheik blocks this with one arm, which is SLASHED. Sheik FALLS BACKWARD onto the corpse of Stalfos #2 as Stalfos #3 COMES DOWN with its jagged sword; Sheik BLOCKS it with his bladed weapon and the weapons LOCK WITH EACH OTHER. Stalfos #3's sword comes down closer and closer to Sheik, who is obviously too fatigued to resist. The blade sinks down near Sheik's eyes, then his lips and finally against his neck, all while the man PERSPIRES and GRUNTS, pushing against the weapon with his own weapon.

Eventually, as the blade comes snug against Sheik's throat, a DISQUIETING SMILE graces Sheik's lips. He LAUGHS, very faintly, and closes his eyes.

The sound of HORSES HOOVES echoes, growing very loud very quickly.

LINK rides past this scene on Epona; he SWIPES at these interlocked weapons with Dhise Slaighre as he passes, knocking both weapons out of their respective owners' hands and inadvertently CUTTING part of his own arm on the Stalfos blade.

Stalfos #3 FALLS BACKWARD in the aftermath of this pass.

Sheik retrieves his other bladed weapon from the chest of Stalfos #2 and LUNGES AFTER Stalfos #3; he strikes at the monster SAVAGELY, causing several DEVASTATING WOUNDS as he pushes the monster against the House of Skulltula.

Link (on foot) joins Sheik and, as Sheik KNOCKS the Stalfos' sword to one side Link suddenly THRUSTS DHISE SLAIGHRE into the Stalfos' head through its nose with such force as to PIN the monster's head to the side of the house.

Stalfos #3 FAILS insanely against the house; one of its arms comes flailing up past Dhise Slaighre, moving so ferociously that it is AMPUTATED as it brushes against the sword. The creature's movements lessen, and then ultimately cease.

Link TOYS with a very small RED EARRING in his RIGHT EAR. He GRUNTS noncommittally.

Link slowly REMOVES his sword from the creature's head; the Stalfos falls lifelessly to the ground as the GREEN BLOOD ON THE BLADE magically hardens into a permanent STAIN.

Link LOOKS OVER at Sheik, who stands with most of his back to the man. It is clear from the noises and happenings in the background that the rest of the town is mostly UNDER CONTROL.

Sheik begins WALKING OFF.

LINK

"Now don't you go thanking me too much..."

Sheik CONTINUES WALKING; Link FOLLOWS behind.

LINK

"Or would you have rather that I not 'interfered'? You kinda looked like you were enjoying the prospect of having an air-hole added to your neck! Hey! Listen to me, damnit!"

Sheik IGNORES Link, and as he walks he suddenly CRUMPLES TO THE GROUND, limp; he holds his hands OVER HIS BODY in a protective, FETAL POSITION, but then he SHUDDERS. SPURTS OF BLOOD comes seeping out all the wounds he endured in his fight with the two Stalfos. Sheik SHUDDERS several more times; each time MORE SPURTS OF BLOOD explode from his wounds.

Link KNEELS BESIDE the man, grabbing his shoulder.

LINK

(whispering)
"Oh, the Goddesses' names!"

Sheik RECOILS from Link's touch.

SHEIK
"Don't you touch me! Don't... don't... d-don't..."

Sheik CRAWLS AWAY a short distance, and then he begins VOMITING steadily, this time it is normal GREEN VOMIT instead of pitch-black sludge.

Both the Boy and the Girl STARE DOWN at the men from their perch on the widow's walk above the House of Skulltula.

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE UPPER TERRACES, PATH TO THE FORTUNE TELLER'S HUT - LATE EVENING.

This is one of the higher parts of Kakariko Village, situated on the upper slope of Death Mountain (the terrain is about eye-level with the top of the old windmill in the background).

Link sits on a crate down the path from the Fortune Teller's SMALL CIRCULAR HUT, where LIGHT streams out from the windows. He LOOKS BACK at the hut while CRADLING his injured arm.

The Boy comes wordlessly up the path with Shikashi, carrying a basket and LIMPING on account of his calf injury. As the Boy passes Link he hands him an AMPOULE containing a shining green fluid.

Shikashi quickly SNATCHES IT AWAY from Link.

SHIKASHI
(to the Boy)
"No: child, no!"

Shikashi pulls a SECOND AMPOULE out of the Boy's basket, this one contains a shining red fluid. He hand this red ampoule to Link, who takes it. Shikashi holds up the GREEN AMPOULE and wags it.

SHIKASHI
"You're not a creature of magic, Pale Rider; Sheik is. He forfeited so much of his animal self so long ago to its

embrace: it makes one so strong in some ways, but so much weaker, too, in others."

Shikashi and the Boy walk off for the Fortune Teller's Hut.

LINK

"Will he survive?"

Shikashi STOPS walking and sighs.

SHIKASHI

"Will he survive? Of course not. Young fools: they never do, not for long."

The old man FACES Link.

LINK

"I mean—"

SHIKASHI

"I know what you mean, Pale Rider. If the old woman can keep him in this world until sunrise, I think, then he'll be able to linger with us a time longer. I can't say how much longer. He could say, I suppose. In the end, though, I think it's merely a question of how devoted his heart is to the prospect of staying with us. Tch! When a body gives itself over to magic so, that's always the deciding factor for their survival. Shadows can stay in the sunlight indefinitely, after all, until the day becomes cloudy enough for them. So, then, if Sheik's heart is, indeed, devoted enough, he'll likely linger on..."

The Boy and Shikashi move towards the Fortune Teller's hut and HAND-OFF their supplies to the Fortune Teller at the door.

Link WATCHES this exchange and eventually RISES; he moves away from the Fortune Teller's hut, facing the rising MOON on the horizon.

LINK

"A matter of 'devoted hearts'."

Link slowly removes the OCARINA OF TIME from under his cloak.

NAVI emerges from Link's cowl and comes to rest on his SHOULDER.

Link looks at the fairy.

LINK

"That isn't a deciding factor for me, Navi. But, then, you already know that..."

NAVI shrugs.

LINK

"Still: it'd be so much easier to find her, wouldn't it? If she were alive it'd put my mind at ease..."

NAVI looks up at Link.

LINK

"...to know that the Royal Family lineage is intact. What did you think I meant? I was serious when I told Sheik I have no loyalties to her! After we kill Ganondorf Hyrule will be in need of a ruler- that's only practical- and say what you will about her, but Zelda is a dedicated person. She was when she had her baby teeth, at least."

Link TURNS the ocarina over in his hands. Navi stares at him INCREDULOUSLY.

LINK

"You still don't believe me, huh? We have a job to do, Navi: we're going to slit Ganondorf's throat, and that's all that matters..."

The fairy CROSSES HER ARMS and SHAKES HER HEAD; she flies back up into Link's cowl.

LINK

"...my feelings- one way or the other- are irrelevant. The road we're moving down is a deserted one, and we're not little kids, anymore. We don't get to be 'lonely together' with anyone, we just get to be lonely..."

Link HOLDS UP the Ocarina of Time.

LINK

(whispering)

"`This ocarina has the power to unite the most devoted of hearts'."

Link puts the ocarina to his lips and CLOSES HIS EYES; he slowly plays through the LAST NINE NOTES of Epona's Song.

SLOW PAN across the moonlit range; a FAINT NEIGH rises from somewhere far off in the distance.

Link SMILES.

LINK
"Wherever they roam..."

He very slowly sets the MOUTHPIECE of the ocarina to his lips again, pausing, before launching into an AWKWARD RENDITION OF ZELDA'S LULLABY. After a moment's reflection Link remembers the notes and plays an ACCURATE RENDITION of the song.

SLOW PAN across the moonlight range as Link plays through the entirety of the song.

Begin a CLOSE-UP as Link comes to the end of the song; he launches into a REPEAT, and only a few notes into the song the MOUTHPIECE on the Ocarina of Time SPARKLES near its base (not visible to Link).

As Link CONTINUES PLAYING there is a SUCCESSION OF FLASHES across the screen: Young Link, in the Temple of Time, with the GREEN BALL OF FIRE swirling over his chest, a flash of the doorway opening, a flash of Link and Zelda in the castle courtyard (the shot with them separated by a sprig of white rosebushes in the foreground), and a very brief flash of YOUNG ZELDA'S EYES in profile.

(NOTE: for the duration of this next scene there is a faint sound, as of a GLASS RIM BEING 'PLAYED' with a wandering finger. The noise is beautiful, but oscillates unsteadily)

(NOTE: from this point forward in the narrative there are multiple moments of continuous, fluid transitions between Adult and Young Link; these are literally indicated in this text using the phrase 'scene-cut'.)

A MASSIVE WHITE FLASH (blinding in comparison to all the moonlit hues and colors of this scene) encompasses the

screen; after it fades we see YOUNG LINK sitting in the royal apple orchard with the Ocarina of Time to his lips (same as pg. _____) also playing ZELDA'S LULLABY. The boy LOOKS UP, startled; in his EYES is a reflection of ADULT LINK sitting in the moonlit field.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: he LOOKS UP, equally startled; in his EYES is a reflection of YOUNG LINK sitting before the sunset in the apple orchard.

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy jumps up in alarm and slams his head into a tree branch, falling down into a heap.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: the man GASPS in surprise and TOPPLES BACKWARDS into the tall grass. The OCARINA OF TIME falls into the grass beside him.

(NOTE: 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' noise stops here)

Adult Link rolls to his side, PANTING; Navi emerges from his cowl and lands on his CHEST, looking the man up and down.

LINK

"T- tell me you saw that! Tell me you felt any of that?"

Navi BLINKS IN CONFUSION; she shakes her head.

Link SITS UP, running a hand through his hair, before slowly RETRIEVING the OCARINA OF TIME from the grass. The 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' noise again sounds, faintly, and again there is a reflection in Adult Link's EYES of Young Link reaching down (towards the camera).

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy is reaching into the shallow water, where he has just plucked the Ocarina of Time out from the reeds. He is looking into the water deeply; Adult Link is reflected in the boy's EYES.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: he quickly shoves the Ocarina of Time into a compartment inside his cloak; the 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' noise stops suddenly, replaced by chirping CRICKETS and Link's HEAVY PANTING.

LINK

(with one hand over his cloak)
"This Ocarina... has the power..."

FORTUNE TELLER
"...whenever they roam."

Link BOLTS to his feet and WHIPS AROUND; the Fortune Teller is standing behind him, about ten feet into a knoll of scrub.

The old woman SMILES at Link with a very UNSETTLING GRIN.

INT. FORTUNE TELLER'S HUT - PRE-DAWN.

A cramped series of bamboo rooms inside the circular dwelling. A trickle of water from a natural spring behind the hut cuts through the dwelling, providing water to a small MYSTIC-LOOKING DIVINING POND near the hut's center (it cuts across the sandy floor in a small carved trench up to this point)

Link sits with his back to a wall beside a very small window near the rear of the hut. The Fortune Teller ROOTS AROUND in a cabinet on the other side of this room (across from the small trickle of water meandering across the hut).

The OCARINA OF TIME sits on a much-used table near the old woman.

FORTUNE TELLER
"Oh... bother and knobs! Hmph! Had myself some prime blanchroot here just the other day. Made such a fine smoking powder, too!"

The woman STOPS rummaging momentarily.

FORTUNE TELLER
"Although I suppose you wouldn't be inclined to partake."

LINK
"I suppose I wouldn't."

The old woman moves to a small BENCH beside the cabinet and removes a STEAMING PITCHER from a drawer.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Well: there's mash ale, flavors culled from the finest buds of Deacon's Fie lilies, don't you know..."

LINK

"I wouldn't be inclined to partake."

The old woman sits cross-legged on the ground across from the man, holding the OCARINA OF TIME between her hands. She motions to the small STREAM running before them.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Spring water from the base of Death Mountain, right behind us: very cold and very fresh. Quenches the thirst quite nicely..."

The old woman STARES at Link for a time.

LINK

"Although, you suppose..."

FORTUNE TELLER

(nodding)

"You wouldn't be inclined to partake."

The Fortune Teller puts her CHIN ON ONE KNUCKLE, amused.

FORTUNE TELLER

"I think you might hate me, don't you, Pale Rider? Or at the very least there's strong animosity, there."

LINK

"Incredible. And you didn't even read my palm lines..."

FORTUNE TELLER

"Well, no: you don't really hate me. It's what I... how should I put it: what I 'represent'?"

LINK

"I've seen enough 'magic' and 'mysticism' in my time, old woman. I know what kind of path those dark arts lead to."

FORTUNE TELLER

"Ah, yes: you've seen how some use them..."

There is a PAINED WHIMPER from across the hut; Link notices movement in one of the other rooms. He can just barely see one of the FORTUNE TELLER'S ASSISTANTS tending to Sheik,

who lies prone on a table (barely any of this scene is visible, save for parts of Sheik's calves and the distinct impression that Sheik is bare, at least from the waist-down).

FORTUNE TELLER

"But you've also seen how others use them, haven't you? Sheik, for example: sh—"

The old woman PAUSES briefly.

FORTUNE TELLER

"He uses his abilities for quite a different purpose."

LINK

(sulky)

"The jury's still out on him..."

FORTUNE TELLER

"It's very easy for you to hate me, Pale Rider, and magic, too, since you are not a creature of magic, isn't it? Shikashi was right back there: regardless of any... 'relationships' you may have..."

Link LOOKS UP at the Fortune Teller; both he and the old woman SLOWLY MOVE THEIR EYES towards the top of Link's cowl (where Navi resides). Link self-consciously TIGHTENS the cowl down over his head.

FORTUNE TELLER

"...you surely didn't come into them through enchanted blood: you're as mortal as any man, and as ordinary as a blade of grass, magically speaking."

The old woman REACHES for the Ocarina of Time and hold it in one hand.

FORTUNE TELLER

"This instrument, however, is quite a different story."

LINK

"So I wasn't hallucinating? I wasn't imagining."

FORTUNE TELLER

"Imagining? No. Definitely not. But hallucinating? Well, that depends on your definition of the word. What did you see?"

LINK

"A- an orchard at sunset, and a small boy..."

FORTUNE TELLER

"A boy you know?"

Link appears DAZED. He shakes his head.

LINK

"No: I never really knew him, I don't think..."

FORTUNE TELLER

"But you've seen him before?"

The woman LEANS FORWARD, SMILING KNOWINGLY.

LINK

"Seen him before? Sure: in ponds and mirrors. But not for
12 years."

FORTUNE TELLER

"You, then?"

The woman HOLDS UP the Ocarina of Time appreciatively,
CHUCKLING.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Who gave you this ocarina, Pale Rider?"

LINK

"It was constructed by Darunia."

FORTUNE TELLER

"The last Goron King. Hmmm. Made for you?"

LINK

"No. It changed hands at least a few times."

The Fortune Teller SMILES and produces a SMALL, SLENDER
STICK from her vestments.

FORTUNE TELLER

"The Goroni look at things so differently from the rest of
us. The salt of the earth they are: minerals, almost,
entirely, and just like a chunk of hardened rock- lying
unchanged from age to age to age- their view of things we

'understand' (NOTE: sarcastic inflection) so well— things like 'time'— is so very skewed from ours. Flesh, after all, is such a transient thing. We're mere flashes of lightning in the darkness, but they are stately candles, burning long and lean through the cold night. Their mindset— and, thus, their crafts— represent a more... 'intransient' view of time, if you will."

LINK

"Is it afterimages, then? That ocarina has the power to... to what? Recall distant memories for someone?"

FORTUNE TELLER

"No. There is only one device known that has the power to recall distant memories. 'Memories' are not the domain of magic or enchanted instruments: they are yours, entirely, Pale Rider."

LINK

"Then... what I saw... You're not saying this thing can take someone back in time? To the past?"

FORTUNE TELLER

"No."

LINK

"But—"

The Fortune Teller DIRECTS Link's eyes to the small stream of water running through the dirt floor between them. She moves her SMALL STICK down the stream line in the water, along with the trickling current.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Time is a river, Pale Rider. Its current is straight and absolute. There are eddies, perhaps, but no counter-current, and there is not a paddle made with the strength to fight that unrelenting rush, outright."

LINK

"But what about the ocarina? Now you say it was a trick of my mind?"

FORTUNE TELLER

"I say that it was a certain trick of time: a trick this ocarina seems to have the ability to make use of..."

The Fortune Teller moves her stick about an inch beside the stream in the dirt and DRAWS A LINE parallel to the water's path. She makes a small BREAK between the lines upstream to allow water into this second line.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Time is a river, and any large river has its tributaries. Any large river has its branches..."

LINK

"How many?"

FORTUNE TELLER

"How many hairs on your head, Pale Rider? How many hairs on the heads of every creature to ever walk beneath the Golden Goddesses' sun, from now until the earliest days when the sun shone bright and young over Old Hylia? Time's tributaries are innumerable, and immeasurable. And the distance between each of them? Usually insurmountable."

The Fortune Teller hands Link the Ocarina of Time. As Link takes the instrument the 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' noise begins very faintly rising; he quickly moves the instrument to his right hand (which is gloved) and replaces the instrument in his cloak.

FORTUNE TELLER

"This ocarina has the power to breach the smallest sliver of these walls, like cutting into the distance between two hairs held snug in a ponytail..."

LINK

"Then... then the boy I saw... it wasn't me..."

The Fortune Teller wags her head.

FORTUNE TELLER

"It is you. A different you. Same boy, different circumstance: a different Hyrule."

Link STANDS and prepares to leave.

LINK

"Then it's an inconsequential one. If I could truly go back in time then I could fix everything—"

FORTUNE TELLER

"Oh, could you, now?"

LINK

(growling)

"Yes."

The Fortune Teller also stands.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Well, if you believe that, then I am sorry: you can never begin again, Pale Rider, but, all the same, you can always try to fix your mistakes..."

The woman turns to leave the room, moving for the room containing Sheik, but Link stops her.

LINK

"No fortune today, then?"

The woman again FACES Link, scowling. She slowly approaches the man and rests one finger on his CHIN.

The Fortune Teller quickly THRUSTS her hand away from Link's chin, causing a small BLOOD SPATTER to streak across the dirt floor; neither Link's chin nor the woman's hand are bleeding, however.

FORTUNE TELLER

"Mostly a man's 'fortune' is told by what he brings with him. Your fortune is unchanged from before, because the thing you bring with you is the same as before."

The Fortune Teller stalks off to tend to Sheik.

Link looks after her, ANGRY, and then he SPITS onto the dirt floor of the hut. He begins ADJUSTING HIS CLOAK, preparing to leave, but then he looks into the LINES on the dirt floor; the second line drawn by the Fortune Teller is red with a few stray BLOOD DROPS in it, and Link's spit has landed directly between the lines. As he watches the reddish water in the second line begins crossing over into the main line, traveling along the disturbance between the lines produced by Link's spit.

NAVI emerges from his cowl and rests on his shoulder.

LINK

"`Devoted hearts', Navi..."

Link rests a hand on his cloak, around the spot where the ocarina rests inside. He suddenly begins to LAUGH.

LINK

"`Devoted hearts'. I think we got the right interpretation, but the wrong participants. He's devoted, and so am I... so what if we're devoted to different things?"

Link OPENS his gloved hand: the small, interlocking triangle MEDALLION (shoddy and worn down over time) rests in his hand. Link then looks at the BLOOD SPATTER on the dirt floor.

LINK

"Very different things. A stupid child's affections notwithstanding, I think we can use this to our advantage..."

INT. LINK'S ROOM IN LON-LON RANCH - TWILIGHT (CONTINUOUS).

Young Link sits cross-legged on his bed staring at the FLOOR, where the OCARINA OF TIME rests in the center of the room. The boy looks at the instrument warily.

Eventually Link looks up, noticing a FULL-LENGTH MIRROR on the opposite side of the room near the window. The boy rises and moves to this mirror, STARING DEEPLY into it. Link blinks, confused, and then he retrieves an EMPTY PILLOWCASE from a drawer beside the mirror; he drapes it over his head, bunching it tight (like a cowl). The boy EXAMINES HIMSELF in this way, finally he puts a hand over his lower face and forehead, LEANING FORWARD to survey his eyes alone.

NAVI lilts over to the boy and perches on his SHOULDER. Link looks at the fairy and GRUNTS noncommittally.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the OCARINA OF TIME on the floor, Link blurry in the background. The boy very slowly crosses the room and stands before the instrument; he finally brings one hand down to pick it up, and as he does so the 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' noise sounds again.

Link HESITATES, but then he TOUCHES the instrument.

The boy GASPS.

Two sequential BRIGHT FLASHES reveal Adult Link's reflection in YOUNG LINK'S EYES and then Young Link's reflection in ADULT LINK'S EYES.

EXT. HYRULE FIELD - TWILIGHT (CONTINUOUS).

Adult Link is sitting cross-legged in the field, Epona behind him and the Ocarina of Time between his hands. He looks up with a GLARE OF CONCENTRATION.

Another BRIGHT FLASH reveals the STONEHEART from Adult Link's time, blocked by rubble and vines; a FLASH after this reveals the Stoneheart from Link's youth (with the titular rock formation freely dangling from its vines) reflected in YOUNG LINK'S EYES.

Adult Link looks up, GRINNING WIDELY.

LINK

"Yeah: it's worth a shot, anyway..."

INT. LINK'S ROOM IN LON-LON RANCH - TWILIGHT (CONTINUOUS).

Young Link DROPS the Ocarina of Time on the floor and STEPS BACK, hesitant. NAVI hovers near the boy's head. The pair LOOK AT EACH OTHER for some time, after which Link LOOKS at the ocarina again and then slowly retrieves it, using the empty pillowcase from before to hold it and attach it to his leather shoulder sash. Link retrieves his SLINGSHOT and OYSTER KNIFE from his nightstand and then creeps out of the room, closing the door very softly behind him.

EXT. THE STONEHEART - MIDMORNING.

Adult Link again stands before the pile of rubble and vines that suspend the Stoneheart far off the ground. He begins WALKING FORWARD, slowly.

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy's skinny, bare LEGS walk over the same ground as his older counterpart. ZOOM OUT reveals the boy's contemplative face as he stands before the Stoneheart; in this time period the giant stone rock is freely suspended about twenty feet off the ground by vines, drifting lazily before the entrance to the Great Forest.

As Link watches the COLOR TONE of the scene shifts to a more SEPIA-HUED one: we see both Young Link and Saria laughing and engaged in horseplay atop the Stoneheart itself. Their GIGGLES and LAUGHS echo hauntingly.

Young Link REMOVES the Ocarina of Time from his shoulder sash and holds it in his hands (cue 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' noise)

YOUNG LINK'S EYES reflect the state of the future Stoneheart: covered in rubble and vines.

The boy walks the length of this wall of rubble (which is not physically present for him, but only discernable using the ocarina's power).

The boy inspects the limestone grounding directly beneath the Stoneheart: this natural rock formation effectively separates Hyrule Field from the Great Forest. The boy kneels down and looks through the many POROUS CRACKS in the stone, beneath which a subterranean AQUIFER gushes dark water.

The child LOOKS UP again and the Stoneheart (dangling directly above him) then back at the limestone floor.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK; he is standing still before the Stoneheart with his eyes closed, holding the Ocarina of Time. The man SMILES deeply and nods.

LINK

"You clever little boy, you..."

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy is walking away from the Stoneheart. He turns to face the structure, slowly withdrawing his SLINGSHOT. The boy LOOKS UP, resolute.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: NAVI hovers near his head.

LINK

"No: I don't know if this is going to work. And for that matter I don't even know if he's going to actually do it or not."

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy is still staring at the Stoneheart. The phantom, echoing sounds of CHILDREN

GIGGLING AND LAUGHING lingers. Young Link's face scrunches, first in annoyance, and then ANGER.

The boy suddenly, unexpectedly produces a TWISTED CHUNK OF METAL from the 'ammo' pouch on his sash and loads it into his slingshot, firing immediately; the projectile SLICES INTO a part of the vine structure holding the Stoneheart aloft. Link repeats this process NUMEROUS TIME in rapid succession, each time hitting almost exactly the same spot. After several rounds (during which a few angry TEARS trickle down the boy's cheeks) there is a LOUD GROANING noise.

After a pause the remaining vines holding the Stoneheart SNAP AWAY, causing the massive rock to freefall into the limestone floor; as the rock impacts it BREAKS into several pieces and, consequently, destroys the limestone foundation. The subsequent demolition process leaves an IRREGULAR TRENCH that exposes the aquifer below. The remnants of the Stoneheart SINK into the middle of this pool.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: The man is sitting on the grass, no longer holding the Ocarina of Time. NAVI is on his knee.

LINK

"Did it mean that much to him, you think? I was never that sentimental, was I?"

The fairy CROSSES HER ARMS.

Link LOOKS AWAY.

LINK

"Maybe a little..."

The sound of THUNDER interrupts this conversation: a small WIND SHOCKWAVE ruffles through the grass, originating at the Stoneheart. As Link watches there are several 'jumbled', 'hallucinatory' events ultimately leading to the 'erasure' of the Stoneheart, the wall of rock and the vines within it (very much a 'bad-LSD-trip' kind of spectacle).

Eventually Link hesitantly approaches the former location of the wall: there is a very DEEP TRENCH (the remains of the aquifer) surrounded by vines that appear to have been dead for many years. Below, in the darkness, and in the

middle of the former aquifer basin are the remains of the Stoneheart, wedged into a small CHASM. A BARELY NOTICABLE TRICKLE OF WATER emanates from this plug, but not nearly enough to keep the aquifer filled.

Navi hovers near Link's head, bearing a similar look of WONDER and INCREDULITY.

Link looks over at the fairy.

LINK

"How... cool... is... that!?"

Epona LEAPS over the chasm, driven on by Link in the saddle. When she lands on the other side Link STARES DOWN the dark, green path of the Great Forest with NARROW EYES. He begins moving Epona forward, but then stops: he turns in the saddle and looks behind him.

Young Link, standing on the opposite side of the hole in the ground is reflected in ADULT LINK'S EYES. The boy is not moving forward.

LINK

"He isn't going to go any further. I don't blame him..."

Link again looks down the path into the forest.

LINK

"We haven't heard anything about the iron knight coming out of the forest, so it's a safe bet he's still in there. And if he is... well... whatever ends up happening isn't something for a little kid's eyes, is it?"

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: Adult Link is reflected in YOUNG LINK'S EYES, riding off into the forest (ie: 'away' from the camera).

The boy stands there for a moment, staring into the forest, before slowly turning around and tromping off towards the Hyrule Field.

EXT. GREAT FOREST ROAD - MIDMORNING.

A winding dirt path through the thick, lush greenery of the Great Forest.

CLOSE-UP on the dirt trail ahead of Epona; there is STRANGE MOVEMENT beneath the fallen leaves.

As Epona approaches this spot a SPINDLY APPENDAGE suddenly bursts through the leaves and grabs the horse's front hooves. Epona REARS, neighing, and in the struggle Link is dumped forward out of the saddle; he careens into a hidden hole in the ground where a large, snarling creature like a cross between a warthog and a ficus (ie: as much plant as animal) lurks: this is the OVERGROWN DEKU SCRUB.

The creature savagely attacks Link, who is supine and on the defensive; he manages to remove Dhise Slaighre from his scabbard but several blows to the creature's THICK, LEATHERY SKIN do not produce penetration.

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy is walking away from the forest (towards the camera) when he stops just shy of the lens. The boy's eyes widen.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: NAVI comes into the space between Link and the Scrub, hands to either side of her body, and gives off a succession of BRIGHT, EXPLOSIVE FLASHES that disorient the creature. Link, meanwhile, attempts to scramble out of the hole in the ground, but the Scrub suddenly and accurately swats Navi out of the air and lunges upon Link.

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy is racing over the Great Forest Road, coming upon the same spot that Adult Link is mired in. The boy scrambles over the forest floor, quickly brushing away leaves. He finds a patch of SOFT EARTH underneath and begins DIGGING FRANTICALLY.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: Link wrestles with the Scrub, managing to get on top of the creature, and he bashes at its head and upper body with the weighty HILT of Dhise Slaighre, but without causing any obvious damage. The creature THROWS Link off it and then PINS him against a wall. Link gets tossed to the ground; the Scrub then SNARLS and prepares a charge.

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy still DIGS in the dirt; finally the ground beneath him drops away, sending the boy sprawling into a much smaller hole, landing on his rear with legs spread. Between the boy's legs a small (perhaps

10" tall) plant-like creature sits rooted in the ground; this is the IMMATURE DEKU SCRUB.

The boy scurries backward just before the small creature can attack his groin. Link produces his oyster knife and comes after the small creature, which NIPS at Link's bare legs, drawing a SUPERFICIAL WOUND on one knee; Link CRIES OUT (more with annoyance than pain) and LUNGES at the creature. The oyster knife glances off the Scrub's side, tearing away part of the creature's GREEN, THIN SKIN, but then the creature thrashes its limbs and sends the boy sprawling into the far side of the trench.

Scene-cut to ADULT LINK: the same 'bad-LSD-trip' spectacle again takes place, complete with a small wind SHOCKWAVE. The Scrub's flesh now bears a very old, discolored WOUND on its side.

The Scrub LUNGES at Link as Link raises Dhise Slaighre. The pair collide and Link falls backwards with the Scrub firmly on top of him. There is a PROLONGED SCREAM.

After a moment of silence Link pushes the Scrub's body off him: Dhise Slaighre is stuck smack in the middle of the creature's old, scarred-over wound, nearly to the hilt. Link stands for a time, CATCHING HIS BREATH, and eventually pulls the sword from the creature. The Scrub bleeds yellow, and the yellow fluid magically STAINS itself upon the blade.

Link scrambles out of the hole in the ground and sits on the earth; Epona comes up beside him and NAVI flies to his side.

LINK

"Well, that was something for a little kid's eyes, wasn't it?"

Link runs one hand through his hair.

LINK

"...what a clever little boy, you!"

Scene-cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy emerges from the small hole in the earth with the wounded Deku Scrub SCREAMING UP AT HIM ANGRILY. The boy looks back into the hole and

regards the creature with a HAUGHTY GLANCE, and then he stares deeper into the Great Forest.

CLOSE-UP on LINK'S BOOTS; there is a pause, and then the boy's feet turn around. The boy tromps away down the Great Forest Road, again heading for the remnants of the Stoneheart and the forest exit.

EXT. SACRED FOREST MEADOW - LATE AFTERNOON.

A flat, grassy meadow bathed in indirect light from the dense forest canopy above. Vast patches of YELLOW ROSES bloom on the fringes of the meadow. To one side of this meadow is an extremely DARK PATCH of forest, complete with very ancient looking trees and WEIRD KNOLLS disappearing into a thick mist. This is the entrance to the LOST WOODS. Ahead, at the northern terminus of the meadow is a VINE-COVERED temple with an ORNATE TOWER at its center (identical to the one from pg. _____). This is the FOREST TEMPLE.

Link rides Epona onto the meadow fringe from the Great Forest Road, but he stops before the grassland and DISMOUNTS. He UNSHEATHES Dhise Slaighre. He crosses the field on foot, slowly at first, looking around WARILY.

There is a SMALL TREE STUMP sitting about 100 meters outside the Forest Temple grounds; it is covered in CHILDISH DRAWINGS and scribbling (crude pictures of hearts, monsters, stick figures and other childhood staples).

Link KNEELS beside this stump and RUNS HIS LEFT HAND over the images. (NOTE: the general slant in almost all the images indicated a right-handed artist; Link moves his hand over a picture of a BIPEDAL DINOSAUR that has an OPPOSITE SLANT, indicating a left-handed artist).

Link looks down at the CRUSHED GRASS near the stump and sees HORSE TRACKS in the ground leading to the Forest Temple; as he moves toward the place, however, he notices ANOTHER SET OF TRACKS moving away.

Link RESHEATHES Dhise Slaighre. He CONSIDERS this development, but then Link again looks at the TREE STUMP.

The GHOSTLY ECHO OF LAUGHING CHILDREN is heard.

Link decides to enter the Forest Temple, and he crosses the meadow, moving beneath the temple's ancient arches. He pauses as NAVI peeks out his cowl.

LINK

"Mido never let us go in here. Not ever. He didn't even want us out here in the Sacred Forest Meadow..."

Link LOOKS BACK at the stump in the distance.

LINK

"She loved it here, though. More than the Stoneheart, even. That... that was a playground. We all loved it. But this? She always thought it was such a very special place. I never really understood that about her, even though it was nice to have the place to ourselves like we did; of course, she'd never actually come in here, either..."

Link LOOKS UP at the looming FOREST TEMPLE.

LINK

"...not into the temple: she stayed in the meadow. But it wasn't because she was scared. She wasn't afraid, I don't think..."

NAVI NODS at Link in agreement.

LINK

"If any Kokiri were to nest-down in the Forest Temple, though, you can be sure that she'd be with them. She'd lead them, even. Who else can the forest children count on, huh? Mido? Please..."

Link WALKS into the darkness of the Forest Temple. His voice ECHOES.

LINK

"No: I'm not still bitter about that rock to the back of the head. That wound healed up alright, didn't it? No permanent damage to me, right?"

There is a SHORT PAUSE.

LINK

"That's not very nice, Navi..."

INT. FOREST TEMPLE - LATE AFTERNOON.

A dimly-lit, disheveled, labyrinthine maze of dingy corridors, all adorned with FILTHY, ANCIENT FRESCOES depicting various things.

NAVI emerges from Link's cowl, providing light.

Link hesitantly steps through the temple's corridors, eventually following a SET OF GIGANTIC FOOTPRINTS IN THE DIRTY FLOOR that he finds. These footprints lead him to an ORNATE, SEALED DOOR. Link notices a PLAQUE set into one of the panels.

NAVI hovers near the wall and moves with Link's hand as he struggles to read the text written on the door plaque.

LINK:

"This... this isn't Kokiri; this isn't any kind of forest speak. It's... it's ancient Hylian, Navi:

The sand to bury
And the water cover,
The leaf to screen
And the shadow conceal
'Till their judgment be revealed,
When their judgment proves its yield.
'Till their judgment proves its yield
Let their judgment be concealed."

Link DROPS his hand and LOOKS at Navi.

LINK

"Judgment?"

NAVI shrugs.

LINK

"Sand, water, leaf, and... shadow. I've heard all this before, haven't I? I know I have. Where, though?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"Even so: what the hell is ancient Hylian text doing in a temple sitting in the middle of the Great Forest? The Hylians never came within a thousand leagues of this place, did they?"

NAVI again SHRUGS.

Link BOWS HIS HEAD in annoyance, noticing for the first time ANOTHER set of massive footprints; these are leaving the doorway, heading off in another direction down the hall. The footprints are very BLOODY.

Link LOOKS UP, slowly, and UNSHEATHES Dhise Slauchre.

LINK
"You ready?"

Navi flies up beside Link's head.

LINK
"Then let's go..."

Link VIOLENTLY KICKS at the door; two kicks are enough to send both hinged doors CRACKING backwards, exposing the corridor beyond.

SLOW ZOOM on Link's eyes. There is no sound except for stray gusts of wind echoing down the corridors.

LINK
(whispering)
"...Goddesses... wept!"

Link moves into the corridor: the place is filled with many sundry survival items, all semi-organized around the place constituting a makeshift campsite (cooking utensils, tent draping, etc...) This chamber shows obvious signs that it was a living area for quite some time (ie: years).

The BODIES of about a dozen Kokiri forest children are strewn randomly throughout this place (an approximately equal proportion of boys and girls, all appearing about 8-years-old, give or take a year). FAIRY ASHES, too, are strewn about the place near or on many of the bodies. All the children were slaughtered using a bladed weapon.

Link moves through this grisly scene slowly; he KNEELS beside a few of these bodies, but quickly continues on after each stop.

NAVI flies along the side of the room, passing by several children's bodies; she lingers near the FAIRY ASHES on one body's chest, MOURNFUL.

A GIRL'S BODY blocks the way to a raised platform surrounded by railings further on in the room. The girl has short-cropped GREEN HAIR, but lies facedown. Link gently ROLLS the body over, exposing her pale face.

NAVI flies up near Link's head.

LINK

"She... she's not here, Navi. She's not with them..."

NAVI notices the RAISED PLATFORM further inside the room; bright light streams down upon this area from a hole in the Forest Temple's central tower.

Link STANDS and follows Navi's gaze; he slowly moves for the platform, crossing over one of the railings that gird it.

Navi hovers over a spot near the center of this area: a LONG, GOLDEN KNIFE (identical to one of the Iron Knuckle's knives from pg. _____) is stuck in the floor of the platform, nearly dead-center, jutting out of the rock. It is covered in BLOOD and there is a LARGE POOL OF BLOOD all around it. Scattered even further around the knife, in a regular 'burst' pattern, are tiny SHINING SPECKS of light (perhaps a thousand of them) barely visible, like decayed firefly light, radiated out all around the knife in the floor.

FAR OVERHEAD SHOT as Link slowly approaches the knife: there is a VAGUE PATTERN of the floor he walks on (visible only from above): a LARGE LEAF image takes up the majority of this flooring.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP on the golden knife: there is a piece of fabric that is run-through and stuck to the blade: a CHILD-SIZED DARK-GREEN HEADBAND.

Link kneels and PULLS the knife from the ground; he examines this headband closely.

SLOW CAMERA PAN around this scene: as it begins we see a large PICTURE OF GANONDORF resting against the far railing

behind Link (the color-scheme, etc... make this picture very conspicuous). Ganondorf is standing before a lightning-filled sky, posing GRANDLY. As the camera pans Link's head eclipses the portrait in the frame; when we again see the portrait it has the same background, but this time Ganondorf is leaning forward and LEERING SINISTERLY (NOTE: both of these are STILL IMAGES: there is no visible movement in the portrait itself).

Link gently PLUCKS the headband from the golden knife. He holds it up in front of his face, eventually SMELLING it, briefly. He leans his head against the golden knife's hand-guard and SIGHS, with his eyes closed.

When Link opens ONE EYE he sees a reflection in the knife's blade: a DARK FIGURE behind him, running toward him bearing a cruel lance.

Link CRIES OUT and ROLLS TO ONE SIDE, using the golden knife to deflect his assailant's lance; the resulting contact sends the GOLDEN KNIFE sailing out of Link's hand where it lands very close to the portrait of Ganondorf, which by now only contains an image of the lightning-covered background: Ganondorf's image is no longer there at all.

Link lands hard on the stone floor, cradling a FLESH WOUND on his left arm. His assailant stands near the center of the chamber, directly on top of the blood pool. His CRUEL BLACK RIDING BOOTS 'paw' at the floor, disturbing the dried blood on the floor. From behind, this figure bears a startling resemblance to GANONDORF.

Link SNARLS.

When the figure turns, however, we see a 'cheap imitation' of a face: something vaguely made in Ganondorf's image, but hideously deformed, as well.

This is PHANTOM GANONDORF.

Link RECOILS at the face's hideousness, but then quickly recovers and UNSHEATHES Dhise Slaighre.

The pair engage each other near the center of the chamber. Link uses the nimbleness of his sword against Phantom Ganondorf's slow, awkward lance to eventually force the

creature off-balance: when Phantom Ganondorf performs an ungraceful 180-degree spin Link quickly plows the tip of Dhise Slaighre between the creature's shoulder blades. Phantom Ganondorf SCREAMS INHUMANLY, but as he falls to his knees a SHOCKWAVE of energy sends Link sprawling across the chamber beside the now-empty PORTRAIT OF GANONDORF; DHISE SLAIGHRE lands very far away, on the opposite side.

Phantom Ganondorf begins to LAUGH inhumanly and gets to its feet, unaffected by the recent impaling.

Link, sprawled beside the portrait, eyes the creature in disbelief.

Phantom Ganondorf CLOSES HIS FIST in front of his mouth, with his knuckles facing Link; there is a noise like an ENERGY WEAPON POWERING UP, and then the creature quickly THRUSTS his fist down in Link's direction. A BRIGHT WHITE BALL OF ENERGY goes sailing through the air, heading for Link.

Link SCRAMBLES and manages to avoid the ball-lightning; the energy instead hits the PORTRAIT behind Link.

Phantom Ganondorf briefly STUMBLES and CRIES OUT in pain; it recovers after a moment, picking its lance up off the floor. It CHARGES at Link, lance extended.

CLOSE-UP on Link's eyes; his brow rises quickly.

NAVI darts in front of the empty PORTRAIT. The light of her body forces a 'hidden image' to be partially revealed: the original stately pose of Ganondorf (very faint, almost like a watermark).

Link barely DODGES Phantom Ganondorf's attack and grabs the GOLDEN KNIFE from the floor; he blindly SLASHES at the portrait, tearing a three-inch wide hole in its left side.

Phantom Ganondorf SCREAMS in pain: its right arm is suddenly RENT violently, almost to the point that it is severed apart. BLACK MIST escapes the wound instead of blood.

Link stabs near the portrait's middle and draws the blade down its length.

Phantom Ganondorf GRUNTS in a sick, 'wet' way: it collapses to its knees, its hands reflexively clutching tight over its chest and stomach (NOTE: because of the creature's intricate clothing-- the cape, the vest, the chain-mail undershirt, etc... this vivisection is NOT entirely visible).

The creature LOOKS DOWN with a pained, sickly glare, but then its countenance changes; it looks up at Link with a MOCKING SNEER, using one hand to pick up the DARK GREEN HEADBAND from the floor. It holds this article of clothing up near its head and then uses its other hand to make a crude 'slashing' motion over its own throat, GRINNING DEEPLY all the while.

Link uses the golden knife to SLASH at the portrait, cutting it at 'throat-level'.

Phantom Ganondorf's neck explodes in a cloud of black mist. The creature's look goes blank and its jaw slackens; it CRUMPLES in a heap on the floor, exploding into a black mist that quickly dissipates into the room, fading into nothingness.

Link DROPS the golden knife on the ground and SIGHS. He TOYS with a very small RED EARRING in his RIGHT EAR and then he GRUNTS noncommittally.

Link scooches across the floor (still sore from being violently thrown) and again retrieves the GREEN HEADBAND.

(NOTE: during this scene, in the background, the portrait of Ganondorf is again changed: Ganondorf is SLUMPED, as if dead, and bleeding profusely from all the rent portions of the canvas, one hand on his chest and another covering his throat)

NAVI hovers near Link's head.

LINK

"She's gone. She's not with them, but still: she's gone, Navi. She's... she's gone."

EXT. SACRED FOREST MEADOW - EARLY EVENING.

Link emerges from the dark arches of the Forest Temple. He wanders through the meadow unsteadily, eventually coming to

the SMALL STUMP at its center. Link STARES DOWN at the hand-carved images on the stump. He CLOSES HIS EYES.

SHEIK

"The flow of time is always cruel..."

Link turns, STARTLED, with Dhise Slaighre in hand.

Sheik is standing between Link and the Forest Temple.

SHEIK

"Its speed seems different for each person, but no one can change it. A thing that doesn't change with time is a memory of younger days. Time passes, people move; like a river's flow, it never ends. A childish mind will turn to noble ambition; young love will become deep affection..."

Sheik looks at Link's right hand and the BLOODY HEADBAND in it.

SHEIK

"But the flow of time is always cruel..."

LINK

"You're out and about, I see. The old woman does good work."

SHEIK

"That instrument of yours does even better work, I see."

Sheik TURNS HIS HEAD in the direction of the Forest Temple.

LINK

"They're all dead: every one of them, to a kid. The iron knight killed them all."

SHEIK

(whispering)

"All?"

Link NODS gravely.

SHEIK

But... 'the leaf to conceal'..."

LINK

"What did you say?"

SHEIK

"Traveler: was no one left? There is a special place near the temple's center: a raised dais shining in the light—"

Link TOSSES the GREEN HEADBAND on the ground between them.

LINK

"—where the last kid fell: I saw the bloodstain, and I saw the knife."

Sheik LOWERS HIS HEAD.

SHEIK

"That... that cannot be..."

LINK

"But it was all there: everything but a body."

SHEIK

"What?"

LINK

"Her body. I don't know what the knight did with her body. It doesn't matter, anyway..."

SHEIK

"But... that forest child: if she were so drawn to this place— and if she would stay there, even on pain of death— she must have been the chosen vessel: she must have been the favored of the Forest. But... to have died? How could she die? How could that forest child—"

Link VIOLENTLY GRABS Sheik's patchwork cloths around the throat area and PULLS the man closer to his face.

LINK

(snarling)

"Saria! Damn it. Saria!"

Link remembers himself and LETS GO of Sheik; he TURNS AWAY from the man.

LINK

(more composed)

"Her name was Saria."

Sheik appears STARTLED by Link's outburst, but then his expression turns more SORROWFUL. At this point SHEIK'S EYES also appear a slightly different color: VIOLENT instead of BRIGHT RED.

SHEIK

"You... you knew her, didn't you?"

Sheik delicately approaches Link from behind; he puts ONE GLOVED HAND on Link's shoulder. By this time his eyes are one again bright RED.

SHEIK

"I'm sorry."

Link RECOILS at Sheik's touch, startled. He SHRUGS away and moves off several steps.

LINK

"Don't you touch me, damn it!"

Sheik quickly PULLS HIS HAND back over his chest; he LOOKS DOWN, awkward and dejected. He eventually looks back up.

LINK

"It... doesn't matter: I'm not a Kokiri, like I said. I left the forest, and I survived. I grew-up, even: I was never one of them. Not ever..."

SHEIK

"This place: she was drawn here, wasn't she? She loved it, for whatever reason, and you never knew why, did you?"

Link looks back at Sheik, over his shoulder.

LINK

"She never knew why, either. She just always said she felt that this place would someday be very important— for both of us. Someday..."

Link again looks at the SMALL TREE STUMP.

LINK

"But it was important enough for me, then..."

SHEIK

"I'm... sure it was for her, too. Do you know why the Royal

Family chose the current location of the Temple of Time to place the sacred ground they uprooted from Old Hylia?"

LINK

(bitterly sarcastic)

"It's a lovely view of Castlebridge, for one."

SHEIK

"It is a vertex: a geographical point of convergence between four ancient structures set into the land that is now called the New Kingdom and its surrounding territories."

LINK

"Four points on the map? 'Sand, leaf, water and shadow', right?"

Sheik looks SURPRISED.

LINK

"I've heard this spiel before, and it was from another Sheikah, come to think of it, although she was a bit more obtuse than you are. Also, unlike most people in the New Kingdom, I can read Ancient Hylian just fine, and I saw that plaque in there. Just what exactly did it mean by 'judgment'?"

SHEIK

"And just what did it mean by repeating that word four times over, do you think?"

Link CONSIDERS the ORNATE SPIRE of the Forest Temple in the background.

LINK

"I've seen a spire like this, once before... but it was underwater..."

SHEIK

"At the Zora's Font, perhaps?"

LINK

"Hard to say for sure. I was a little tied-up with other things when I last saw it. So: 'Water'..."

SHEIK

"The Water Temple. The Zora kept it in their heyday, and

maintained its power in an unbroken line of honor-bound servants. They called them 'sages'."

LINK
"Sages?"

SHEIK
"The last one of record, before their race died out so many generations ago, was a young princess among her people—"

Link NODS.

LINK
"Yeah, I know: I think we've met."

Sheik again appears SURPRISED.

SHEIK
"You do get around, Traveler..."

LINK
"That Zora girl is dead, too, obviously, seeing's how the Zora went extinct long before the Royal Family even founded the New Kingdom. What about your 'sand' and 'shadow'? There's a 'Sand Temple', I suppose..."

SHEIK
"The Gerudo hold it, and the Gerudo keep it. At the Colossus Oasis Plain."

LINK
"Ganondorf's people. Well: no help there. What about 'shadow' then? That would imply the 'Sheikah', wouldn't it? You?"

SHEIK
"The Sheikah were almost totally wiped clean from this realm in the years follow Ganondorf's ascendancy to the throne, during the time of the Culling. There were... there were very large camps, you see, and anyone prone to resist— from the frailest of elders to the smallest of children—"

LINK
"Yeah: I know that part. So, are you the only one left, then?"

Sheik LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, hesitant; he doesn't answer.

LINK

"Forget it: it doesn't matter. If a little Kokiri Forest Child and a fossilized Zora princess were really supposed to be the 'sages' in some kind of convoluted ancient Hylian prophecy then your system's seriously flawed: they're both dead, and they're not coming back—"

SHEIK

"But... there must be some kind of difference between death and—"

Sheik PAUSES.

SHEIK

"There must be a reason. This is the will of the Goddesses— it must be— and who could truly know the will of a deity? But you must seek out the 'shadow', Traveler: it is important."

LINK

"I've got a better idea: why don't you?"

SHEIK

"For one, the Shadow Temple is far less accessible now than it was in the past. And for another, well, I have my own reasons..."

Link SCOFFS and begins stalking off for Epona.

SHEIK

"The prophecy is quite clear, Traveler: with the sages' judgment the Goddesses' will shall be laid bare. Nothing has come of these words for so long— long enough for one to think them merely the stuff of fanciful legend— but now, with your arrival, these temples are becoming battlefields; Ganondorf's actions prove the legend's truth—"

LINK

"It only 'proves' that Ganondorf likes to torture and slaughter innocent people; we didn't need to prove that about him. Besides, I don't want him 'judged': I want the man dead."

SHEIK

"You owe it to more than yourself to see this prophecy through, Traveler—"

LINK

"I don't owe you one damned thing—"

SHEIK

"The Stalfos mutants..."

Link STOPS walking.

SHEIK

"They were not a freak occurrence—"

LINK

(whispering)

"They were 'freak' enough for me..."

SHEIK

"They were a controlled, calculated plague: a punishment leveled against you—"

LINK

"Then the man's aim is off, isn't it?"

SHEIK

"—but directed against the people of Kakariko."

Link LOOKS DOWN AND TO THE SIDE, GROWLING.

Sheik STEPS CLOSER to Link.

SHEIK

"You must understand: the activation of the four Temples is the key to opening the road for the Hero of Time! It is the Hero of Time's... 'action'... that unlocks the sages' powers."

LINK

"The 'Hero of Time'? Where the hell are you getting any of this, anyway?"

SHEIK

"It's a hidden prophecy, kept safe by the Royal Family of Hyrule—"

Link FACES Sheik.

LINK

"And how the hell do you know about it?"

SHEIK

"Like you, I also get around..."

LINK

"And you think this 'Hero of Time' person is me?"

Sheik LOOKS AT THE GROUND, pausing considerably before answering.

SHEIK

"No... it isn't, I'm sure of that. But you still have a great part to play."

LINK

"Then who exactly is the 'Hero of Time', huh?"

SHEIK

"I believe... I believe that it can be me, Traveler."

Link CROSSES HIS ARMS, SMILING ironically.

LINK

"Don't we have a high opinion of ourselves?"

SHEIK

"Seek out the 'shadow'!"

Link again TURNS AWAY from Sheik, GROWLING.

SHEIK

"The flow of time is always cruel, but a thing that doesn't change with time is a memory of younger days. It's in those moments— when we cry for our loneliness— that our departed ones are closest to our hearts, though it's so hard to feel, sometimes. Those memories will always be your own; they'll always be at your side when you need them most, and the people that you've known will always be a part of you..."

Link CLOSES HIS EYES.

SHEIK

"Saria will always be... your friend."

When Link OPENS his eyes he BLINKS uncomfortably.

SHEIK produced a SHINING BLACK MARBLE.

SHEIK

"Traveler: we'll meet again..."

Link TURNS and SNARLS.

LINK

"Now you wait a minute!"

Sheik THROWS the marble, sending a plume of smoke training over the grass; Link LUNGES after the man, but finds himself alone in the meadow after the smoke clears.

Link stands by himself for some time before quietly walking off, away from the Forest Temple and towards Epona. He reaches the mare, who is standing in the shadows of the forest meadow, near the misty fringe of the Lost Woods. Link quietly adjusts the horse's saddle and satchels before RAISING HIS HEAD; Link turns suddenly, confronting a small figure standing on the fringes of the Lost Woods: this is Mido, however his appearance has changed. His face bears patchwork 'mismatching' and his body is similarly ungainly (as he continues to fully transform into a Skull Kid).

Mido steps forward a few paces, coming closer to the light of the forest glen.

MIDO

"M- mister?"

Link GAPES at the boy; he does not answer.

MIDO

"Y- you came from in there, didn't you, mister?"

Link LOOKS BACK at the Forest Temple; he nods.

MIDO

"Sa- she- this girl I know- and the others with her- they haven't come out from in there; not yet. They didn't want to be like us, I don't think- since the troubles came to our village- but I know she- I know they'll return to us, someday..."

Link LOOKS TO ONE SIDE.

MIDO
"...won't they?"

Link looks at the ground, and then he looks back up at the boy.

There is a LONG PAUSE.

MIDO
"Oh... I see. She- she won't come out again, will she?"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

MIDO
"I... trust you on that..."

Mido STARES AT THE GROUND sorrowfully. He looks back up, STARING at Link intently (SQUINTING, even).

MIDO
"You... aren't... no: of course not; you couldn't be him..."

Link looks AWAY from the boy.

MIDO
"Hey, Mister: have- have you been traveling around much, Mister? There's this little kid I once knew: something really bad happened here a long time ago. Our guardian- our protector- he died and... and I said that he died because that boy did something wrong to him. Only she defended him, all the way up until she left us..."

Mido again STARES DOWN; when he looks up his eyes are TEARFUL.

MIDO
"Hey, Mister? If- if you ever see a little kid somewhere- he'd be easy to spot, 'cause he always messes things up, and he doesn't really fit in anywhere- if you ever see him, ca- can you tell him something? Sar- I made a promise to her that if he ever came back I would tell him that she'd been waiting for him; that she'd always been waiting for him..."

Link's eyes QUIVER.

MIDO

"M- Mister? C- could you also tell him something else? Tell him- tell him that Mido is sorry. H- he wouldn't forgive me- shouldn't, anyway- but I wanted him to know that. I wanted him to know that, 'cause she really... really... liked..."

Link MOVES FORWARD towards Mido, who reflexively SHIRKS back into the misty woods. Link immediately STOPS moving and watches the boy; Mido stares at Link silently for a time, and then he steps back into the Lost Woods, VANISHING into the mist.

Link SLUMPS DOWN next to Epona, sitting on the meadow grass, his head hung low.

INT. LON-LON RANCH BARN - PRE-DAWN.

Link is SLEEPING on Malon's small cot in the corner of the barn; the sound of BUCKETS BUMPING TOGETHER jars him awake.

Malon is on the other side of the barn, near the cows, giving them their feed.

MALON

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to wake you."

Link ROLLS OVER, facing away from the girl. He is SHIRTLESS and his left arm is wrapped up in semi-bloody bandaging.

LINK

"It's your bed: you don't have to apologize. I'd have been happy to bed down in the hay."

MALON

"I told you that I had to work the garden all night, tonight: I wouldn't be sleeping in it, anyway. Besides: when was the last time you actually slept in a bed, Pale Rider?"

Link doesn't answer for some time.

LINK

"An actual bed? About five months, I think..."

MALON crosses around to the other side of the cot, where a SMALL NIGHTSTAND rests; she deposits a rolled-up scrap of paper upon it.

MALON

"That's a long time to go without that kind of creature comfort..."

Link does not acknowledge the woman.

Malon MOTIONS to the paper.

MALON

"I found what you were looking for, by the way..."

Link reaches a hand out and TOUCHES the paper, but again he ignores Malon.

Malon SIGHS and turns to leave the barn; Link, however, moves his hand into hers, GRIPPING it and tugging her, gently.

Malon looks back, STARTLED.

Link DROPS his hand. He does not look up at Malon.

LINK

"I'm... sorry. Please: do what you need to do. I'll be gone before daybreak..."

CLOSE-UP on Link lying in the cot for about thirty seconds; eventually the cot's WEIGHT SHIFTS and SPRINGS SQUEAK. Malon has crawled into the cot beside Link, 'spooning' him from the rear.

Link tolerates this, still appearing to ignore the girl.

MALON runs one hand over the BANDAGING on Link's left arm.

MALON

"Tell me: where does it hurt, huh? Where do you feel the pain, Pale Rider?"

Link doesn't answer for a time.

LINK

"Nowhere important, I don't think."

MALON

"Before— when I said that you don't give a damn about the people of Hyrule—"

LINK

"You were right—"

MALON

"I don't think I was. I... don't think that someone like you could ever feel that kind of coldness."

Malon FINGERS Link's wounded arm delicately. She SNUGGLES down closer to him.

MALON

"You are warm, at least..."

LINK

"Would you say I have a 'gentle heart'?"

Malon does not answer for some time.

MALON

"No."

Link SMILES FONDLY, closing his eyes. Malon's head is up near Link's bangs; she SMELLS his hair.

LINK

"What? I thought you spent enough time around wild beasts..."

MALON

"You smell... so nice."

LINK

"Doubt that—"

MALON

"Safe. You smell safe: 'earthy' like... like a wet autumn wind bringing rain to the harvest. Or... or a memory— I don't know— but you smell 'safe', anyway."

Link opens his eyes; he looks down at the bed covers.

LINK

"I'm not 'safe', for you or for anyone. Ever since I came
ba—"

Link PAUSES. He SCRATCHES at his chin, contemplatively.

LINK

"Ever since I got to Hyrule I've brought only one thing
with me: it's death. It follows me everywhere I go. I— I
really can't complain: that's what I came here for, after
all. That's my part to play in all this, and so it
surrounds me. That's all..."

MALON

"Seems to me that you can choose what part you want to
play, isn't that right? It doesn't have to be death, does
it?"

LINK

"What else is there, huh?"

Link ADJUSTS his body in the bed, consequently knocking
Malon's hand off his bandaged arm.

LINK

"I'm not safe, Malon, not for you especially. It's bad for
you, every minute I'm around here. Once I leave this place
you can forget you ever knew me."

MALON

"That's what you think I should do?"

LINK

"That's what I think would be best. I'm going to leave
Hyrule when I finish my job— one way or another— and in the
long run I really think you should erase my very existence
from your memory."

There is a LONG PAUSE.

MALON

"You're hurt very badly— on the inside— and I know that.
But still, you don't have to be so damned cold..."

Malon RESTS HER HEAD on the pillow, her face very near the
back of Link's head.

MALON

"When— when you leave Hyrule, Pale Rider, you could always take me along with you. I wouldn't really mind that, too much..."

Link OPENS HIS EYES again.

MALON

"Is that childish dreaming, you think? It is, I know. Ingo would never let me go: he'd be serving horsemeat to Kakariko for a solid month after I left. What would happen to the horses without me to protect them? It's just— I... I like to dream sometimes, Pale Rider. I know I'll never leave this ranch. I know I couldn't..."

LINK

"You mean you have a responsibility?"

MALON NODS lightly in assent; this JOSTLE against the bed is noticed by Link.

LINK

"Well, so do I. And dreaming doesn't change any of that."

MALON

"I know that. But sometimes it's the thoughts that keep you moving on. Everyone needs a little fantasy, now and then..."

The girl YAWNS. Malon CLOSES HER EYES and SNUGGLES deeper against the pillow.

MALON

"...and everyone... everyone needs a knight... sometimes..."

Link CLOSES HIS EYES; he smiles very faintly.

LINK

"What if we left here together, Malon?"

MALON

"Don't joke, Pale Rider..."

LINK

"Just 'what if': daydream for me. What if we put this place behind us? Where should I take you? Where would you

like to go? Would you like to see the swamplands in the Great Fen? And the phantom bog lights, too: the way they dance around in circles around the trunks of tar-root trees, weaving strange colors in the air, as if they were ghosts on the water?"

Malon GRUNTS quietly in approval.

LINK

"There's the Eastern Palace on the other side of the marsh, on the banks of the Lake of Leagues just before it goes off the map. Its gardens— acres of them— decaying, untended and all alone, overgrown and rotting in the sun while the dead halls of that crumbling palace loom in the distance; it has these giant pillars, glistening in the light like standing slabs of liquid iron. Would you like to see that?"

Malon GRUNTS.

Link CLOSES HIS EYES again. There is a pause.

MALON

(very sleepy)

"What else would you show me?"

LINK

"The caves of the Unnamed Mountain Range: Spectacle Rock, and the dwelling place of the ancient Hylia Berserkers, doomed to fight their civil war for all eternity. Their shouts echo in those caverns; you can hear them. With these crimson pools of molten rock deep inside— glowing like branding irons— you can almost see their spirits scurrying through the gloom..."

Malon GRUNTS.

LINK

"There's beauty, too: The Highlands— near the wooded glen beside the Old Northern Castle— and their strange rock formations. There are peaks there that jut out sideways from the land like a finger— like a bridge into the sky— hovering over those green woods. And when you stand up there, with dawn creeping in over the land and the stars fading away, giving rise to the forest below, you can even see the blazing white sand of the Parapa Desert out in the distance. You turn around and there's the black-green silt of the Midoro lowlands; beyond that there are beaded drops

of dew collected on tombstones— thousands of them, in thousands of rows down in the Great Seaside Cemetery— where the first kings of Hyrule were buried— and they shine so!

They shine like a hundred-thousand sparking rupees. And when you're up there— when you're seeing all these wonders come to life— it doesn't feel 'dead', or 'old'. They call it 'Old Hylia', but there's nothing old about it. It feels so... so young: watching the light rising, it feels like the world's just beginning— all over again— and just for you..."

Malon SNORES.

Link SMILES; he very gently slides off the cot and sits on the edge. He places the BLANKET over Malon's body, then sits hunched down on the side of the cot, leaning forward.

Link's DUN-COLORED CLOAK is draped over a chair set against the wall of the barn. NAVI slowly emerges from the garment and lilts over to Link, coming to rest on his KNEE.

LINK

"But... no matter how much I was drawn to it— and no matter how far I traveled through it— I never really felt anything other than... coldness. It was an artificial experience; something I couldn't say was real. I was never meant to go exploring along the Old Shores. Something always pulled me back, nipping at my heels..."

Link LOOKS OVER beside the nightstand; DHISE SLAIGHRE rests in its scabbard up against the furniture.

LINK

"...tugging at my belt. A weight, or a hook, even..."

Link turns his attention to the ROLLED PAPER on the nightstand; he unfolds it and SMOOTHS it out as he speaks.

LINK

"...that artificiality— and that coldness: being back here— in this place— it's the only place I ever really felt alive..."

The paper is revealed to be a map of THE NEW KINGDOM OF HYRULE (so written in calligraphy). Link TRACES A FINGER over the crumpled, ancient document along its far western boundary, where uncertain writing (as if the region is not

well-explored) indicate areas called GERUDO VALLEY, FORTRESS OF FLAMES, THE HAUNTED WASTELAND and, further West still, an almost entirely-unmapped region called COLOSSUS OASIS PLAIN. Link puts one finger there, TILTING HIS HEAD in curiosity.

LINK
"The 'sand'..."

Link then goes to the far eastern edge of the map, locating the GREAT FOREST and its boundary with the (all but unmapped) LOST WOODS. Link locates the meadow boundary between the two: the (unnamed on the map) SACRED FOREST MEADOW (which, in its arrangement, is not dissimilar to a vaginal cleft in appearance), and TAPS THE SPOT gently.

LINK
"The 'leaf'..."

Link moves his finger UPWARD almost entirely northward, coming to the ZORA'S FONT and the small, deep lake he encountered in his boyhood. He TAPS this spot as well.

LINK
"The 'water'..."

Link picks up a DISHEVELED QUILL sitting on the nightstand, and finding no ink he sticks the instrument under his bloody bandaging; when he removes it the tip is coated in blood.

Link DRAWS A LINE from the Colossus Oasis Plain to the CASTLEBRIDGE area of Castle Town, around the location of the Temple of Time. He does the same for the Great Forest area and the Zora's Font: three lines, all intersecting at Castlebridge.

LINK
" 'It is a vertex', he said. 'Seek out the shadow', he said..."

He SHAKES HIS HEAD; NAVI lands on the map, strolling along the bloody lines.

LINK
"This doesn't damn-well help: the 'shadow' could be

anywhere, and it could intersect Castlebridge from any part of Hyrule..."

NAVI nods contemplatively. The fairy WALKS THE LONGEST LINE of the map— that of the Colossus Oasis Plain-to-Castlebridge line, which is easily ten-times longer than the other two lines— and stops at the far-western part of that line, at the Colossus Oasis Plain.

Link bows his head in annoyance, but then looks intently at Navi: the fairy's BRIGHT BODY is illuminating the page as a point-light source, radiating out from the GERUDO DESERT area. Link TILTS HIS HEAD curiously.

NAVI looks up at Link and notices him staring at her; she puts her HANDS ON HER HIPS and GESTURES UNCOMFORTABLY, questioning.

LINK

"But... shadows don't hide from the light, Navi: they're made by the light."

Link puts his finger down right beside Navi and DRAWS HIS HAND along the page, back towards the Castlebridge part of the map.

LINK

"The sun shines..."

Link's finger STOPS at Castlebridge where the line he's following stops. The Great Forest line and the Zora's Font line deviate out from this point in EXACTLY IDENTICAL FASHION at IDENTICAL ANGLES, towards their respective locations. Link puts TWO FINGERS on Castlebridge and PARTS THEM, moving further east.

LINK

"...and it parts around a body..."

Link takes up the BLOODY QUILL and dabs it in his bandaging again; he draws a FOURTH LINE on the map, this one a STRAIGHT EXTENSION of the Colossus Oasis Plain line further eastward, beyond Castlebridge. He stops at the first point of interest that the line comes to: it moves straight through the dead-center of KAKARIKO VILLAGE.

LINK

"...because the shadow is always under the sun."

Link looks over at Navi and SMILES.

LINK

"Thank you, Navi: you're an incomparable genius."

Navi looks up at Link VERY CONFUSEDLY, and then back down at the map beneath her; she gives a very UNSURE 'THUMBS-UP' to Link.

Link LOOKS OVER at his CLOAK; the OCARINA OF TIME is peeking out of a fold in the garment.

Link APPROACHES the cloak, moving his hand closer to the instrument.

LINK

"Think he'll still be on board? He's a handy little guy to have around, in a pinch..."

Link's HAND moves even closer to the Ocarina; the 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' noise is audible, RISING STEADILY.

LINK

"I wonder if he's still game..."

FARTHER SHOT of Link beside the cot, drawing his hand towards the Ocarina of Time; a 'mish-mesh' effect covers part of the scene, revealing part of the barn as it appears 12-years-ago; YOUNG LINK is pacing near one of the barn's windows, although he quickly stops and LOOKS ACROSS the rest of the barn UNCERTAINLY, HIS EARS TWITCHING in discomfort (as if he does not exactly SEE, but rather 'SENSES' the scene in front of him). His OCARINA OF TIME is prominently draped in the front pocket of his shoulder sash.

ADULT LINK moves his hand away from his Ocarina of Time; this 'mish-mesh' scene quickly disappears. The man SMILES.

LINK

"Oh: it looks like it. And he knows where to go, now..."

NAVI flies in front of the man's face, bearing a look a CONCERN.

LINK

"No: not everything else. It's... 'selective', the way the information flows: I can control it, to a point, at least. It's not easy to explain, but I can keep things from him. The less he knows about all the gritty details, the better, anyway."

Navi CROSSES HER ARMS.

LINK

"I know because I can feel him doing the same thing: withholding information from me that he'd rather not divulge, even if it's me he's divulging it to. The stuff about himself he doesn't even want to admit to himself, I suppose..."

Navi COCKS HER HEAD.

LINK

"You know damn well the things I mean."

Link shakes his head.

LINK

"It's for the best, anyway: he knows who I am, after all, and that's reason enough for him to help me, even if he doesn't know the details. If he did... well..."

Link shakes his head again.

LINK

"...it wouldn't be... 'productive', not for us at least. And we need to hurry, anyway. Even without him pulling Dhise Slaighre from the ground, Ganondorf's got to be set to make his move against the Royal Family in that timeline: he probably doesn't even have 24 hours left before the deed is done. By then the kid'll be a little too 'distracted' to be of any more use to us, most likely."

Navi again COCKS HER HEAD.

LINK

"I would be, anyway..."

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - AFTERNOON.

Link approaches the OLD WINDMILL at the village center; it CREAKS AND GROANS forlornly.

NAVI peeks out from under his cowl.

LINK

"No: I'm not going about this at random, as a matter of fact. Impa herself said that Kakariko used to be a Sheikah camp, however many hundreds of years ago that might have been..."

Link WALKS TOWARDS the windmill.

LINK

"And Impa's people were obsessed with 'shadows', right? Well: there isn't any other structure in the whole village that throws a bigger 'shadow' than this."

Link GESTURES to the windmill; NAVI peeks out at the man, SKEPTICAL.

LINK

"Alright, consider that this thing is old, too: much older than any other structure in Kakariko."

NAVI TILTS HER HEAD, still skeptical.

Link CIRCLES around the windmill until he comes to a spot near its rear; he looks up near the top of the structure, where patchwork BOARDS, cobwebs and debris dot the archaic windmill. Underneath all these, however, is an obvious stone structure barely peeking out through the scaffolding: it is the same style of ORNATE TOWER seen in the other two temples.

LINK

"Lastly, consider the architecture..."

NAVI BLINKS, startled.

LINK

"Don't worry, Navi: you're still a genius, even if you don't really know why..."

Link OPENS HIS CLOAK, revealing the OCARINA OF TIME; the 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' NOISE sounds as he CARESSES the

instrument; DISSOLVE-CUT reveals YOUNG LINK standing in the exact same spot as Adult Link.

ADULT LINK again SMILES and ENTERS the windmill through a ROTTED WOODEN DOOR.

Scene-Cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy begins entering in the same fashion, but a pair of STONG HANDS grabs the boy from behind, PULLING HIM BACKWARD as he SCREAMS.

INT. OLD WINDMILL AT KAKARIKO VILLAGE - AFTERNOON.

A dingy, cylindrical structure laden with metal and wooden gears. Ratty sheets dangle from unsteady scaffolding and sunlight struggles through a patchwork mesh canopy far, far above in the ceiling. The sound of GEARS CHURNING is very loud. FLOUR DUST cakes the air.

Adult Link walks with a gangly, pale-skinned man sporting a goatee; this is the WINDMILL OPERATOR.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Before it were a windmill? Heh! Don't rightly know what it coulda been before it were a windmill. I doubt Death Mountain were loomin' over the land long before this were a windmill..."

The Windmill Operator goes to work adjusting some gears and drop cloths near one wall; as he works he WHISTLES a lilting 'sailing-style tune'. This is the SONG OF STORMS.

LINK

"It's been here from time immemorial, then?"

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"A'fore time were memorial enough to be immemorial, at least!"

The Windmill Operator goes back to WHISTLING the Song of Storms.

LINK

"I'm surprised you aren't deaf by now with all this noise, let alone whistling a happy tune. There aren't enough of those to go around these days, are there?"

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Never for awhile now, I suppose. Ah, when I was younger there were, at that. A dozen rosy tunes each for e'ry man, woman and child in Hyrule..."

The Windmill Operator STOPS working briefly and RESTS HIS HEAD on the gear rigging, SMILING FONDLY.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"I never sang, then. Never whistled a tune, neither. Didn't feel I needed to, then. What's another li'l voice added to that kind of happy chorus? But, now, with the High King's rule an' all, well, one day I figger'd a happy tune might be just what the world needed, at the moment. Know what I mean?"

NAVI peeks out of Link's cowl, staring up at Link QUIZZICALLY.

Link begins NODDING at the man, slowly, but then he SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"No: no, I don't think that's really what the world needs at the moment..."

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Well, say what you will: this li'l tune of mine's been bobbing on my brain for a whole lifetime, unsung. For whatever reason I felt that these dark times could finally use it, use it for somethin' at least."

LINK

"Not saying it hurts, just that it doesn't help, either..."

The Windmill Operator GRUNTS appreciatively, then begins ATTENDING TO HIS WORK again.

LINK

"What else can you tell me about this place? Its history, I mean?"

The Windmill Operator SHRUGS.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Wouldn't know much about tha'. All's the 'history' I know's fairly recent, what. It'd begin with the aquifer rupturin' on us."

The Windmill Operator POINTS down to a section of the windmill below ground level; Link looks over the edge of the cylindrical bottom, where a MESS OF STONE RUBBLE is inundated with black water.

LINK

"That place: there was a path down there?"

The Windmill Operator shakes his head.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Not as such. A cavern, more like. Leadin' to nowhere, of course. Just a place for foolhardy village children to dare each other to enter. Back in my day, hell, I had me a 'fetching stick' against that wall, what for all the soot-covered crybabies I'd have to go and pull out from the place! At least once a month, by my count..."

Link is still staring into the black water. He SMILES.

LINK

"And the aquifer: it 'ruptured' when, exactly?"

The Windmill Operator GROWLS and SCRATCHES HIS HEAD.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Eh... uh... musta been eight years ago, by reckonin'."

He MOTIONS WITH HIS HEAD toward a far corner of the windmill room: a BLOODY DROP CLOTH is wrapped up against a wall.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"I remember it enough 'cause that's around the time I had to go an' change all the drop cloths on the upper landings, anyway..."

LINK

"There was... some kind of small battle, here?"

The Windmill Operator shakes his head.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"There was a small bleeder, here. Eight years ago is when Sheik came to us, give or take."

LINK
"Sheik?"

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Mmm. See: Kakariko Village used to be a far more...
'savage' place t' be. Sheik comes along- a mere rumor at
first- some mysterious phantom loppin' off Stalfos heads,
gettin' in good with the cursed Skulltula family here in
town, bein' a general thorn in the High King's side an' all
that- but a mystery's a mystery, right? So's it's not long
after the hullabaloo starts that I'm workin' a late shift
in the upper gear house, waaaay up near the top landing..."

The Windmill Operator POINTS far overhead at the top of the
windmill's landings.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"I hear a noise, like a cooing. 'Maybe an owl', I thought,
but no: gave way to another sound soon enough. Sobbin', I
swear, and the whimperin' of a child, no less. I make my
way upwards, leery as a leever, mind you, and that's when I
see it: over in the shadows of the topmost landing,
silhouetted in the moonlight. Sheik's lying back to the
wall, gently peeling that battle dress o' his from his body
ever so slowly an' crying like all-get-out. There's so much
blood there, blood everywhere, an' in the mornin' it's
still there too, so's I didn't imagine it, mind you.
There's blood enough for three grown men to've bleed out up
there, and yet the boy was still out there slicing-up
Stalfoses the very next night. That's when I got it in my
head: Sheik is a Skull-Kid!"

Link is STARING AT THE FLOOR of the windmill: there is a
coating of FLOUR DUST all along the uneven stone floor.
Some ODD FOOTPRINTS mar the ground, as if left by LARGE,
HEAVY IRON BOOTS sometime fairly recently. They vaguely cut
a path down to the black water at the room's base.

LINK

"Sheik was hiding? And in the windmill? This was before
Sheik settled in at the Death Mountain Crater, I guess. And
eight years ago... he- I mean Sheik: Sheik would've been
12, more or less?"

Link LOOKS UP.

LINK

"And for the Goddesses' sakes: Sheik is not a Skull-Kid.
Skull-Kids don't grow up, you know..."

The Windmill Operator GRUNTS.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Well: they's got all manner of tricks, those Skull-Kids.
Can take any form, you know, from somethin' most pleasin'
to the eye to somethin' most horridly awful. Read your
mind, too: that's how they try an' steal your soul right
out from under you!"

LINK

"Really: does Sheik seem at all interested in stealing
anyone's soul, do you think?"

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Well: not as such. But then you can't trust what you don't
know. Everyone knows about Skull-Kids, but no-one rightly
takes the tales seriously. Mind-readin', soul-stealin'
freaks, they are!"

The Windmill Operator WALKS OFF to attend to some work on
the other end of the windmill.

LINK

(whispering)

"Superstitious crackpot: the things a person will
believe..."

NAVI peeks out from Link's cowl with ONE BROW ARCHED. Link
LOOKS DOWN at her, SCOWLING.

LINK

"...Yes: ignoring the fact that my fairy companion and I
are about to get help from a little boy in another
dimension so that we can enter a sacred temple that's been
disguised as a run-down windmill. That's actually
happening, here..."

Link STARES OVER at the rolled-up, BLOODY DROP CLOTH in the
corner of the windmill room for several seconds. He snaps
out of this daze soon enough.

LINK

"Speaking of which: I do think it's about that 'time'..."

Link retrieves the OCARINA OF TIME from his cloak; the 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' NOISE sounds fiercely.

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - (CONTINUOUS).

YOUNG LINK is struggling fiercely against a set of arms in front of him, trying to move forward with ardent determination.

A MORE DISTANT SHOT reveals that the Windmill Operator (12-years-younger than the previous scene) is actively blocking the child's path. He PUSHES Link back a distance, and the boy GROWLS and SCOWLS at the man.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"No good you pouting at me, li'l master! I'll not have you creepin' around in there. Much too dangerous for a boy, it is- one misstep spells disaster- and I'll certainly not have my entire afternoon wasted away scrapin' your li'l entrails out of my gears!"

The Windmill Operator TURNS to re-enter the windmill and Link STEPS FORWARD to follow him; the man instantly turns and faces the boy.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Now I mean it, li'l master! One more step and I swears by all tha's sacred I'll leave you gift-wrapped 'n bridled on your parents' doorstep like a tethered colt!"

Link STOPS MOVING FORWARD; his scowl DEEPENS.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"Tha's more like it, then..."

Link's EYES BULGE slightly; ADULT LINK, standing in the shadows of the windmill interior, is reflected in YOUNG LINK'S EYES.

As the Windmill Operator approaches the windmill door Link retrieves the OCARINA OF TIME from his sash; he puts the instrument to his lips and launches into a spot-on rendition of the SONG OF STORMS.

The Windmill Operator's HAND goes limp on the doorknob; it begins TREMBLING after a moment. The man TURNS, very

slowly, and looks at Link with HORROR; Link, meanwhile, continues playing the song.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"H- how... could you... know..."

CLOSE-UP on Link playing through the SONG OF STORMS, adding his own artistic flourishes to the piece.

The Windmill Operator POINTS at the boy with a shaking hand.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"G- guh- gah! Geeeah! Skull-Kid! A Skull-Kid! Ah!"

The man goes RUNNING OFF wildly.

WINDMILL OPERATOR

"The Goddesses save me: he's in my head! He's in my head!
Geeeah!"

NAVI emerges from the boy's green nightcap.

NAVI

"You're evil; do you know that?"

Link LOOKS at the fairy out of the corner of his eyes; he WINKS at her mischievously.

INT. OLD WINDMILL AT KAKARIKO VILLAGE - (CONTINUOUS).

Young Link creeps into the mill, which is in much the same state as its 12-year-older counterpart, except that more light comes into the cylindrical room, and the standing water at the windmill's base is gone, leaving a SOFT SILT FLOOR underneath which disappears into a barely navigable cavern leading underneath and behind the mill.

NAVI illuminates the room as Link descends the uneven floor, drawing his OYSTER KNIFE as he goes.

The boy LANDS in the silt dirt, leaving obvious FOOTPRINTS as he explores the moon-like ground. He locates the SMALL CAVERN on one side of the ground, and on the other he finds the large stone blocks comprising the windmill's outer wall. Link CROUCHES beside one of them, with his cheek up

to the crack between blocks, FEELING along its edge with one hand.

Link LOOKS UP to the floor of the windmill above him and head back upstairs, searching through stray gear parts and pieces of cloth until he finds a LARGE PRY BAR amongst the debris; he takes this down into the silt and JAMS it between the massive stone blocks, GRUNTING as he tries to wedge-open the stonework. He soon gives up, SWEATY and PANTING.

NAVI flies beside his head.

NAVI

"Force... multiplier."

Link looks at the fairy, who begins flying UPWARD slowly until, several stories up in the mill, she illuminates a LARGE LOOSE GEAR sitting on a scaffolding ledge.

Link looks first at the gear, then at his pry bar. He GRINS.

The boy JAMS the prybar between the base of two stones at an odd angle, then he begins making his way up windmill structure, carefully navigating the treacherous path.

NAVI flies in front of the boy as he crosses a scaffold on all fours. The boy SLIPS briefly, sending small pieces of debris careening down the windmill shaft until they land in the silt far below with a thud.

NAVI

"Careful now: I don't know what he's looking to find down there, exactly, but I assume he'd rather not have your skeleton be one of the exhibits on display when he gets down there..."

Link continues moving on all fours.

NAVI

"Hey: you ever wonder what he is after? I know I do. Just what are we doing for him, exactly? I mean, there we were, all ready to fetch Dhise Slaighre for Her Royal Nutjob, and then he comes along, just like that, and what does he say? 'Don't take the sword: do what I want, instead'. How can we trust him, exactly?"

Link LOOKS UP at Navi, ROLLING HIS EYES.

NAVI

"Whether that's true or not is irrelevant. I can't trust you to clean your teeth when you should- not to mention wash your clothes. My point is that just because he might be who he seems to be- and he certain looks like he is, granted- it doesn't mean squat. He still might not have your best interests at heart."

Link reaches the edge of the scaffold and STANDS on the plank beside the giant loose gear. He GLARES at Navi.

NAVI

"Why? Because you don't even have your best interests at heart! That's why! Because you're playing with your life as if this were some silly game! Because you can be a very foolish little boy: that's why!"

Link LOOKS AWAY from the fairy, FUMING.

Navi eventually flies closer to the boy's face, hesitant.

NAVI

"I'm sorry about that. It's just... it's just that you think your job is to do all this stuff- for her, and for him, and for whoever- and you don't think it's that important what happens to you. Well, it is. You're important to other people 'cause they would be left in a lurch if you went and died on them..."

Link LOOKS AWAY again; NAVI flies into his field of vision.

NAVI

"...but you're important to me because you're alive, no matter what you do. It's true, I guess, that you might not be a Kokiri, and we might not be... well, we might not be what the other Forest Children and their fairies are to each other, but you're important to me... because I don't want you to die."

Link STARES at Navi for a moment; the boy finally HOLDS HIS FIST up near his face. NAVI slowly perches on his bare knuckles.

NAVI

"Just... try to remember I'm the only one around here that's really got your back, and that doesn't account for much, honestly..."

Link looks at Navi with GRATEFUL EYES; there is a pause, and then the boy very unexpectedly PUCKERS HIS LIPS and 'kisses' the fairy (basically bombarding her whole body with his lips). The fairy flies back as Link SMILES. The boy WALKS OFF, moving closer to the gear on the scaffold.

NAVI flies behind him, reeling and twitching uncomfortably from traces of the boy's spit all along her body.

NAVI

"That... that was incredibly sweet, and exceptionally disgusting..."

Link LOOKS BACK at the fairy mischievously, with a cocked brow.

NAVI

"Yeah, I know: you in a nutshell..."

Link approaches the loose gear and carefully looks over the edge of the scaffolding; the silt floor is far below them, and directly beneath is the pry bar, jutting out of the stonework.

Link puts his hands against the back of the gear, PUSHING IT FORWARD with all his might and GRUNTING; after a moment he gets traction, and then the gear lists and goes tumbling off the scaffold. It careens through the darkness, ultimately slamming into the pry bar, causing it to break, but not before forcing the two stones between the bar's grip to PART slightly, enough to allow a faint sliver of DAYLIGHT into the dreary silt area.

Scene-Cut to ADULT LINK; he is standing before the black water as a THUNDEROUS SHOCKWAVE blast strikes from the waterline, followed by a 'bad-LSD-trip' shimmering of the black water. After all this passes, the water is revealed to have VANISHED, exposing the silt floor below.

A SLIT OF DAYLIGHT lines the dry floor, courtesy of a 12-year-old fracture in the stonework at the windmill's base.

Link DESCENDS onto the silt floor; the LARGE BOOTPRINTS from earlier are now very well-defined in the silt. Link FOLLOWS THEM with his eyes as they disappear near the small CAVERN ENTRANCE.

Link DRAWS Dhise Slaighre.

LINK

"It's... it's him. He went right through the water: right under the water? The Stalfos attack was just a diversion: it was orchestrated just for him... He is here..."

Scene-Cut to YOUNG LINK: the boy is in the silt floor of the windmill once again, admiring his handiwork. The RAY OF LIGHT he created partially illuminates the tiny cavern at the back of the mill; Link approaches it hesitantly. He SQUIRMS through several tight spaces, ultimately coming to a dead-end. The SLIVER OF LIGHT, however, still illuminates his path, and NAVI notices a SMALL PLAQUE set into the stone above Link's head. She flies up to it and MOVES ACROSS IT.

NAVI

"The sand to bury
And the water cover,
The leaf to screen
And the shadow conceal
'Till their judgment be revealed,
When their judgment proves its yield.
'Till their judgment proves its yield
Let their judgment be concealed."

Navi flies down beside Link's head. The boy gives off a VERY QUIZZICAL GRUNT.

The SLIT OF DAYLIGHT on the cavern's dead end SPARKLES MYSTERIOUSLY against the rocks. After a moment there is an ETHEREAL HUM, and then the rock VANISHES, as if melting under the sunlight, leaving a surgically-cut, gaping hole in its place.

Link LOOKS AT NAVI, then back at the hole. The boy once again produces his OYSTER KNIFE and descends into the darkness.

Scene-Cut to ADULT LINK: the man treads over the same ground as his younger counterpart, however the previously

narrow way has been VIOLENTLY CHISELED AWAY, leaving debris and a much more accommodating pathway. At the location of the plaque there is a DEEP HOLE in the wall, uneven and savagely-carved, as if it were wrought by extreme force (the rock debris here is pure white limestone, as if the demolition happened recently enough that the stones had yet to be weather stained like the other rocks around them).

Link holds DHISE SLAIGHRE up to his face and descends into the darkness.

INT. SHADOW TEMPLE CORRIDORS - LATE AFTERNOON.

Adult Link moves through a decayed, ancient hallway saturated with grime, filth and mold. It is vaguely clear that this place is artificially carved into the rock, as the occasional GROTESQUE FRESCOES on the walls indicate, but the place is exceedingly dingy and depressing.

NAVI's bright body is the only source of light within this place.

Link TREADS SOFTLY over the uneven rock floor. VARIOUS STRANGE, 'UNWELCOMING' NOISES sound throughout the cavern, making Link JUMP at the ready at various points (and in various directions).

Link comes to a narrow cavern adorned with strange pillars; it is labyrinthine, and the UNWELCOMING NOISES from before are louder, here. Just as these noises CREST, however, they quickly SUBSIDE.

Link moves around a certain pillar and immediately JUMPS BACKWARD, bringing Dhise Slaighre up into a blocking stance; the sword is instantly STRUCK by a heavy, black blade.

The IRON KNUCKLE emerges from behind a pillar and VIOLENTLY SHOVES Link into a nearby pillar; the man goes careening off several pillars and tumbles beside a pit. Before Link can stand the Iron Knuckle is at him, KICKING AT HIM with his black iron boots. Link BLOCKS several of these kicks with his sword, but he is forced to ROLL further into the darkness when he suddenly TUMBLES into the nearby pit, SCREAMING as he falls.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SHADOW TEMPLE SANCTUM - LATE AFTERNOON.

A black pit with only one dingy, partially-lit pathway extending uncertainly through the blackness.

Light slowly rises from above; Link, draped in his cloak, is lying facedown in the black sand of the pit bottom. Navi ltilts down onscreen, bearing copious light as she does so; eventually she settles on Link's thigh.

Link GROANS and sits up slowly, cradling his left arm and rubbing his right knee. He TOYS with a very small RED EARRING in his RIGHT EAR. He GRUNTS noncommittally.

LINK

"Not as graceful an entrance as I predicted. Hopefully our little friend has an easier time of it..."

Link TOUCHES the OCARINA OF TIME underneath his cloak; the 'FINGER-ON-A-GLASS-RIM' NOISE SOUNDS, causing a 'mish-mesh' of the scene; a shimmering set of stone stairs are revealed along one side of the black cavern, which Young Link is slowly descending.

Adult Link REMOVES his hand from the ocarina and this scene fades.

LINK

"Yeah: figures..."

Link examines his surroundings, also staring up at the hole he tumbled through.

LINK

"Well, we're not getting back up the way we came, that's for sure..."

NAVI flies up near Link's head. Link looks at her with an IRONIC SMILE.

LINK

"...hopefully the kid'll think of something, I suppose."

Link looks beyond Navi, towards the small pathway in the rock and the FAINT, EERIE LIGHT emanating from within. Link moves close to this area, but stops short.

NAVI flies up near his head.

LINK

"Yeah: I'm ready... Let's go."

Link moves through the path and emerges in a massive, bleak cavern. There are LARGE TORCHES set at regular intervals around this area, all of them putting out PALE PURPLE FLAMES. These flames INCREASE in size as Link passes by each of them.

NAVI WOBBLER in the air, and then she comes to rest on Link's SHOULDER, one hand to her head.

LINK

"Sick? Disoriented?"

NAVI nods.

LINK

"This 'Shadow Temple' must be into 'borrowing horsepower' to use for its little tricks. That's fine and all, but it'd be nice if it had asked..."

Link TUGS AT THE BACK of his cowl, creating a space for Navi to duck into.

LINK

"...settle in and rest up here before you fall on the floor, Navi; I'd hate to accidentally step on you if you lost your balance."

The fairy GLARES at Link before unsteadily tilting into his cowl.

LINK

(whispering)

"We'll be out of here before long, somehow."

Link continues moving through the cavern; the TORCHES before him all readily EXPLODE with purple fire, while the ones further away from him barely glow with dull 'pilot light' flames.

The sound of 'IRREGULAR, LABORED BREATHING' rises as Link walks, as if some creature were putting forth a strenuous effort at something.

FAR-UP OVERHEAD SHOT reveals that Link is walking on a massive, square floor with identical brick layout to the Forest Temple's raised platform (from pg. _____). Instead of an image of a leaf, however, there is only the nebulous shape of a black cloud set into the platform.

Link eventually notices a SHAPE in the distance, silhouetted by the wan purple flames of the cavern; as he approaches it (and as all the flames around him roar to life as he passes) it becomes more distinct: finally revealing a BODY splayed supine, lying on a coarse wooden table at the center of the cavern.

As the torches near this table reveal the figure Link's EYES WIDEN. He rushes over to the table, where Impa lies on her back with a LONG, GOLDEN KNIFE (identical to one of the Iron Knuckle's knives from pg. _____) stuck clean through her midsection, its hilt SHINING in the torchlight.

Impa's HEAD is to one side, eyes closed. She is PANTING raggedly.

Link delicately gets up onto the table beside the woman's body; he HOLDS HER HEAD with one hand while examining the abdominal wound.

CLOSE-UP on Link pulling away bloodied clothing and other objects from the knife wound; he is frantically trying to stop the bleeding whilst simultaneously considering whether to take the blade out or not.

Suddenly he STOPS working, his eyes WIDENING, and he looks up: Impa is looking straight up at him, SMILING faintly (this is not a pleasant sight in the horrible torchlight of the temple).

LINK

"I... I'm trying to help you, just please--"

IMPA

"You cannot help me anymore..."

LINK

"The blade- I just need to stem the bleeding--"

IMPA

"And you needn't help me, anymore. I cede my life willingly for the protection of Hyrule: the route I now trod is the road of the dead... and it's..."

LINK

"Just... just be still! I can- I can bandage the--"

IMPA

"...it's misty: so very misty. And it's a road you cannot follow me down, little one."

Link AGAIN STOPS working; he looks up at Impa.

IMPA

"Not yet, at least."

LINK

"You... know?"

Impa NODS slowly, again SMILING.

Link SINKS DOWN onto the table beside Impa, sitting unsurely. He again looks at Impa, gently tousling one of her white hair locks.

LINK

"12 years? Not even 12 days, not for you, at least..."

IMPA

"What's 12 years, though, working to enforce a goddess' will?"

Link's look grows very COLD; he moves his hand away from Impa's head.

IMPA

"The blink of an eye; the length of a breath..."

LINK

"You're no different than you were back then."

IMPA

(smiling ironically)

"I was a much less 'open' person, then..."

Impa moves an UNSTEADY HAND over her midsection, WINCING.

LINK

"You're a traitor, aren't you? You're working for Din, right?"

IMPA's eyes flutter; she looks CONFUSED.

IMPA

"Din? I... I do not worship Din..."

LINK

"You opened the way for Ganondorf's rule! It was you all along, wasn't it?"

IMPA

"Din... gives me my sensibilities... my strength; and Farore my sense... my wisdom..."

LINK

"Removing Dhise Slauchre, Impa? That was not a wise thing to do!"

IMPA

"...I respect them- the two of them- for their contribution. I bow to them, even... but... I do not worship them..."

Link slaps Impa's cheek, bringing her mind back into focus.

LINK

"You knew about the sword, didn't you? You planned all of this from the start!"

IMPA looks up at Link, SURPRISE on her face. She NODS.

IMPA

"It was... always planned... for me..."

LINK

"By Ganondorf?"

IMPA

(shaking her head)

"By fate. To confront evil, one must first expose it. And
to destroy it..."

Impa REACHES UP with an unsteady hand and grasps Link's
CLOAK at his chest; she TRACES A TRIANGLE pattern around
Link's sternum, exactly where his birthmark rests.

IMPA

"...one must have the proper... heart..."

Link removes the woman's hand from his chest. He SHAKES HIS
HEAD and again relaxes on the table, staring into
nothingness for a moment.

LINK

"You... aren't working for Ganondorf. Of course you're
not..."

Link FACES Impa again.

LINK

"`Proper heart'? But it's 'guts' that's never been my
problem, remember? I don't have a heart..."

IMPA

"You say no, so no..."

LINK

"Impa, am I the Hero of Time? Can I kill Ganondorf?"

IMPA

"Kill Ganondorf? No..."

Link BOWS HIS HEAD.

LINK

"Tell me: am I not a 'master'?"

IMPA

"You seek his death?"

LINK

"Yes."

IMPA

"Then no, you are not. But... you can... confront..."

LINK

"What about your convoluted prophecy, huh? Your Forest Temple Sage is dead, Impa! So's the one at the Water Temple. The Goddesses only know what happened to the Sage over at the Sand Temple..."

IMPA

"The Sand Temple Sage... he is dead as well. He died over 12 years ago, back when a fledgling Gerudo prince prepared to make his move on the Kingdom of Hyrule..."

LINK

"What is this to you, then? You want to protect this place, and its people, and everything else about Hyrule, but you can't, can you? What good has all this death been, huh? What's the point to all this killing? And now you're dead, and you won't be coming back! This... this whole damned mess is senseless!"

IMPA

"Because... it makes no sense to you?"

Impa extends a hand and grips Link's shoulder; she PULLS HERSELF UP closer to the man.

IMPA

(whispering)

"'Dead'... and 'death'... 'killing'... you keep using these words, but I don't think you really understand what they mean. So few do, I guess. Ganondorf didn't. He doesn't... and now he has made a very serious mistake..."

Impa FINGERS the blade in her gut.

IMPA

"Your return has motivated that mistake. My... 'action' here helps cement that mistake... in stone... and in blood..."

The woman LAYS BACK DOWN, with help from Link.

IMPA

"I... cede my life willingly for the protection of Hyrule. I cede my life willingly for the will of N- Naru..."

LINK
(whispering incredulously)
"Nayru?"

IMPA
The route I now trod is the road of the dead... and it's...
it's..."

LINK
"Misty..."

Impa shakes her head.

IMPA
(tearful)
"Clear! So very clear!"

She LOOKS AT LINK intently.

IMPA
"My charge... she still lives..."

Link NODS.

LINK
"Yeah: I know she does."

IMPA
"Having to leave her behind... to do what must be done..."

Impa SHAKES HER HEAD.

IMPA
"All this time you've lived to punish Ganondorf. And all
this time— for him to be so out of reach— and for no
punishment to be possible..."

LINK
(nodding)
"Yeah: Zelda's found someone else to punish..."

IMPA
"I am not vital for the survival of Hyrule..."

LINK
"And I sure as hell am not, either."

Impa COCKS HER HEAD, perplexed, and sighs.

IMPA

"Or... you have even more... 'qualifications'... than I first thought. You... you must be the Hero of Time!"

LINK

"I am? Really?"

IMPA

"Don't... misunderstand! I don't know that. There's no way for me to know that. I don't know if you are or if you're not. But... but you must be, when the time comes! You must see to that!"

Link looks PERPLEXED.

IMPA

"When the time comes, and when your heartbeat sings in your head, you'll understand. You will be the Hero of Time. You... must be..."

LINK

"The heartless have no heartbeats, Impa."

IMPA

"And wishes do not make truth, little one."

Impa raises one hand up to her RIGHT EYE; she puts her index finger ON her eyeball, PRESSING DOWN with unsettling force. There is a NOISE LIKE A FAINT SERPENT 'HISS', and when Impa removes her hand she pulls a sticky, long RED FILAMENT up with her finger. It comes to rest on her fingertip as a nebulous red blob MOVING faintly in serpentine fashion. This is one of Impa's Mind's Eye worms.

A small BLOODY TEAR trains down Impa's cheek in the wake of this action.

IMPA

"Usually... one must train their Mind's Eye most strenuously... to actually see the truth..."

Impa puts her hand into Link's; TWITCHING her index finger and allowing the Mind's Eye worm to fall into Link's palm. She is SHIVERING faintly, at this point.

IMPA

"...if you're not a master, you can at the very least stand on the shoulders of others, to reach the height you seek..."

Link HOLDS UP HIS HAND.

LINK

"What is this?"

IMPA

"A common thief uses their cunning to avoid being seen, but the King of Thieves uses his power to deflect the truth itself from the eyes of his victims, as he wishes it. But wishes do not make truth..."

Impa LOOKS DOWN at Link's hand and the red blob on his palm.

IMPA

"... it reveals nothing... but the absolute truth."

Link HOLDS THE WORM up to his face, watching it WRITHE on his finger, bearing an UNCERTAIN LOOK.

IMPA

"`Truth' is evil's enemy, if not its outright bane; you must... use... it..."

Link hesitantly moves the Mind's Eye worm closer to his face, up near his own LEFT EYE; EXTREME CLOSE-UP as Link slowly moves his finger forward, bringing the worm closer and closer to the eye. Link's finger PAUSES about a millimeter from his eye, as if he were having second thoughts.

Suddenly the MIND'S EYE WORM takes 'shape' (ie: appears as more a very small serpent than an indistinct blob) and 'lunges' across the gap between Link's finger and his eye; it 'dives' into Link's IRIS, causing a small 'eddy' of ruddy colors to explode across Link's LEFT EYE.

Link puts his HANDS OVER HIS FACE and SCREAMS, more in surprise than pain. When he removes his hands he BLINKS unsteadily; his left eye is now blood red, but as he blinks and WAGS HIS HEAD his left eye's flamboyant color DIMINISHES until, after a few seconds, it is exactly the same color of blue as his unaltered right eye.

Impa rests her head to one side, closing her eyes and EXHALING DEEPLY.

IMPA

(gradually getting slower and less clear)

"I... would not leave my charge's side, if it were up to me. She... she is pre... precious... precious... precious flowers, in the garden? I... I'll pick them... with you... say- said... didn't enjoy it... didn't I? Didn't I say 'no'... but I... there wasn't ever... a thing I enjoyed... a thing... I enjoyed m-more..."

Impa SIGHS long and hard; finally she STOPS BREATHING. Link gets off the table, numbly contemplating her body.

Suddenly a WHITE SHAFT OF LIGHT explodes from the center of the room (ie: up through Impa's body) extending far up into the cavern ceiling, which is revealed to be covered in THICK STONE STALACTITES.

The FLASH OF LIGHT eventually subsides; Impa's body has disappeared (minus copious blood-staining on the table, as well as the long golden knife, which remain) and in its place are thousands of SHINING SPECKS of light tumbling away from the table in all directions like rolling marbles (these are identical to the lights from pg_____).

All this bright white light highlights various hidden parts of the cavern; we see through LINK'S LEFT EYE that his vision has been altered. With almost 'night-vision' clarity Link is able to see around the cavern with a new perspective, using his now-amplified left eye.

Link notices a HIDEOUS, EXTREMELY LONG SPINAL COLUMN jutting from the floor near the edge of the cavern; there are also the remains of two MASSIVELY OVERSIZED HANDS and, twisted about the spine, a bony 'head-protrusion' consisting solely of one massive, long eye socket. The rotted remains of an ARROW are lodged in this eye socket (this is not entirely obvious). The creature appears to have been dead for a number of years.

This is BONGO BONGO.

Link's eyes WIDEN as he contemplates the skeleton; he looks down at the OCARINA OF TIME (barely peeking out of his cloak), then back at the skeletal remains.

LINK
"Oh, no..."

INT. SHADOW TEMPLE SANCTUM - (CONTINUOUS).

Young Link walks through the same cavernous chamber as his older counterpart; there is far more light in the chamber in this time-period, however, and the sound of RUSHING WATER dominates. GREEN VINES gird the cavern sides and its top, totally eclipsing the stone ceiling. All along the outskirts of the cavern are shallow WATER POOLS.

The LARGE ROWS OF TORCHES are here, as well, but none of them react to Link's presence; all remain completely dormant.

GREAT GEYSERS of high-pressure water occasionally erupt from certain parts of the cavern at certain times; some of these plumes rise as high as the ceiling, where they bombard the green vines.

Link TREADS CAUTIOUSLY across this place, wary of the water geysers. At one point Navi darts out of his nightcap, quickly VEERING LEFT; Link quickly follows her, after which a geyser immediately erupts in the spot he was previously standing.

Link looks first at NAVI, and then back at the water plume. He looks back at Navi with an EAGER, CHILDISH SMILE.

NAVI
"No, it doesn't look like fun to me. It looks like an easy way to break a few bones, or more, even..."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD

NAVI
"Yeah, so what if Fado used to do the same thing with the water plumes near the village lake? Two things: one, she'd been doing that way before you were even born and two, if every Kokiri Forest Child jumped off a cliff, would you?"

Link POUTS.

NAVI

"Of course not. After all: you're a steadfast iconoclast, aren't you?"

NAVI continues flying forward, while Link remains stationary, his pout DEEPENING.

NAVI

"No: that actually wasn't an insult. Sheesh! We really do need to get those flashcards, don't we?"

Navi FLITS back and forth throughout the cavern.

NAVI

"Honestly, I don't know what else he expects from us, down here. This little rat-hole cavern is the aquifer basin: we can't get much father down than this..."

ZOOMING CLOSE-UP on LINK'S EYES as Navi speaks these previous words: a faint ORANGE PINPOINT illuminates the corners of Link's irises. Link is DISTRACTED, at first, and then he turns to examine the source of this light, his PUPILS DILATED excessively (as if 'drugged'). The boy walks over to a far wall of the cavern, where the pinpoint of light shines; there is a PLEASANT HUM in the air, and Link's face appears NUMBLY SERENE, as if the boy is hypnotized.

(NOTE: Bongo-Bongo, despite having neither a visible mouth nor vocal cords, makes a constant, hypnotic 'THROAT-SINGING' TYPE NOISE throughout its appearance. At this time the noise is quiet and serene, however it changes in pitch, frequency and overall 'pleasantness', or lack thereof, depending on circumstances)

NAVI has not noticed any of this.

NAVI

"Still: that text up there was ancient Hylian. I thought the original Hylians kept to themselves, way out in the old lands of Utter East. What in the world is their writing doing on an old plaque stuck down a well shaft in the middle of the New Kingdom?"

As Navi speaks these previous words Link moves closer to the STRANGE ORANGE LIGHT near the cavern wall, SMILING

DOPILY. The PINPOINT of light is hovering in the air, slightly higher than the boy's head, BOBBING AROUND playfully. Link hesitantly GRABS AT IT, snatching at the air like a cat playing with a laser pointer's dot. The boy's GRIN widens as he plays with the hypnotic dot.

NAVI

"I tell you: we can't trust this guy to be honest with us! Who knows what kind of sneaky things he's up to down here, not to mention whatever he was doing in the forest. Don't you find it odd that he hasn't told you anything about what happened in the Sacred Forest Meadow? Why so tight-lipped? He won't say a word! And that's certainly not your style, you know..."

NOTE ON PREVIOUS: SLOW PAN around NAVI'S BODY as she speaks; she is hovering in the air with her back to Link, who is visible in the distance near the far cavern wall, TOYING with the hovering orange light. When the camera pans to the other side of her body and Link re-enters the frame, however, we see the boy cavorting in front of Bongo-Bongo, whose massive tubular eye is the source of the orange glow. The creature is currently SPREADING ITS MASSIVE HANDS (each of which is approximately as tall as Young Link) out to either side of Link's body, as if preparing to snap them shut and crush the boy.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK: the man grips the Ocarina of Time tight and SNARLS in the darkness of the cavern.

LINK

"Hey!"

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK: the boy is still TOYING with the orange light, however the image of BONGO-BONGO'S CORPSE reflects in his EYES; Link GASPS and stands still, surveying the giant creature before him that he is now able to see quite clearly.

BONGO-BONGO'S massive orange eye stops swaying around; the creature's tubular head-stalk descends closer to Link's face.

Link SWALLOWS uneasily.

Navi's body quickly STRIKES at Link's LEFT CALF with enough force to knock the boy on his back; Bongo-Bongo's hands

immediately SLAM TOGETHER, sending a RUMBLE through the entire cavern.

Link ROLLS BACKWARD and gets to his feet.

Bongo-Bongo LUMBERS after the boy, CHASING him across the cavern. Link SCRAMBLES over the uneven stone floor, dodging several GEYSER PLUMS that erupt around him as he runs. The boy moves through a mess of large stalagmites near one side of the cavern, which Bongo-Bongo immediately sets to work DEMOLISHING with its freakishly large hands.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK; the man is still holding his Ocarina of Time, the camera pans very quickly around him as he pays attention to the battle he can sense. At one point the camera shows the mess of stalagmites in the cavern corner; when it again pans around them, however, many of them are BROKEN into shards. More camera panning reveals a SET OF DEEP CRACKS in the cavern wall being formed in a row.

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK; the boy is racing along the cavern edge, Bongo-Bongo on his heels. The creature SLAPS at the boy constantly, managing only to carve out DEEP CRACKS in the cavern wall as it chases Link.

At one point Link uses the cover of an oversized stalagmite to ready a MAGIC BEAN in his SLINGSHOT; the boy aims and FIRES at BONGO-BONGO'S EYE; the bean hits dead-center, causing the creature to REAR-UP and raise its tubular head.

Link GRINS, triumphal.

Bongo-Bongo quickly lowers its head and GLARES at Link with its massive orange EYE; the magic bean is stuck about two-inches down in the shining 'pus' of the creature's eye (like a raisin in a cup of Jell-o). Bongo-Bongo's eye briefly turns RED, and then the magic bean quickly DISSOLVES, as if being eaten away by acid, leaving Bongo-Bongo's eye immaculate. It regains its ORANGE color instantaneously.

Link's smile FALLS quickly. The boy GRUNTS, almost appreciatively.

Bongo-Bongo approaches the stalagmite Link hides behind and LOWERS ITS HEAD; the creature suddenly 'spits' a tiny

projectile from its eye; the molten goo HITS LINK directly between the eyes. The boy falls backward, SCREAMING, and then sits up in a daze with a small train of 'GUNK' tricking down the bridge of his nose (NOTE: he is not seriously injured).

Link dodges another 'hand-clap' from the creature and darts through the middle of the cavern; at one point he is partially lifted off the ground by a GEYSER ERUPTION, which sends him sprawling over the rocks, wet and slippery. Bongo-Bongo lunges after him once the geyser stops and GRIPS LINK in one hand, but the boy is too slippery to hold and Link falls out from the grip, landing on the rocks with a GRUNT.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK: the geyser eruptions in Young Link's time are reflected in ADULT LINK'S EYES.

LINK
"Hey!"

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK: the boy's head snaps up. The EXPOSED STALACTITE CAVERN ROOF is visible in the boy's eyes. Link looks up above him, near the center of the cavern, at the VINE-COVERED cavern ceiling.

A particularly large water geyser ERUPTS a few yards away from the boy; it hits the ceiling vines with relative force.

The boy looks back at Bongo-Bongo, now towering above him.

Link TIMES his actions and then quickly SCRAMBLES away from the creature. Bongo-Bongo quickly pursues, but SLIPS on the wet rocks near the cavern's center.

Link RACES away from the creature, but he only makes it a few yards before his left BOOT gets jammed in a rock. The boy falls forward and then desperately TUGS at his boot.

Bongo-Bongo regains its stability and approaches the boy, slow and menacing. Link TUGS even harder at his boot, GASPING.

Bongo-Bongo reaches Link, standing just before the boy with its hands parted to either side.

Link suddenly SMILES DEMONICALLY. The boy ROLLS backward effortlessly, boot and all, leaving Bongo-Bongo standing at the cavern center.

The same large water geyser ERUPTS again, sending Bongo-Bongo hurtling towards the cavern ceiling; the creature SLAMS into the viny ceiling, hitting the hidden stalactites.

The creature lands on the cavern floor again, WRITHING IN AGONY.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK; the man is watching the cavern ceiling as one of the larger STALACTITE TIPS DISAPPEARS from the group. The man SMILES DEMONICALLY (in identical fashion to Young Link's previous smile).

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK; Bongo-Bongo's head comes up, revealing the STALACTITE TIP buried deep within its eye and protruding nearly two feet (given the length of tip removed from the roof in Adult Link's time period it is evident that the tip of the stone is buried VERY DEEP inside the creature's tubular skull).

Bongo-Bongo's EYE turns red, as before, and then BRIGHTER RED, still. STEAM erupts from the eye as a little mess of the massive stone pillar in its eye begins dissolving away, however this is too much material to handle; Bongo-Bongo's EYE turns VERY DEEP CRIMSON before finally MELTING altogether, pooling down the creature's body as a bright red tearstain.

Now blind and extremely pained, Bongo-Bongo THRASHES insanelly around the cavern. Link TAKES COVER behind some stone rubble and WATCHES in horror as the creature thrashes about.

The SCENES CUTS at different points between Young and Adult Link as Bongo-Bongo hits various parts of the cavern, causing damage and destruction that are reflected in Adult Link's time as well. ADULT LINK watches all these changes take place with WONDER.

Bongo-Bongo finally exhausts its temper and SLUMPS DOWN near the cavern's edge; it has SERIOUSLY DAMAGED its own body through all its thrashing, leaving gaping, bleeding wounds. As it bleeds it is evident that the creature's

innards are at least partially filled with JUVENILE MIND'S EYE WORMS.

After a moment of pained struggling, Bongo-Bongo becomes still.

The 'THROAT-SINGING' NOISE ends here.

Link stands before the slain creature, PANTING. He TURNS to leave the cavern, but then STOPS; there is a sound, like SAND MOVING THROUGH AN HOURGLASS. Link turns around to see a FINE DIRT SHOWER falling near Bongo-Bongo's body; the source is a DEEP FISSURE the creature created in its death throes.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK; there is a SHOCKWAVE BLAST near one darkened corner of the cavern. Upon investigation Link finds the SKELETAL REMAINS of Bongo-Bongo now lying in the cavern corner, with a piece of rock still jutting from the creature's large, empty eye socket.

NAVI flies up near the rock wall behind the creature, highlighting the DEEP FISSURE in the rock. Link SETS HIS HAND on this fissure, finding it to be filled with FINE DIRT. The man pulls several handfuls out of the crag, and then he looks back at Navi.

LINK

"Kid's a giant-killer, alright, but I've still got to do all the dirty work..."

EXT. KAKARIKO GRAVEYARD - EVENING.

A well-kempt cemetery situated just outside Kakariko Village. Orderly rows of tombstones are broken only by several well-manicured dirt paths.

A SMALL BOY (younger than the 'BOY' from the village) plays amongst the tombstones. This is the CEMETERY BOY. He wears a MASK on top of his head (ie: not pulled down over his face) of a fox-like creature.

A HUNCHBACKED man with a DISFIGURED FACE, carrying a large shovel, moves very slowly down the tombstone row. This is DAMPE THE GRAVE KEEPER.

DAMPE

"You'd best mind your step! Don't be scuffing the path like that! I've told ya' mebbe a thousand times before..."

Dampe LEANS on a tombstone very near the boy.

DAMPE

"My plate's full, yeah? Sure it is, but it's no large task diggin' a child's grave, li'l mate!"

The Cemetery Boy SNEERS and leaps over a tombstone, drawing the fox-mask down over his face.

CEMETERY BOY

"Hehehe! You can't catch a Keeton, though!"

The boy LOPES down a row of tombstones, making a STRANGE COOING NOISE as he goes. Suddenly a HAND bursts up from the space between two tombstones. The Cemetery Boy TRIPS over this and lands in the dirt with his mask knocked off beside him. The boy rolls over, GAPING at the struggling hand.

Cemetery Boy

"Eh... ah... hhhheeee... gaaaaaaaah!"

The boy leaps up and RUNS OUT of the cemetery, screaming at the top of his lungs.

Cemetery Boy

"DeRed! DeRed! No! No: ReDead! ReDead! Gaaaah!"

LINK struggles out of the soft earth with effort, GRUNTING and PANTING. Eventually he gets up to his waist before stopping to rest.

DAMPE walks up to the tombstone nearest Link and leans against it, shaking his head.

DAMPE

"Tsk, tsk, tsk. Well, I am sorry about that. I always thought about puttin' bells and wires in the coffins! But you must be a very sound sleeper, eh?"

LINK

"I sleep with one eye open..."

DAMPE

"Oh, then you've got to be moving along, then: to bed down in here, you gotta sleep with both eyes open."

Link fully emerges from the soil with Dampe's help. The man cinches his cowl up and starts off, removing the Ocarina of Time from his cloak with a gloved hand.

DAMPE

"'Course, I may need to do a little headcount here at some point, just t' make sure everyone is where they belong, mister!"

LINK

"Who knows? Maybe I do belong down there. Why don't we do an even trade, huh? Before the sun sets tomorrow I'll have at least one body ready for you..."

Link PLAYS EPONA'S SONG on his ocarina; there is a NEIGH in the distance.

DAMPE

"Promises, promises! Well, then: just how many graves should I dig for the event, then?"

EPONA comes racing through the cemetery, bounding over tombstones. Link LEAPS into her saddle and takes the reins.

LINK

"One, if things go well..."

DAMPE

"And if they're... 'pear-shaped', shall we say?"

Link stares out across HYRULE FIELD, eyeing the charred ruins of Castle Town far in the distance and the STATIONARY THUNDERSTORM along Castlebridge.

LINK

"In that case? Three..."

Link SPURS Epona onward, away from the cemetery and towards Kakariko Village.

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - LATE EVENING.

Link rides up to the Windmill entrance, bathed in the light of a full moon. He dismounts, and then PACES indecisively

before the windmill. Eventually he notices TRACKS in the ground moving away from the mill: horse's hooves. Link follows them to where the rider mounted the horse (based on the footprints) and finds a DISHEVELED EIGHTEEN-DAY BLUSHER trampled in the dirt.

Link examines the FLOWER, holding it close to his eyes.

LINK

"An Eighteen-Day Blusher... and not a few days old..."

Link moves the flower away from HIS FACE. He SNARLS darkly.

INT. CHICKEN COOP OF LON LON RANCH - VERY EARLY MORNING.

A disheveled chicken coop bordering the edge of Lon-Lon Ranch (ie: along the main gate). It is also a storehouse for various tools and items that can't or shouldn't be stored in the barn. Many boards are rotted and provide only scant cover. Chickens in cages four-rows tall SQUAWK vehemently.

Outside it is predawn.

INGO enters the coop through a side door, humming to himself before singing.

INGO

"Hey: chick-a-chucka, hey chick-a-ye!
Dough's in my pocket, dough chick-a-lee!
I'm come a callin', here chick-a-see!
I pick my chick-a, pick chic-a-thee!"

Ingo notices the PERSISTENCE SQUAWKING of the chickens and grows annoyed. He stands before the chickens and GROWLS.

INGO

"What's all this, then? Tarnation!"

The man picks up a SPADE from the wall and chucks it at the cages, sending the birds into an even bigger tizzy."

INGO

(smirking)

"Might as well give 'ya somethin' to scream about, if you're all so inclined!"

Link suddenly emerges from the shadows behind Ingo and GRABS the man by the scruff; he sends Ingo careening into a support beam, which he hits head-first. The man reels on the ground, BLEEDING from a cut on his head and SCREAMING.

LINK
"Hello: Ingo."

Ingo looks up in alarm; he SCRAMBLES over to the chicken cages and retrieves the SPADE he threw. He stands with the instrument BRACED in one hand, ATTACKING Link with it.

Link DODGES Ingo's thrust with the spade and catches his arm in two hands; he deftly applies FORCE, causing a loud CRUNCHING NOISE.

Ingo SCREAMS in pain and falls to his knees; part of the radius bone in his arm has BROKEN THROUGH his skin.

LINK
"Let's talk about your good friend Ganondorf."

INGO
"He's no friend of mine, dammit!"

LINK
"But good 'business' can create the best of friends, can't it? And his business is the only business around, isn't it?"

Link picks Ingo up and SLAMS his body against the far wall of the coop.

LINK
"Ganondorf's black knight has been toying with me ever since I got to Hyrule. Someone's keeping him well-informed about me, don't you think?"

INGO
(writing in pain)
"The... grapevine—"

LINK
"Is grown by you! You sold your soul to the highest bidder 12 years ago, Ingo! Did you think there wouldn't be consequences?"

INGO

"Wasn't my soul... my heart!"

Link's pressure on the man's body lessens.

INGO

"That's the only way he'd ever let her live..."

LINK

"Her? Malon? Slime! You beat her!"

INGO

"Which is far better'n a killin', wouldn't you say? Or have you not paid attention to what happens to damn-near anyone who breaks his laws?"

LINK

"You won't let her leave Hyrule!"

INGO

"On account that she'd only get twenty feet or so before he finished her off, maybe? Yes: of course I won't let her leave!"

LINK

"You expect me to believe that you give a damn about anyone besides yourself?"

Ingo lowers his head. He GROWLS angrily.

INGO

"No: not at first. When the High King gave me the keys to this place I... I was happy to be honcho— that's a fact— and Miss Lonni rode me ever so hard during my time as a field hand... well... turnabout's fair play, so I didn't mind gettin' myself a pint-sized slave, to boot..."

LINK

"Lovely. Just what exactly happened to Talon, then?"

Ingo SHAKES HIS HEAD.

INGO

"Her father? Couldn't do a thing for him, even if I wanted to—"

LINK

"You wouldn't have anyway, would you?"

Ingo MEETS LINK'S GAZE, his eyes dark.

INGO

"No: I wouldn't have..."

Link appears slightly STARTLED by the man's candor.

INGO

"I could do a little something for the brat, though: a little bit of make-believe."

LINK

"Make-believe?"

INGO

"As long as I were doin' the High King's work, it seemed appropriate for him to keep his mitts off the things I found to be 'precious' to me."

LINK

"You pretended to care about her?"

INGO

"Tch! It's not like I did, but then it's not like I wanted her rear end thrown into the culling camps, either."

LINK

"You're a genuine humanitarian, Ingo..."

Ingo's sneer DARKENS.

INGO

"Well: of course you'd look down on me, wouldn't you? Better I had let her go with the lambs to the slaughter, huh?"

LINK

"I didn't say that--"

INGO

"No, no, no: you're right. How did you put it, eh: 'the cold embrace of a coffin is more desirable than the shackles of his slavery'? No: you're right. It's you who's the humanitarian, Pale Rider!"

Link LETS GO of Ingo; he stares at the floor.

INGO

"Anywho, familiarity don't exactly breed contempt, not for me, at least; for whatever it's worth I do care about that li'l girl, more'n some, anyway—"

LINK

"What's that supposed to mean?"

INGO

"I may be a profiteering piece of slime, stranger, but I've taken risks in my time to keep her safe. You may be a grand hero, but you've done everything you can to jeopardize her life, and everyone else's around here, too, ever since you got here!"

LINK

"I'm working to free Hyrule..."

INGO

"Your definition of 'freedom' is lackin', Pale Rider!"

Link suddenly DRAWS Dhise Slaighre out of its scabbard and sets the tip of the blade against INGO'S THROAT; Link SNARLS.

LINK

"I can already see one way to set her free, right now..."

INGO

"You wanna kill me, mister hero? I'm unarmed! Show some chivalry!"

LINK

"According to you, Ingo, this would be mercy!"

MALON

"Stop!"

Link and Ingo START and look back at the coop entrance: MALON is standing in the doorway, hands over her heart.

MALON

"Pale Rider: stop!"

LINK

"That's not my name! Stop calling me that, damn it! And don't you dare defend this pig!"

Link looks back at Ingo.

LINK

"He's just a collaborator: he deserves to die—"

MALON

"But you don't deserve to kill him!"

Link is BREATHING HEAVILY; there is relative quiet in the coop after this statement. Link LOWERS Dhise Slaighre and GRUNTS noncommittally.

MALON

"Whatever he's said to you you can't judge him— you can't judge anyone in Hyrule— too harshly: this land is full of cowards like me, thieves like the High King, liars like him—"

LINK

"He's not a liar."

Ingo LOOKS UP at Link, first with surprise, and then knowingly.

LINK

"Everything he's said to me so far is the absolute truth, I think..."

Ingo SMILES with grim vindication.

INGO

"Now you're bein' honest? Woo-eee! That's a real sight to see. In that case, maybe your honesty deserves a little candor to match. Guess what, stranger? The grapevine's been talkin' about you nonstop. An' the news ain't good, if you're wondering. Matter of fact, would you believe—"

A SHADOW moves over the rotted boards of the coop's exterior wall (ie: the outer wall of Lon-Lon Ranch); highlighted by the morning SUNRISE. When Link realizes that it's the outline of a body he reflexively DRAGS Ingo down to the ground.

A MASSIVE BLACK FIST breaks through the rotted wood wall; the IRON KNUCKLE quickly uses its other hand to throw a BLACK TOMAHAWK at the men. Link lands on top of Ingo and the axe cuts Link's SHOULDER as it passes.

The Iron Knuckle quickly flees around the outside wall perimeter.

LINK'S HEAD comes up, facing the hole in the wall (ie: facing the camera); the man's eyes are narrow and he SNARLS angrily. Malon still stands in the background, GREATLY out of focus. SLOW CAMERA REFOCUS to background; this blurs Link's image and sharpens Malon's enough to reveal the Iron Knuckle's tomahawk blade, stuck firmly in her chest.

Link's eyes WIDEN; he TURNS around.

MALON stares at Link before FALLING backwards onto the straw-covered floor.

Link rushes to the girl's side. He gently STRAIGHTENS her body and examines the chest wound.

NAVI emerges from his cloak and flies down to Malon's chest, landing on the tomahawk hilt. The fairy looks back up at Link and slowly SHAKES HER HEAD.

Malon manages to LIFT HER HEAD; she looks first at NAVI on her chest, and then up at Link, SQUINTING. She brings one hand close to Link, resting it on the man's cheek.

Link's BLOOD-RED LEFT EYE temporarily becomes bright blue, identical to the color of his unaltered right eye.

The girl SMILES FONDLY.

MALON

"L- little... l- lumber... jack?"

The girl's hand FALLS AWAY from Link's face; her eyes become glassy and she stops breathing.

Link slowly stands up, bearing a dazed look. He absently reaches up and touches the SMALL RED EARRING in his right ear, toying with it vacantly.

Ingo cowers in the coop corner, SNIVELING.

Link's fingers manipulate the earring unsteadily; the jewelry FALLS from his ear, bouncing across the chicken coop before landing very near Ingo.

Link is still staring vacantly at Malon's body. He GRUNTS, noncommittally, and then he GRUNTS again. Link NODS his head absently, again GRUNTING.

The man slowly turns around and walks toward Ingo, who is still cowering in the corner. Link holds Dhise Slaighre over the man before suddenly bringing the blade down; it sinks into a lump of wood beside Ingo.

Link kneels slowly, retrieving the earring from beside Ingo, who GIBBERS unintelligibly; he stands up, his face bathed in sunlight from the hole in the coop, and refastens the earring in his ear.

The sound of HORSE'S HOOVES is audible, at first very loud but growing softer over time. Link watches through the hole in the coop wall as the Iron Knuckle rides away from the ranch, sprinting away on his black steed across Hyrule Field towards Castle Town.

SLOW ZOOM on Link's eyes, still looking vacant. They begin to tremble slightly as he makes another noncommittal GRUNT.

EXT. HYRULE FIELD - SUNRISE.

A red, bloody sun is rising up over the field, bathing the misty land in sharp, 'obscene' light.

Link SPURS Epona on, SCREAMING commands at the mare, who moves across Hyrule Field at a breakneck GALLOP.

The Iron Knuckle is riding for Castle Town in the distance; its black horse gallops ahead of Link, moving faster as the Iron Knuckle SPURS it on with its STEEL SPIKED BOOTS, drawing blood from the creature.

Link's SCREAMS to Epona are more savage; eventually the man begins shouting commands in 'Ancient Hylian' (ie: Scots-Gaelic). Link SMACKS at the horse's backside, going so far as to brandish the flat end of a LONG DAGGER from his cloak against Epona, causing a PAINED WHINNY from the mare. Link

resorts to mercilessly KICKING at Epona's SIDES, brutally pummeling the horse to run faster.

Link begins catching up to the Iron Knuckle as their horses approach the old Castle Town drawbridge. Link deftly UNSHEATHES DHISE SLAIGHRE into his left hand as the horses come neck-and-neck.

Link SWIPES at the Iron Knuckle, bouncing his blade off the knight's thick armor at the knee. He then swipes at the black horse's head, landing a glancing blow against the creature's EAR. Link then takes both his hands, gripping his sword's hilt, and brings the blade down on the horse's NECK, sticking it several inches into the animal's neck and prompting a SCREAM from the horse.

The Iron Knuckle's horse immediately COLLAPSES into a heap, its body TUMBLING OVER ITSELF before coming to a rest near the Castle Town drawbridge. The Iron Knuckle emerges from this carnage and immediately moves for the drawbridge.

Link slows Epona near the carcass of the black horse, performing a running-dismount, and then he REMOVES DHISE SLAIGHRE from the dead horse's neck. Link spots the Iron Knuckle stumbling over the drawbridge and he SCREAMS SAVAGELY.

Link runs the knight down and engages the Iron Knuckle in a swordfight over the Castle Town drawbridge. The Iron Knuckle's RIGHT IRON GLOVE is awkwardly bent from the fall of his horse and it is unable to properly engage Link. While the Iron Knuckle's attacks are slow, awkward, and yet forceful, Link's attacks are quick, erratic, and brutally unrelenting.

Link SHOUTS at the Iron Knuckle throughout this engagement, hurtling curses in both 'New Hylia' (ie: English) and 'Ancient Hylia'.

During the course of this fight Link's COWL and CLOAK are severely damaged and almost entirely discarded. Underneath the cloak Link wears a BLACK BATTLE VEST (ie: a 'kevlar-type' jacket very snug against the body), and long tan pants covered in small pockets and compartments. As the fight progresses Link reveals the presence of EXTENDABLE DAGGERS beneath his wrists, RETRACTABLE SPIKES in his boots, capsules of 'EXPLOSIVE FLASH POWDER' (much like tiny

black-powder bombs, useful as a tool of disorientation), small RAZOR-SHARP PROJECTIONS topping both knees of his pants (ie: for devastating 'kneeing' injuries) and METAL ARMGUARDS along the outside of both wrists (capable of withstanding a direct blow from the Iron Knuckle's sword).

Ultimately the fight becomes brutally one-sided; Link uses Dhise Slaighre and his various hidden weapons to strip off a majority of the Iron Knuckle's heavy armor, leaving the creature in a more vulnerable second layer of armor (NOTE: the creature's helmet remains firmly intact).

The fight spills out into Castle Town itself, moving past the old drawbridge guard post. Link stops yelling at the creature, instead merely GRUNTING ANGRILY as he lands his blows. Link manages to nearly sever the Iron Knuckle's right arm before hacking away at the creature's left arm, messily severing it from the Iron Knuckle's body. A black, tarry substance escapes these wounds in lieu of blood.

When the Iron Knuckle manages to knock Dhise Slaighre from Link's hands Link immediately retrieves it, but has no time to grip it properly; he picks the instrument up blade-first with his gloved hand and SWINGS THE HILT around, crushing one side of the Iron Knuckle's helmet. The disoriented creature stumbles while Link 'flips' the sword in the air, catching the hilt. He proceeds to STAB at the Iron Knuckle's chest plate, although each stab fails to penetrate and leaves large dents. Link lets out a PROTRACTED SCREAM as he STABS at the chest plate again and again, making more dents until the armor plating is unrecognizable caved in (and 'IMPOSSIBLY' caved in, such that no living person's body could conceivably occupy such a suit).

The Iron Knuckle COLLAPSES onto the brick floor of the town marketplace, lying supine. BLACK TAR BLOOD seeps out of various parts of the suit of armor, intermixed with some of Link's blood from relatively SUPERFICIAL WOUNDS on his body.

Link SCREAMS in victory, standing over the supine knight. Link brings Dhise Slaighre over his head preparing for a downward thrust, but he pauses. He lowers the sword and bows his head.

EPONA comes trotting onto the scene, lead by NAVI; the horse's SIDES are BRUISED and a small trail of blood drips behind her as she walks.

Link's LIPS QUIVER. The man sinks down onto the cobbled street, dropping Dhise Slaighre onto the ground, and puts his head on one knee.

Suddenly the Iron Knuckle sits up and GRABS LINK'S THROAT with its one remaining arm; Link STRUGGLES in its grasp. He resorts to using one of his WRIST KNIVES: he jams the blade directly into the Iron Knuckle's visor, whereupon there is a SICKENING CRUNCHING NOISE. When the creature's grip slackens Link quickly stands and retrieves Dhise Slaighre; Link RAMS the sword directly between armor plates on the Iron Knuckle's chest, impaling the creature.

The Iron Knuckle again falls backward; a BLACK LINE OF BLOOD magically burns itself into DHISE SLAIGHRE'S BLADE. Copious GREENISH-BLACK FLUID begins pouring from all facets of the Iron Knuckle's remaining armor, creating a large, rancid pool around the creature's body.

Link again drops Dhise Slaighre on the GROUND beside him.

The man COLLAPSES on the cobbled street; he is SOBBING openly. Link eventually curls himself up into the FETAL POSITION, his whole body spasming with each sob.

EPONA stands beside the man. THUNDER in the sky gives way to a rain shower. The horse moves slightly, standing directly over the sobbing Link as the rain comes down. Navi perches on the horse's forehead.

EXT. LON-LON RANCH - AFTERNOON.

The horses' corral is currently empty at the ranch. Young Link moves through the grounds, tromping into a MUDDY PART of the corral. The boy SIFTS through the dirt and mud, finally retrieving a WET BALL OF GUNK from the ground. Link SCRAPES SOME OF THE DIRT AWAY with his hand, revealing the disheveled MASK OF TRUTH underneath.

The boy STANDS UP; a strong wind blows in his face, and when he turns around he sees the distant outline of CASTLE TOWN across Hyrule Field. The boy HOLDS UP the dirty Mask

of Truth beside his head, STARING AT IT, before finally tromping out of the hoses' corral.

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - EARLY EVENING.

This is much the same temple as it was 12 years ago, none the worse for wear, save for a few cobwebs in odd places.

Adult Link stumbles into the temple and moves down the long red carpet leading to the altar. Beyond that is the holy ground and former resting place of Dhise Slaighre.

The man is battered and bruised from his fight with the Iron Knuckle (bearing, AT THE LEAST, a facial wound, a superficial torso wound and a leg wound) and is still without a cape or cowl.

Link walks slowly at first, holding an exposed Dhise Slaighre in his left hand. As he approaches the holy ground and crosses over to the small hole in the floor Link slows even more. He stops directly over the hole he originally plucked the sword from.

Link stares down at the hole with an emotionless face for several seconds. He then begins to VIOLENTLY RAM the tip of the blade against that hole in the ground. When the sword does not go in Link tries again, and several more times, each time growing more frustrated, ending with him screaming in a BLIND RAGE before ultimately tiring himself out.

CAMERA FOCUS from behind Link; the man collapses to his knees with Dhise Slaighre supporting his weight on one side, much like a walking stick or a crutch. Sheik's body is visible in the REFLECTION OF THE BLADE (ie: standing behind Link).

Link doesn't react to Sheik's presence.

LINK

"Come to tell me it doesn't work this way? I already know that..."

SHEIK

"Why try, then?"

LINK

"I want this nightmare to end, that's all, even if it's ended in some impossible way..."

Link STANDS and faces Sheik; CAMERA VIEW from directly behind Link, looking over his shoulder. The man holds Dhise Slaighre over his shoulders, resting his hands on either side. There is a reflection in the blade of the temple wall behind him; NAYRU is standing there, watching him (this image is NOT obvious). This reflection is visible only as the following line is given ("...even if it's ended...")

LINK

"...even if it's ended by a deus ex machina."

SHEIK

"Childish sentiment."

LINK

"Sometimes it's the childish thoughts that keep you moving on. Everyone needs a little fantasy, now and then, I've been told."

SHEIK crosses his arms.

SLOW PAN around Sheik and Link's bodies; the 'mish-meshed', juxtaposed body of YOUNG LINK is visible closer to the main red carpet of the temple, standing behind and to the side of Sheik.

Link LOOKS directly at his younger counterpart with little emotion; the boy reciprocates this stare. Adult Link is reflected in YOUNG LINK'S eyes, and Young Link in ADULT LINK'S EYES.

This 'mish-mesh' vision becomes garbled, and then ultimately dissipates.

Sheik FOLLOWS Link's eyes.

SHEIK

"He is here as well, isn't he?"

LINK

"Don't know who invited him: the kid never opened the temple door in his timeline, so I don't know how he would've gotten in..."

SHEIK

"The Door of Time is a supernatural device; it uses magical power to operate—"

Link ADJUSTS THE CLOTHING directly over his heart.

LINK

(whispering)

"Oh, it uses a bit more than that, actually..."

SHEIK

"Your ocarina is a magical device as well, though, and it holds power over both our worlds. Magic penetrates more than living flesh and blood, it seems. It's safe to hypothesize that any magical entity living within our two timelines would be... 'linked' by a common fate."

Link BOWS HIS HEAD for a moment. He soon raises it.

LINK

"'Linked'? Well Ganondorf uses magic; he's obsessed with it. If he dies in either of our worlds, then he might die in both of them."

SHEIK

"That's not certain, but it is possible. Just what are you implying, Traveler?"

LINK

"The kid never pulled his Dhise Slaighre out of the ground; he never lifted the seal against Ganondorf's magic. The bastard can't use that magic to conquer Hyrule in his timeline!"

SHEIK

"No doubt he will still move against the Royal Family. He is within the castle walls. He will go after their crown, and with his style of brutality— and his cunning— he will very likely succeed."

LINK

"No doubt. But our kid can rally his cavalry, bring in some reinforcements to overthrow Ganondorf before his grip on power gets a little too tight."

SHEIK

"What 'reinforcements' would the child bring?"

LINK

"The Gorons, for one. They'd listen to him, believe me. The Kakariko Militia would almost certainly follow them down from Death Mountain, and assuming Ganondorf's plan still calls for butchering the Royal Family alive, well, the Sheikah wouldn't just stand by, either. That yellow-eyed bastard would find Hyrule Castle a very naked little fortress to hide in while the rest of the New Kingdom comes crashing down upon him. He'd be crushed, and then after the dust settled they'd pass their own 'judgment' on him."

SHEIK

"Judgment... he would be executed. This is a very bloody plan..."

LINK

"That's my 'specialty'."

Link STANDS UP and rubs the back of his head.

LINK

"It can work, though. We don't save that timeline's Royal Family— there's not nearly enough time to do that— but we do save their Hyrule. And ours, too, the Goddesses willing..."

SHEIK

"But... this plan cannot work..."

LINK

"Why not, huh? You wanted a 'Hero of Time', didn't you? You wanted divine 'action' to save Hyrule. Well guess what? Assuming the kid does pull this off, with my direction, not only do I get to be your precious 'Hero of Time', but I'll get to save Hyrule without even drawing this cursed sword again."

Link STARES DOWN at Dhise Slaighre. He SCOFFS.

LINK

"I don't think I was ever the person who was supposed to use this thing. I'm not a master, and frankly I don't want to be. I could live a thousand lifetimes without using this damnable thing ever again. So how's that for 'action'?"

SHEIK

"That- that is not the proper 'action'. What you're suggesting is not the proper action of the Hero of Time--"

LINK

"Says you?"

SHEIK

"Says the prophecy. And you are not the Hero of Time! You must understand that!"

Link CLENCHES HIS JAW and GROWLS softly.

LINK

"Why not?"

Sheik looks to ONE SIDE.

SHEIK

"Because it is not your place to be the Hero of Time. That's why."

Link SMILES WRYLY and walks past Sheik.

LINK

"You're very uppity on that point, aren't you. Well, I'm sorry, my friend, but for the first time ever I feel like I finally have control over something. This can work..."

SHEIK

(whispering)

"Control is an illusion; fate is a reality..."

Link KNEELS on the plush red carpet of the temple's main walkway and retrieves the OCARINA OF TIME from a pocket on his vest.

The 'mish-meshed' juxtaposition again presents itself; YOUNG LINK is standing a foot away from Adult Link, holding his own OCARINA OF TIME between his hands. The pair are nearly eye-to-eye.

Adult Link BOWS HIS HEAD for a moment, seeming to 'get Zen'. When he looks back up at his younger counterpart he STARES AT THE BOY intently.

Adult Link's face is reflected in YOUNG LINK'S EYES.

LINK

"Yes... that's right: Darunia. Go get Darunia, and the Kakarians, if they're willing..."

Young Link COCKS HIS HEAD.

LINK

"Well, for one thing the villagers should be impressed when they see a small boy riding at the head of a Goron army. I would be, anyway."

Young Link RETURNS HIS HEAD to level, his eyes QUIZZICAL.

Adult Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"No: stay away from the castle for now. Focus on collecting your foot soldiers, okay?"

Young Link NARROWS HIS EYES.

LINK

"`Cause time is a factor, here: that's why! You can explain everything to her later, if you must."

Young Link CROSSES HIS ARMS.

LINK

"I don't know when: when it's all over. She is a princess, after all; I don't think she's going anywhere anytime soon!"

Young Link LOOKS DOWN at the carpet, and then back up at his older counterpart.

LINK

"Let's say because I'm older than you are, alright! Look: I'm not gonna tell you everything I've been through, but I haven't been through it all to have my motives questioned by a petulant 8-year-old, alright?"

Young Link GRITS HIS TEETH.

LINK

"What, huh? Do we understand each other, or not?"

The boy does nothing for several seconds, and then Young Link nods very faintly ('microscopically', even).

LINK

"Good!"

Adult Link rises and moves closer to Sheik.

SHEIK

"Your child sounds 'willful'."

LINK

"You have no idea. Fortunately for us, though, he isn't the brightest flame in the candelabra— never was: he can still be used to our advantage..."

SHEIK

"Do you think you may underestimate your younger self, perhaps?"

Link SMILES. He begins ADJUSTING HIS CLOTHING and checking those various accessories hidden within.

LINK

"A very good friend of mine once said that there's a reason no one puts absolute power— like this ocarina— in the hands of little kids..."

Link moves to put the OCARINA OF TIME in a pocket on the back of his vest, TURNING HIS HEAD away from Sheik.

LINK

"...because they're rather stupi—"

Suddenly YOUNG LINK (by way of the 'mish-mashed' graphical trick) appears in the frame beside Adult Link; the boy wears the MASK OF TRUTH on his face, staring directly into ADULT LINK'S EYES. The child's REFLECTION in Adult Link's eyes is NOT like all the other previous eye reflections: instead of a mess of stylized shadows the Mask of Truth appears VERY clearly, almost as if it is SHINING.

Adult Link GASPS. QUICK ZOOM into the man's unaltered RIGHT EYE.

Several BRIEF FLASHES fill the screen: Young Link pulling Dhise Slaighre out of the temple; Young Link suspended in the air while being tortured by Ganondorf on horseback; Impa's horse speeding away from Castle Town with Young Zelda staring back, her mouth stained with blood and her face full of tears; Kozume and Kotake raining down magical fire on Castle Town; and finally another VERY BRIEF flash of Young Zelda's terrified, blood-smearred face, much closer than before.

Adult Link LANDS on his rear on the temple floor, seemingly VERTIGINOUS.

Young Link falls to his KNEES, panting, and removes the Mask of Truth, casting it to one side.

Both the boy and adult STARE at each other for a VERY LONG TIME (perhaps thirty seconds), each panting hard, and neither says anything.

Young Link pulls his OCARINA OF TIME out and stares at his older counterpart with a PISSED-OFF SNEER.

LINK

"J- just wait. Don't..."

The boy HOLDS HIS OCARINA up, his facial expression unchanging.

Adult Link SINKS DOWN onto the carpet in a more relaxed position. He nods.

LINK

(whispering)

"I wouldn't blame you... but, still: don't..."

The boy suddenly BRINGS DOWN his ocarina, SMASHING THE FRONT OF IT against the marble floor; the INTRICATE MOUTHPIECE of the ocarina is SHATTERED.

After this the entire 'mish-mesh' scene EVAPORATES and Young Link disappears.

LINK

"Damn it!"

SHEIK

"What is it?"

Link STANDS UP and SNARLS.

LINK

"Clever little..."

SHEIK

"Is he not so unintelligent, then?"

LINK

"Even less than I give him credit for. He's ruining everything, damn it! He... he knows, now..."

SHEIK

"I see..."

Link PACES back and forth, BALLING HIS FISTS.

LINK

"He knows what Ganondorf has planned for the Royal Family. Well, at least what he planned if Dhise Slaighre had ever been pulled. He knows what kind of danger Zelda's in."

SHEIK

"He must also know that Ganondorf may adjust his plan: the Royal Family may not be so threatened, and the child may not act so... 'impulsively'."

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"No, you said it yourself: one way or another, Ganondorf was going to take the throne—"

SHEIK

"—with or without the Princess of Hyrule's help..."

LINK

"Don't editorialize. The point is that the kid's not gonna be of any help to us now, not where he's going..."

SHEIK

"Could you read his mind? You know what he plans?"

LINK

"I don't have to: I know the kid's going straight for Hyrule Castle."

SHEIK

"How can you be sure? You believe that he will go for Ganondorf's throat? He's a child!"

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"He doesn't give a damn about Ganondorf..."

SHEIK

"What, then?"

LINK

"He's going for Zelda. He's going to try to protect her, as best he can, anyway."

There is a PAUSE.

SHEIK

"How... how can you be sure—"

LINK

"Because I was him, once. In a way I still am him. I know what he would do..."

Link FACES Sheik and steps forward, his eyes probing.

LINK

"...and I know what I would do, too..."

Sheik STEPS BACK one step, matching Link's movement.

There is a PAUSE.

LINK

"We've lost the kid, and my plan, I suppose. So, then: what's yours?"

SHEIK

"The Silver Gauntlets are prepared to move on Ganondorf's Castle."

LINK

"Look at you! They don't seem to be the type that takes to

suicide missions. That really must've taken some convincing
on your part..."

SHEIK

"They trust the Ancient Hylians to interpret the will of
the Goddesses: they believe in the promise of the four
temples—"

Link SCOFFS.

LINK

"But, then, who could truly know the will of a deity, huh?"

SHEIK

"I know that what happened to Hyrule is not, and cannot, be
the will of any deity."

LINK

"We agree, there."

SHEIK

"And what of the last temple? What of..."

LINK

"The Shadow Sage?"

Sheik NODS.

Link does not answer for several seconds.

LINK

"Impa's dead..."

Sheik's EYES fall.

Link HOLDS UP Dhise Slaighre.

LINK

"...but so is the one who killed her."

Sheik turns around, facing away from Link.

SHEIK

"I understand."

LINK

"You knew her, I take it?"

SHEIK

"Was... privileged to be acquainted. But no: I never really knew her, I don't think..."

LINK

"I'm sorry; there was nothing I--"

SHEIK

"She was a legendary warrior, and the most worthy of all the Sheikah; she knew her role. She was happiest in the thick of the fight, and in the mystery of the unknown: that's what mattered most to her. Now she's in the greatest unknown. She couldn't be happier than that, I don't think."

LINK

"I heard tell that she was actually happiest picking flowers in gardens, if you can believe that."

Sheik SCOFFS. He does not face Link.

SHEIK

"Hardly the pastime of a warrior, Traveler!"

LINK

"No, it isn't. But it is the pastime of someone who loved a certain little girl very deeply, I think..."

SHEIK

"You'd bring her into this, again? Memories of Impa will be tarnished for generations to come just because of her association with the Princess of Hyrule! What humiliation, being the sworn protector of King Ganondorf's little whore! She was forced into such a role, by fealty to the Royal Family, and that's all--"

LINK

"Well, if she's innocent in all this, then I'm not: it wasn't 'fealty to the Royal Family' that lead me to act--"

SHEIK

"No: you were led astray by a manipulative little harpy--"

LINK

"I was lonely-- a sad little boy who got the chance to be lonely together with a sad little girl. I was with someone who felt alone and isolated just like I did, never mind our

different circumstances. I was with someone who, despite their own troubles and concerns, could see past all that and look at the world around them a lot more sensitively than most adults. We were children! We were kids working out problems that were way too big for us! One of us was trying to be noble— trying to do right by her people and secure the safety of her kingdom—

SHEIK

(whispering)

"You know nothing!"

LINK

"—and me? I was impressed. Hell: I was blown away, even. How could a sad little girl have such a noble little heart beating inside her?"

Link takes ONE STEP towards Sheik, descending one of the carpeted stairs leading up to the sacred floor.

LINK

"How could someone be so pure? How could someone be so beautiful— and on the inside more than on the outside, even? For me all that reckless bravery was the easy part: I could do that standing on my head. I could move mountains, if I tried. I was smitten by her nobility—"

SHEIK

(whispering)

"She was reckless!"

LINK

"Recklessly noble: a small girl trying to be a woman. That's no better than a small boy trying to be a man. What was she to me, huh? She was my friend— to hell with the rank and all— and she's the apple of a grizzled old Sheikah warrior's eye: a name whispered very fondly in her dying breath; a child she loved more than I can even imagine. Enough so that, in the end, all she really wanted was to go back to the garden, to be back with that innocent little girl that she was forced to take away from her childhood— from the life she knew— take her away from her friend..."

One of Sheik's BLADED WEAPONS falls to the temple floor with a loud clank; Sheik FALLS TO HIS KNEES with a bowed head.

There is a SNIFFLING SOUND, although this is unmistakably FEMALE in nature and not in Sheik's normal voice.

SLOW PAN up Sheik's body, from the front. Upon reaching the head we see drastic differences; this person's eyes are DEEP VIOLET, not red, and their face is obviously feminine in appearance. The woman is extremely beautiful, although her face bears numerous HEALED SCARS in various places (unlike Sheik's previous visage, which was unblemished).

This is ADULT ZELDA.

Link approaches slowly from behind; CAMERA remains stationary on Zelda, with Link's blurry torso in the background.

LINK

"For 12 years you've been working so hard to destroy yourself—"

ZELDA

"I deserve it! I was deluded enough to believe I had a gift— something that could save Hyrule— but I was wrong: all my premonitions and visions were a delusional fantasy, and for 12 years my people have paid the price!"

Link slowly sits down beside the woman, careful to leave a few feet between them. He faces forward.

LINK

"What good is your guilt? For 12 years I've done nothing but live to put those old days behind me. I ran. What do I deserve for that, do you think? You've punished yourself a thousand times over for your sins, but me? I haven't even looked for absolution, not until now..."

Zelda SNIFFLES again, regaining her composure. She stands up slowly.

Link does likewise.

ZELDA

"'Absolution'... is in Ganondorf's Castle. It's waiting for us there, I think—"

LINK

"No, that's not where it's waiting. Not for you, at least—"

ZELDA

"But I have only one last 'action' to perform to set everything right again—"

LINK

"Your role is to move the chess pieces; not to participate in battle with them—"

ZELDA

"I am not a princess! Not anymore! And— and you're not my pawn! Not anymore, at least! What's needed now is the Hero of Time, alone. I can ask no more of you—"

Link CLOSES THE GAP between himself and Zelda, his teeth GRIT.

LINK

"Due respect: you're right. You're not a princess, anymore. You're not an angelic little girl, and I'm not an innocent little boy; we've both got enough blood on our hands by now to coat a battlefield. I reek of it, Zelda! I'm nothing but a bloody, broken shell of a thing. I've committed more horrors than anyone should ever have to commit in a lifetime, and I've seen more than enough good people die out there. I've lost—"

The man CHOKES UP momentarily, and then SNARLS again.

LINK

"...I have lost, and the things I've lost will never be coming back. Not ever. And I didn't— I didn't lose these things senselessly, 'cause I'm the one that gets to make sense of those losses. I deserve that chance, anyway. Impa was right: I know I'm the Hero of Time, and you don't deserve to take that away from me!"

ZELDA

"I... have lost, too... But I'm tired of losing. Maybe I'm only selfish— I always have been, anyway— but I won't let you be the one to perform the Hero of Time's action..."

Link suddenly brings DHISE SLAIGHRE up between himself and Zelda; the woman watches intently, but makes no movement.

Link grips the sword's blade with his gloved hands and turns it around; the HILT now faces Zelda.

LINK

"This thing is yours, you know. It's not a beautiful thing, and it's not particularly wonderful, either. It's cursed, and it's bloody..."

The BLADE OF DHISE SLAIGHRE is stained with various 'high-water' blood marks of various colors and compositions. Part of the BLACK GLOVE on Link's hand is cut from his fight with the Iron Knuckle; there is a spot of dried blood on his hand.

LINK

"...it's a bloody, broken shell of a thing. But it's yours. It always has been, I guess. Call that destiny, or fate, even..."

Link EXTENDS THE SWORD towards Zelda.

LINK

"Everything I've done so far has been a selfish drive for revenge: a chance to get even. Maybe that's immoral, but I don't really know. You have the right to take that chance away from me, but you don't deserve to do it."

Zelda first touches Dhise Slaighre's HILT, then moves her hand down the sword's blade. All the dried blood does not leave any trace on her hand, but as her fingers near Link's hand on the blade she skirts a few stray drops of the man's blood that have come to rest on the blade; these smear over her fingers like normal blood droplets. She stops moving her hand along the blade before actually coming into contact with Link's hand.

Zelda uses her other hand to PUSH AWAY Dhise Slaighre's hilt, moving the sword back to Link.

ZELDA

"You use that sword as you will..."

Link slowly SHEATHES Dhise Slaighre. He SIGHS and, after a pause, turns to face the temple exit.

LINK

"Then it's settled. Alright, so where's your rallying point? Where are you supposed to meet up with the Silver Gauntlets?"

ZELDA

"High Road's End: at the beginning of the volcanic crater."

LINK

"You've all got stilts, or something? How did you plan on crossing the void?"

ZELDA

"Void?"

Zelda appears CONFUSED, but then she NODS.

ZELDA

"That's right: your eyes haven't been trained to see the truth, have they?"

Link appears CONFUSED. He looks over at Zelda with sudden realization.

LINK

"I see..."

There is a LONG PAUSE. Link and Zelda stare at each other awkwardly. Finally Link moves for the temple exit.

LINK

"Goodbye."

He takes several steps before Zelda calls after him.

ZELDA

"Wait!"

Link TURNS and faces Zelda, who comes up very close to the man; she moves her face in quite close to his, enough to make Link uncomfortable.

LINK

"Can't this wait until I come back, perhaps?"

NAVI flies out of Link's clothes and HOVERS beside the man, flitting nervously.

Zelda HALF-OPENS her mouth, suggestively, while Link stares at her in disbelief.

Suddenly, just before her lips meet Link's, Zelda's EYES become brilliantly RED; a SICKLY FLASH explodes from them. Instantly Link's body goes limp and he falls down at Zelda's feet; NAVI's body loses all color and she FALLS out of the air. Zelda SNATCHES the fairy out of the air with one deft hand and kneels down, placing the fairy gently upon Link's HIP.

Link lies crumpled on the floor, LOOKING up at Zelda with EXPRESSIVE EYES.

Zelda gently STROKES Link's hair and SHAKES HER HEAD.

ZELDA

"I'm sorry... truly I am..."

The woman STANDS UP, retrieving her BLADED WEAPONS from the floor. She looks down at Link, who still stares up at her in his paralyzed condition.

ZELDA

"You don't understand: there is no coming back. The 'action' in the ancient prophecy— it's not an abstract thing. It's quite clear, actually: it calls for martyred blood. The Hero of Time fulfills this obligation to the Goddesses: the Hero is to spill their blood to incite the judgment of the Sages..."

Zelda again KNEES DOWN beside Link.

ZELDA

"The Hero of Time does not survive this conflict. So— so you see, it can't be you..."

Zelda stands up and WALKS OFF a few paces; she again TURNS and looks back at Link.

ZELDA

"I'm— I'm so very sorry that we never got the chance to play that duet..."

The woman places the patchwork scarves back over her lower face and turns, RUNNING down the carpeted temple corridor.

Suddenly, before Zelda makes it to the temple entrance, the section of marbled floor she crosses EXPLODES OUT from under her; the woman quickly disappears into a mess of

THICK BROWN VINES that shoot up from the floor. There is a BRIEF SCREAM heard underneath all the noise of the demolition, but it quickly disappears. The mess of vines quickly retreat back down into the ground; Zelda is nowhere to be seen.

One particularly thin and long vine remains; it SLITHERES through the temple, coming to rest near Link's paralyzed body. As Link watches, helpless, the vine moves over the man's neck, its sharp tip tracing the contour of his ADAM'S APPLE while moving down his body. Upon reaching the neckline of Link's black vest the vine tip TEARS a small section of the garment from his neckline to his nipple-line, baring just enough of Link's chest to expose the triangle-shaped café-au-lait BIRTHMARK on his sternum.

This vine, too, disappears back through the hole in the temple floor, leaving Link alone in the temple. After a pause Link struggles to speak, barely getting a word out.

LINK
(labored and pained)
"G- Gannondorf!"

EXT. TEMPLE OF TIME - EVENING.

Link emerges from the temple and walks down the granite stairway, moving uneasily. He WIGGLES THE FINGERS on his dominant left hand uncomfortably.

EPONA stands at the foot of the stairs. Link slowly approaches the horse and makes several adjustments to her SADDLE and BRIDLE. After this he unexpectedly REMOVES both of them and his satchels as well, leaving the horse stripped of any and all gear.

Link stands in front of Epona and PATS HER HEAD.

LINK
"What're things like revenge and hate to horses, huh? What's happened to Hyrule, and to all of us, shouldn't really matter to you, Epona. There's still plenty of green pastures in this world, so go find one..."

Link TURNS and walks off; Epona FOLLOWS him closely. Link again faces the horse.

LINK

"Where I'm going is a little too hot for horses, girl. You can't help me anymore..."

Link affectionately STROKES Epona's face, putting his head beside hers; he looks at the BRUISES on one of her sides with disgust.

LINK

"I... I really hope you meet that grand knight, someday. I hope you go on those adventures to faraway places and have those strange quests with him. Whoever he is, one thing's for certain: It's not me. To be blunt: I just don't deserve you, Epona. I never did."

Link gently swats at the horse's backside, prompting Epona to move off, aimless, back down the road towards Castlebridge.

Link watches the horse trot off, and then he again MOVES OFF up the High Road towards Ganondorf's Castle. He STOPS once, looking back as Epona disappears from view.

LINK

"Hey, Navi..."

NAVI comes out of his clothes and perches on the man's NOSE.

Link GOES CROSS-EYED to look at the fairy.

LINK

"The... uh... Great Forest can't be more than a few days away, as the fairy flies; there might be— I mean— I'm sure there are places out there that are still untouched— safe— and there's always the swarms of free fairies out in the deep woods. They'd love to have you, I'm sure, and— and you'd be happy there, I know. You're better than they are, I know that, too: your line of fairies is supposed to bond with Kokiri Forest Children, and you never actually had one— but still: that's probably the best place for you, now, to be with—"

NAVI suddenly SLAPS Link's face (ie: hits the upper bridge of his nose) first with one hand, and then another. Both times Link WINCES. When he recovers he again stares down at the fairy on his nose, cross-eyed.

There is a LONG PAUSE, during which NAVI cocks her head—her eyes EMOTIONAL— and Link stares down at her. Eventually a single TEAR rolls down the side of Link's face.

LINK

(very slowly)

"No: you have no earthly idea just how fast..."

A single tear also trains down NAVI'S CHEEK.

The fairy moves off Link's nose and HOVERS before him.

LINK

"Are you ready?"

Navi NODS.

LINK

"Then let's end this."

The pair moves off into the fog, climbing up the ruined High Road.

EXT. GANONDORF'S CASTLE - EVENING.

Link approaches the massive volcanic crater, moving to its edge, and stares at the towering CASTLE KEEP at its center.

Link looks all around this area INTENTLY, his BRIGHT RED LEFT EYE shining. Link's attention is drawn to a certain part of the chasm. After a time there are sounds behind him; Link TURNS quickly and unsheathes DHISE SLAIGHRE.

Four PURPLE-ROBED FIGURES emerge from the darkness (their faces invisible), all of them bearing long swords, with silver gauntlets on their sword hands. At Link's drawing of his sword they each square themselves in a defensive posture.

Link and the figures stand at the ready for some time, no one moving. Ultimately Link TURNS AROUND (slowly) putting his back to the figures, and SHEATHES his sword.

The purple-robed figures RELAX, somewhat, but none of them sheathe their swords.

Link walks around the perimeter of the volcanic crater with the figures following behind him at a distance. Eventually he comes to a certain spot on the edge where he stands directly in front of the chasm. Link looks down hesitantly and, taking a DEEP BREATH, steps out over the edge; his foot lands on some invisible surface, and then his other one: Link stands directly over the lake of lava.

Link makes several more steps forward (in a straight line towards the castle island far ahead of him) but the purple-robed figures do not follow. As Link walks he detects their hesitance. Without turning to face them Link UNSHEATHES Dhise Slaighre.

The purple-robed figures all square themselves into defensive posture again.

Link suddenly RAMS the sword into a spot near his left foot; the sword jams into a pitch-black VINE, which is exposed in the attacks. This action causes a 'ripple-effect' for some distance behind, and in front, of Link: an entire massive BRIDGE OF VINES is temporarily exposed, extending all the way from the chasm edge to the castle keep at the crater center.

Link RESHEATHES his sword and continues along the once-again invisible bridge. The figures behind him eventually follow at a considerable distance.

EXTEMEY LONG-DISTANCE SHOT of the group traversing the volcanic crater; they all move far, far above the lava pit beneath them (and they are little more than the size of ants in this shot). Eventually a STRANGE WAVE moves along the turbulent lava surface, and then once again; the second time this happens it is more clear that this is the BACK of some immense, fire-covered creature than a simple wave.

CLOSE-UP on Link walking forward (towards the camera) with the purple-robed figures behind him.

Again, the same LONG-DISTANCE SHOT: the massive NECK AND HEAD of an incomprehensibly gigantic fire-covered dragon is moving upwards from the lava, angling forward (towards the moving group); it is wingless, but nonetheless able to move freely through the air. This is VOLVAGIA.

Again, a CLOSE-UP on Link walking forward (towards the camera) with the purple-robed figures behind him. The invisible vine bridge behind the group suddenly BURSTS INTO FLAMES and EXPLODES as Volvagia's massive head and body obliterate it and move upwards into the air (the creature's neck diameter averages about fifty-feet, give or take, and its body-proper rivals a blue whale's in terms of overall size). Two of the purple-robed figures are caught in this firestorm and incinerated, SCREAMING, and Link and the remaining two figures quickly RACE for the other end of the bridge.

Again, the same LONG-DISTANCE SHOT: Volvagia is slowly ARCING through the air, graceful, preparing to come back down on another part of the bridge near the fleeing group. The creature OPENS ITS MASSIVE MOUTH.

Link and the two figures are running frantically. A WITHERING SCREAM from Volvagia overhead causes the vine bridge to tremble and causes all three fleers to COVER THEIR EARS in pain and FALL TO THEIR KNEES. Link jumps up almost immediately, and the two robed figures soon after; as Link races forward one of the robed figures quickly PUSHES the other out of the way; this former figure is immediately CRUSHED by Volvagia's body as it plunges through that part of the bridge. The second robed figure narrowly escapes, following Link across the rest of the bridge.

The pair reaches the opposite side of the bridge and the MAIN GATE of Ganondorf's castle, which is CLOSED. Link frantically SEARCHES for alternate routes, but finds none.

Suddenly Volvagia BURSTS UP from just behind the pair, obliterating the section of vine bridge directly connected to the castle island.

The robed figure quickly scrambles along the outer edge of the castle, moving over patchwork scaffolding and ruins; Link follows, and the pair moves up and around the outside of the castle.

EXTREME LONG-DISTANCE SHOT of Ganondorf's Castle; Volvagia gracefully, slowly, circles around the structure, letting loose another WITHERING SCREAM.

Link and the robed figure eventually find a large nook in the ruined scaffolding that plunges into a small 'cave' set into the castle's side. They land hard on the uneven stone surface of this place while, through the hole they entered, Volvagia's massive body is seen swooping past them, disappearing around the outside of the castle with a RUMBLING BOOM trailing in its wake, lessening over time.

Link STANDS UP, panting and holding an iron rod poking out of the castle wall for support. The robed figure brandishes a GLISTENING DAGGER and suddenly stands, LUNGING at Link. Link PARRIES this attack and fends off another; eventually he tackles the figure and wrestles them to the ground, holding their own knife against their throat. The figure's cowl falls away from their head in the struggle, revealing NABOORU, aged 12 years since Link last saw her.

Link is SNARLING with anger, but upon seeing Nabooru's face his face falls in disbelief.

LINK
"Y- you are Nab--"

The woman's face contorts in SURPRISE.

LINK
"You are Gerudo..."

NABOORU
"You are observant."

The woman tries KNEEING Link, but the man closes his legs before her knee finds its mark; Link quickly ROLLS off the woman, standing back against the alcove wall with the glistening dagger at the ready.

Nabooru stands as well, squared defensively.

LINK
"You're the leader of the Silver Gauntlets? A Gerudo?"

Nabooru SCOFFS.

NABOORU
"The Silver Gauntlets are all Gerudo, idiot towhead!"

LINK

"Ganondorf is a Gerudo; he's one of your people—"

NABOORU

"He is a dishonorable traitor—"

LINK

"He's a thief, and your people are thieves. He stole the throne of Hyrule; doesn't that make you—"

NABOORU

"He betrayed a sacred trust; he violated his word and acted without honor. He is not my king, nor is he 'one of my people'—"

LINK

"You can't just disown your monarchs!"

NABOORU

"No, but we can kill them, can we not?"

Link CONSIDERS this statement. He lowers the dagger, slowly, and then steps towards the woman, who remains defensive.

LINK

"So there is honor among thieves?"

NABOORU

"The prince betrayed all those he ever knew, both at home in the desert and here in Hyrule. That pretender whore of a mother of his rules the Gerudo Valley with an iron fist, and he lords over the broken bones of Hyrule. It all began with his absolute obsession with the Royal Family. He came here 12 years ago pledging life and loyalty to them, all the while plotting Hyrule's downfall. Gerudo abide their word; Gerudo live with honor. Such cowardly actions are an embarrassment to Gerudo honor."

Link COCKS HIS HEAD, staring at Nabooru incredulously.

Nabooru LOOKS TO THE SIDE.

NABOORU

"They are an embarrassment to me..."

There is a pause, and then Link quickly FLIPS THE DAGGER in the air, causing Nabooru to SQUARE HERSELF into a defensive posture; Link, however, merely hands the dagger back to her, hilt-first.

LINK

"If you want the man dead, you're not in bad company. Why did you attack me?"

Nabooru slowly takes the knife, and then puts it in a scabbard on her waist.

NABOORU

"You are not Sheik, and we expected Sheik, not the notorious Pale Rider. The Sheikah are pitiable servants—collared dogs— but they are as true as they are wise; we trusted his council. Tell me... is Sheik—"

LINK

"Sheik is gone, I think. I seriously doubt he's coming back."

NABOORU

"I see. In any event, I assumed that you lured us to our deaths out there when the monster attacked."

LINK

"I don't need a 200 foot-long dragon to kill people; I can do that just fine on my own."

NABOORU

"I'm sure that's true. Anyway, you're most certainly not one of the prince's men, I suppose..."

LINK

"How do you figure?"

Nabooru holds up the small, dirty INTERLOCKING TRIANGLE TRINKET, dangling it in the air.

Link STARTS, then he checks his vest pockets, feeling the emptiness of one breast pocket.

NABOORU

"This is an old symbol, for sure; it was used by the Royal Family here many generations ago..."

The woman TOSSES the pendant back to Link.

NABOORU

"...but it's older than that, even. I first laid eyes on that symbol when I was child, sent to complete the initiation trials of my people down at Colossus Oasis Plain."

Link's eyes bulge.

LINK

"The Sand Temple, right?"

Nabooru NODS.

NABOORU

"Rauru- the temple vicar there- was particularly fond of that symbol."

Link LAUGHS.

NABOORU

"What is it?"

LINK

"I find it kinda hard to picture a rabble of Gerudo all bowing down to worship Din while surrounded by ancient symbols of the Hylian Royal Family!"

NABOORU

"We worship Din; we worship the sun, even; we worship whomever we choose. A Gerudo has that freedom. Rauru maintained the Sand Temple for anyone's spiritual oblation to anything they saw fit..."

Nabooru LOOKS TO ONE SIDE.

NABOORU

"As a matter of fact, he himself did not see fit to worship Din..."

LINK

"Farore, then? Odd for a Gerudo priest to worship the Goddess of the Royal Family of Hyrule--"

NABOORU

"Not Farore. He..."

LINK
"What?"

NABOORU
"He worshipped Nayru, the Irrational."

LINK
"Nayru? You're kidding me!"

NABOORU
"He was an odd man, and very difficult to understand. I don't know when exactly he chose such a strange Goddess to submit to, and still he tolerated anyone's belief, but he—that is, I hear he even tried to convert his own daughter to Nayru's worship, though apparently he had the good sense not to force the issue too much when she resisted. How he'd go on, if you let him! Spouting nonsense about 'De'chiem Nabooru'..."

Link LOOKS UP at the woman.

LINK
"What was that? Nabooru?"

NABOORU
"'De'cheim Nabooru'; it means 'the strength of Nayru's spirit'. That and 'De'chiem Amaru'; 'the strength of Nayru's love'. Nonsense, all of it, but still: he was entitled to his opinion..."

LINK
"Ganondorf: he killed Rauru, didn't he?"

Nabooru's eyes WIDEN; the woman stares at the ground and SHAKES HER HEAD.

NABOORU
"The great stone steps of the Sand Temple... they are very treacherous— designed for the young and bold more than the old and wise. At the time what else were we to think of such an old man suffering such a great fall? In retrospect— with the timing so convenient as to coincide with the prince's journey to Hyrule..."

LINK
"Hindsight is everything. I understand that pretty well."

Nabooru CROSSES HER ARMS.

NABOORU

"Still, though: what else to expect from the pig of the vines!"

LINK

"What?"

NABOORU

"The prince. Ganondorf. Gerudo names are always expressive. His means 'in the image of Ga-non'."

LINK

"Ga...non?"

NABOORU

"A fairy tale, told by Gerudo parents to frighten their disobedient children. Out in the Haunted Wasteland there are the remains of some great bog that once covered the Gerudo Valley, eons before it became a desert. The story goes that a herd of pigs drove one of their own to exile—Ga-non— and it wandered that bog for the rest of its life, forever lost in the maze. It became so a part of the swamp, though, that in death it remained there: even gaining control of the vines that lay writhing in the muck."

LINK

"That's a strange name to give a future king..."

NABOORU

"The rumors are that the prince was 'aggressive' as a newborn, drawing blood from his mother's teat, slurping his milk as greedily as a pig eats slop. He was very like the pig of the vines as an infant."

LINK

"And now he's the King of them, as an adult..."

Link NODS appreciate.

LINK

"I guess he just didn't appreciate the irony of Kotake's gift. Anyway, now you're looking to avenge your fath— your fallen honor, is that it?"

NABOORU

"My honor is meaningless next to the insult our prince brought to Din; he is a disgrace to her honor, and Din demands justice. She will sit in judgment of that monstrous creature, brought there but my hand or by any other..."

LINK

"`Judgment', huh? Variations on a theme..."

Nabooru COCKS HER HEAD at Link. The man SHAKES HIS HEAD in reply, turning to face the alcove entrance.

LINK

"Never mind. Let's just say that neither of us is really in bad company, at the moment..."

HYRULE CASTLE - EVENING.

Young Link walks through the foyer and corridors of Hyrule Castle; as on his previous journey he is not questioned by the guards in the public areas of the castle.

Link moves down the corridor leading to the royal apartments, however a guard at the ornate door stops the boy: it is CASTLE GUARD #3.

CASTLE GUARD #3

(growling)

"Oh: is that you, boy? I am sorry (NOTE: sarcastic inflection), but her Highness is quite unavailable at the moment."

Link STAMPS HIS FOOT.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"No getting' in here without the proper escort, sonny. You want a word with her Highness, you just drop a line to the proper go-betweens; they'll get your message to her in the by and by, I'd imagine. Shouldn't take more than a fortnight, in any event!"

Link OPENS HIS MOUTH, as if to speak, but then a VOICE sounds from further down the corridor: it is the FEMALE SERVANT from earlier.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Oh, my: is that the princess' little playmate? Why, it is!"

The woman comes up between the guard and Link, speaking to the guard.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Now, sir, honestly this one is of good moral character and all that; surely you can let him through?"

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Er... well: my orders are orders, you know—"

FEMALE SERVANT

"And you know how close our little Zelda is to this one, don't you? We can't just toss him out in the night, can we?"

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Well, certainly not, but—"

FEMALE SERVANT

"And have the guardsmen in the hedgerow chase the poor child for sport? Wouldn't it be such a shame to have to explain to her Highness why her cherished childhood friend wasn't allowed into her own home? The poor dear would be a basket-case, I'm sure..."

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Now, see: there's protocol to be followed—"

The young woman LEANS FORWARD.

FEMALE SERVANT

"...and if that were the case, I'm quite afraid, your head might end up fitting quite comfortably in one. A basket, I mean."

Castle Guard #3 SWALLOWS UNCOMFORTABLY. He grudgingly stands aside.

CASTLE GUARD #3

"Er... well... assuming someone's got the proper responsibility for the boy—"

The Female Servant puts both hands on Link's shoulders.

FEMALE SERVANT

"I can do that, with pleasure. After all, our little friend here is the perfect gentleman, isn't he?"

The Female Servant looks down at Link, who NODS in agreement.

Castle Guard #3 SNEERS at both woman and boy as they pass. On their way through the door the Female Servant calls after the guard.

FEMALE SERVANT

"By the way: how's your bunions, today, Captain?"

The man FUMES.

INT. PRINCESS ZELDA'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS, ROYAL FAMILY ROOMS
- EVENING.

The Female Servant enters Zelda's sitting room, followed by Link. The boy LOOKS AROUND the room, finding it deserted. In the meantime the Female Servant busily bundles wads of Zelda's clothing into a small WOODEN LAUNDRY CART.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Oh, her Highness isn't in at the moment: she has other obligations to attend to."

The woman pulls a SMALL VIAL of clear liquid out of her BODICE as she speaks; she puts it on the table beside her and then motions her head in the direction of a desk drawer, still busily SORTING Zelda's clothing.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Oh, would you please be a dear and fetch me a kerchief from in there? I've simply got to get all these clothes out to wash, and I've only my two arms on me..."

Link ROOTS through the desk drawer, producing a WHITE HANDKERCHIEF. He HOLDS IT UP for the woman, his face PROBING.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Ah, wonderful. Be a sport and fold it up all nice and neat, square if you could!"

Link NODS and drapes the kerchief on a chair back, gently folding it in sections.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Oh, her Highness left here all dolled up: it's the special feast this evening, don't you know. The sendoff for Prince Ganondorf. Just a cozy little banquet above the castle keep: His Highness, our little Zelda and, of course, the prince himself!"

Link finishes folding the kerchief. He HOLDS UP the finished product.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Very good! Oh, very good. How nice it would be if all the help around here were as helpful as you are!"

The Female Servant MOTIONS WITH HER HEAD to the vial of clear liquid on the table beside her.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Just pour all that out into it now, if you would!"

Link retrieves the vial and UNCAPS it; he looks up at the woman while holding the vial over the kerchief.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Yes: that's it. Nice and even, too: spread it around..."

Link POURS the fluid over the rag, carefully saturating every bit of it with the fluid.

FEMALE SERVANT

"...anyway: that's been in the works for weeks now, their little soiree. You know nobles, with their fancy parties and all. Her Highness was so very keen on making a good impression at the event, and no doubt the prince will find her a most charming little lady, as do we all. And they truly want no one to disturb this moment. It is, after all, so very historic..."

Link finishes pouring the fluid into the rag, which is now totally saturated with it. The boy HOLDS THIS UP for the woman.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Ah, bravo!"

The woman finishes tossing items of clothing into the laundry cart and approaches Link, CIRCLING AROUND the boy and gently putting a hand on his shoulder. She takes the damp rag from his other hand, SMILING SUNNILY.

FEMALE SERVANT

"Thank you so much, my dear boy!"

Suddenly, without any warning, the Female Servant quickly STUFFS the kerchief over Link's face, burying his mouth and nose. At the same time she uses her other hand to HOLD DOWN Link's green nightcap.

Link STRUGGLES in the woman's arms; only MUFFLED SCREAMS escape the kerchief. After some time (NOT IMMEDIATELY; nearly twenty seconds elapse, give or take) Link's struggles CEASE and the boy becomes totally LIMP.

The Female Servant DROPS the boy; Link lands hard on the carpeted floor, his nightcap falling by his side. Navi lands beside him, totally without color and similarly unconscious.

The woman standing over Link CHUCKLES malevolently. PAN-UP reveals that it is, in fact, KOZUME, whose gnarled old face is now in place of the 20-something-year-old young woman from before.

Kozume surveys Link's unconscious body, GRINNING.

KOZUME

Ah, How very nice it would be if all the help around here were as helpful as you are!"

INT. HYRULE CASTLE DUNGEON - EVENING.

A basement section of the castle, complete with a row of empty cells and cruel-looking bars. A thick wooden door is the only exit. Moonlight streams into the dank place from a thin, fine-mesh screened window running high above the cells.

Kozume roughly DUMPS Link into one of these large cells; the boy's body ROLLS over the floor several times. He GROANS MEEKLY. The half-filled LAUNDRY CART sits behind the woman.

Kozume CACKLES and then hurtles NAVI at Link (as if pitching a fastball). The dim-lit fairy bounces off Link's body and lands hard on the stone floor (apparently none the worse for wear). The woman shuts the cell door, which claps shut with a resounding CLICK.

Link SITS UP, groggy, as Kozume LAUGHS again.

KOZUME

"You could possibly be used to our advantage, I think. After all, that tiny royal tart probably wouldn't want to see her precious little playmate filleted alive, would she?"

The woman LEANS DOWN near the cell bars; Link defiantly gets up and stands directly on the opposite side of them, SNEERING.

KOZUME

"And when precious little Princess Zelda inherits her father's throne in, oh, say half-an-hour, or so, we will need her to be most... 'pliable', for our purposes! You'll probably only need to loose a few fingers and toes before that girl does whatever we want her to!"

Link RATTLES THE CELL BARS angrily; Kozume again CACKLES and moves off, slamming the large wooden door behind her as she leaves the dungeon.

Link KICKS the cell door, teary-eyed with rage. He CROSSES HIS ARMS, sniffing.

SLOW PAN around the boy reveals a pair of NARROW, CREEPY EYES leering out of the nearly pitch-black darkness in the far corner of the cell: a figure is sitting on one of the wooden benches lining the cell wall.

VOICE

"Still waters, it seem, do run so very deep..."

Link SPINS AROUND and plasters his body against the cell bars, frightened.

VOICE

"...don't they, my young friend?"

EXT. GANONDORF'S CASTLE - LATE EVENING.

VOLVAGIA arcs idly through the air, making lazy, massive loop-de-loops around Ganondorf's Castle.

Inside the small alcove Link sits on a chunk of debris, LEANING on the hilt of Dhise Slaighre. Both he and Nabooru have removed some layers of superfluous clothing; the pair SWEAT profusely.

LINK

"...and after that it was different. He treated me like a son, at least for a little while, and I never really knew what that felt like to begin with."

NABOORU

"'Nice', I suppose."

Link NODS and SMILES unsettlingly.

LINK

"It's always 'nice' to be needed. It's better to be wanted."

NABOORU

"Which were you?"

LINK

"I don't know. When he took his feud to the Tantara people he certainly needed anyone he could get."

NABOORU

"But he knew you from a young boy; certainly he wanted you."

LINK

"The 'work' he planned to do in Tantara, though... that wasn't what I wanted. But it may have been just what I needed. We raided a far northern desert settlement; a group of wanderers— simple nomads— all with the pretense of finding some damnable sacred statue. When the nomads claimed they didn't know the location of the statue we burned their belongings— all their carts, crafts, and creatures— right before their eyes. Their whole lives— carried on their own backs for generations long— right up in smoke, just like that. There was this small girl in the group— a little wide-eyed thing— and she stood out. See,

everyone in that tribe was speechless; they were heartbroken, angry, furious even. But I remembered that little girl because there was only one emotion in her eyes that I could see at all."

Link LOOKS DIRECTLY AT Nabooru.

LINK

"Terror. Absolute terror. The others were worried about the future: their next meal; the next sip of water on their lips, and the next food or drink for the days and weeks after that. Desert life's hard, and we just made it a thousand times harder for them. But that little girl had no concept of the future, or probably the past, either. All she knew was that at that moment her whole entire world had just fallen apart. There's no contemplating how to pick-up the pieces, or how to move forward: just that pure, instinctual, childish emotion. It's a lot purer than anything an adult feels. We qualify our emotions too much, and a child can't do that, really."

NABOORU

"You sympathized with this desert nomad? How touching..."

Link SHAKES HIS HEAD.

LINK

"No, I didn't. But I knew a small girl, once, and I saw that same look on her face, once. It was burned into my brain for so long, eating at me, and keeping me from finding peace. I guess I just didn't know it until that moment. It helped me understand what I needed to do, and that I didn't need to be galloping all around the Old Shores any longer. Especially when his campaign against the Tantari people grew more... savage. He wouldn't listen to reason: none of my reasons. It got worse before it could get better, too. 'Son' or no, I had to do something..."

NABOORU

"He was the first man you ever killed, wasn't he?"

Link STARTS.

LINK

"I didn't say that I killed him--"

NABOORU

"You didn't have to—"

LINK

"And I certainly didn't say he was my first—"

NABOORU

"And you certainly didn't have to say that, either. Despite the image you try to project I don't think that you are accustomed to killing, Pale Rider. Not yet, at least; it simply doesn't seem to suit you."

Link SCOWLS DANGEROUSLY.

Nabooru STANDS and paces along the alcove wall.

NABOORU

"Time is passing, and my nerves are fraying; it's getting hotter in here, too."

LINK

(whispering sulkily)

"I would've said colder."

NABOORU

"That creature: it's so large that it warms the air as it moves; the castle exterior is like a spit put out to roast..."

LINK

"There has to be some way to enter the main tower: a weaker portion of the walls, probably somewhere closer to the tower's top."

Nabooru FACES link.

NABOORU

"You still plan to raid the castle proper? Madness! We've lost what limited forces we had to begin with, and Sheik was never even here to lend us aid at all. This attack was doomed from the start—"

LINK

"So what, then? Escape? Run away and go back to hiding out in the scrub in Hyrule Field? We have the chance to end all this, here and now—"

NABOORU

"We have the chance to die: that is all. I won't commit to some foolhardy suicide mission for no reason—"

LINK

"The Princess of Hyrule is in that tower right now!"

Nabooru SCOFFS and TURNS HER HEAD.

NABOORU

"You lie!"

Link MOVES into her field of vision, his eyes RESOLUTE.

LINK

"Look at me! Look at my face!"

Link GRABS Nabooru's shoulders and the woman initially RESISTS, but as she looks at Link's face she STOPS struggling. There is a PAUSE.

LINK

"I wouldn't have to lie about a thing like that; I could come up with a hundred-thousand different stories more plausible than that, if I wanted to!"

NABOORU

(whispering)

"Are you so clever?"

Link SMILES.

LINK

"Only too much for my own good."

NABOORU moves AWAY from Link, standing with her back to the man, CROSSED ARMS.

NABOORU

"Zelda of Hyrule: she truly is up there?"

LINK

"She is. You have the chance not only to redeem your people's honor, but to restore the princess to her rightful place on the throne. It's a rare position to be in, you know: Ganondorf did what he did, and you can't take that

away- you can never begin again- but you can try to fix your mistakes."

NABOORU

"And what do you have to gain from all this, anyway? Why are you here? You're no trained killer, after all..."

LINK

(whispering)

"...just a sucker for pouty purple eyes."

NABOORU

"What was that?"

LINK

"I'm just here for a friend who needs my help."

Nabooru SCOFFS.

NABOORU

"Such 'friendship' is an overrated thing."

LINK

"Is loyalty?"

NABOORU

"Honesty is fine, but loyalty a mistake. We Gerudo live our lives more passionately than you can imagine, but we never make the mistake of depending too much on other people. Such feelings, left to their own devices can stir up more trouble than a nest of newborn dodongos..."

LINK

(in SYNC with Nabooru)

"-nest of newborn dodongos..."

Link and Nabooru say these last words slowly, each SURPRISED by the other's delivery of them. There is a PAUSE.

LINK

"That... is a very common phrase... on the Old Shores..."

Nabooru STARES at Link intently.

NABOORU

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

Nabooru LOOKS DOWN at Link's neckline, along the tattered front of his shirt; she first notices his TRIANGLE-SHAPED BIRTHMARK. She looks up at the man.

NABOORU

"It's... it's you, isn't it?"

LINK

"What?"

NABOORU

"We could be dead, but we're not, and you could've been killed any time since you came to Hyrule, but you were not. It's you he's after, isn't it?"

LINK

"I don't see how that's possible—"

NABOORU

"As much as he's after the princess, at least. That's it, isn't it? The prince... he's looking for an audience with you, now, isn't he?"

Nabooru LOOKS OUT at the alcove exit; a DRONING HUM (akin to a freight train) sounds along the wall as Volvagia slowly passes once again.

NABOORU

"But the invitation— it's extended only to you, isn't it?"

The woman approaches the alcove exit.

LINK

"Hey! Wait: what're you doing?"

Nabooru looks back at Link.

NABOORU

"Two targets: time enough for one kill. And you, I think, are vital to the interests of the prince. I am not; you will make it to the top, I believe. From there it is up to you..."

Link STANDS and approaches the woman; Nabooru takes several more step back.

LINK
"Nabooru..."

The woman SMILES FAINTLY. She CHUCKLES softly.

NABOORU
"It's a proud thing to be a Gerudo, but not for the past decade and more: it is an embarrassment. I gave my word to Sheik that I would see this plan through— Din's will at stake— and now I think it's only proper to transfer that word to you, if only because of the circumstance. Gerudo abide their word... Gerudo live with honor..."

Nabooru faces the alcove exit, DESPARINGLY SLANT-EYED.

NABOORU
(snarling)
"...and I will no longer be embarrassed!"

Nabooru jumps out of the alcove and begins a madcap dash DOWN THE TOWER, moving swiftly on sure feet.

Link also emerges from the tower, CALLING AFTER THE WOMAN, but Nabooru does not respond.

VOVAGIA lazily soars in the distance; as it detects Nabooru moving down the tower it slowly drops altitude on an intercept course.

Link SCRAMBLES up the side of the tower, frantically scraping his heels along uneven surfaces. Volvagia ROARS down the side of the tower as Link desperately climbs.

Eventually Link reaches a small PLATEAU in the castle: an area of even flooring circling around one final LARGE, THIN TOWER sitting at the middle. As Link clambers up this ledge there is a DULL BOOMING NOISE; the entire tower SHAKES slightly and Link winces, PANTING on his knees. After a moment he stands and faces forward; he begins walking towards the more slender upper tower's prominence.

INT. HYRULE CASTLE DUNGEON - LATE EVENING.

Young Link CAUTIOUSLY APPROACHES the shadowy figure sitting in the dungeon cell with him; as he and NAVI approach light from the fairy's body illuminates the speaker: it is the

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN, sitting beside his considerable bundle of masks.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"In the doghouse, too, my young friend? Could it be that a puppy like you was never properly housebroken, perhaps?"

Link SCOWLS at the man; the Happy Mask Salesman LAUGHS.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"As for me, well: I didn't think my Zelda masks were so 'disrespectful', but the Royal Guard did, and they went and threw me in here, if you can believe that..."

The Happy Mask Salesman LEANS BACK casually, and his GRIN widens considerably.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Hehehe! If you can believe that. Whether you do, or not, makes no difference to me..."

NAVI ROLLS HER EYES and flies away from the pair; the fairy moves between the cell bars and flits around outside the cell, SEARCHING for any kind of escape possibilities for Link.

The man looks over Link's shoulder at the beat-up, muddy MASK OF TRUTH.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Ah: but there's a much finer example of my work. You put it to good use, I trust. I certainly hope that mask was able to increase your happiness..."

Link looks over his shoulder as well, retrieving the Mask of Truth from his back. He EXAMINES it cursorily, and then willingly HANDS IT UP to the Happy Mask Salesman.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"It doesn't suit you, I suppose. Just as well: so unpleasant are the people it does suit, really. Hmmm..."

The man OPENS HIS RUCKSACK and looks through a collection of various masks.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Just what is more your style? Hmmm..."

Link notices a CREEPY MASK with large, manic eyes surrounded by multi-colored flames. This is MAJORA'S MASK. The boy reaches up and idly TOUCHES the mask, but the Happy Mask Salesman gently moves the mask away from Link's reach.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Oh, no, my friend. Your finances are nowhere near up to par! I'm afraid that one would cost you the moon..."

The man instead produces a VERY BLAND LOOKING MASK: depicting a rock with crude eye carvings and a mouth hole. This is the STONE MASK.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Plunk a rock down in still waters: it's an unremarkable thing— the rock, I mean. So easily overlooked, and even when seen, so often ignored."

The man EXTENDS THE MASK out to Link, who cautiously TAKES IT.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"They say that little children should be seen and not heard, but why stop halfway, huh?"

Link looks at the mask QUIZICALLY.

NAVI flies by a wooden table beside the cell door. Exasperated, she PERCHES on a small IRON LEVER above the table; when she does so there is a RUSTY SQUEAL and the lever FALLS about an inch.

One of the small SIDE DOORS to the cell row unlocks with a CLICK, swinging open.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Why not go the full way through, huh?"

Link RACES to this side door and squeezes through the cell; NAVI comes to rest on his shoulder. The boy moves for the HEAVY WOODEN DOOR on the other side of the cells, but stops when he realizes that the Happy Mask Salesman is not following. He looks back at the man, still leering out of the darkness of the cell with his CREEPY SMILE.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Oh, ho! Don't you worry about me, my young friend. I couldn't possibly, you see: I wouldn't know what to do with my freedom, even if I ever had it to begin with!"

Link COCKS HIS HEAD, quizzical.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"My warden, after all, is so much more demanding than the Royal Guard, although a far better looker, I think!"

Link LOOKS AT Navi; the pair appears greatly PUZZLED, but the boy leaves the dungeon quickly.

Link moves past the heavy wooden door and through a small CORRIDOR of moldy brick. The boy CREEPS through the darkness, at one point he slowly brings the STONE MASK up to his face and PUTS IT ON. Link approaches a door at the end of the hallway, puts his hand on the knob and SLOWLY TURNS it.

Suddenly the door COMES OPEN at once; Nabooru is standing on the opposite side, just having opened the door from her side.

Link GASPS— freezing in his tracks— but the woman does not appear to take note of the boy.

Two GERUDO WOMEN sit at a small table beyond the door, playing some kind of card game.

GERUDO WOMAN #2

"Come, then: Nabooru! You'll wear the lock off that door!"

GERUDO WOMAN #1

"Too true! That little Kokiri can live or die, for all I care!"

NABOORU

"Not surprising you would say that—"

GERUDO WOMAN #2

"Kozume was quite clear in her instructions—"

NABOORU

"Yes: instructions that make no sense. What is a forest boy to her, or to our prince, for that matter? And why secure

him here in our own host's dungeon? We behave as if we were—"

GERUDO WOMAN #1 and GERUDO WOMAN #2
(in sync)

"Thieves in the night!"

The two woman at table CLANK two mugs of liquid together.

NABOORU

"We are guests at the moment. A thief thieving in the night has a certain nobility about them, but a thief thieving from his guests is a different thing..."

The woman stands with HANDS ON HER HIPS, staring down the corridor; Link still stands just inches in front of the woman, barely daring to breathe.

Eventually Nabooru SHAKES HER HEAD and turns around; she walks towards the women at table and retrieves a mug of her own, drinking deeply from it. She sits down and joins in the card game.

Link INCHES his way into the room, carefully observing the women before him.

GERUDO WOMAN #2

"Orders are orders, you know: surely the prince has his reasons for all things. It isn't for us to question his actions. We are merely—"

NABOORU

"Thieves, yes. But not kidnappers..."

Link passes by the table, again moving very slowly, and still none of the woman pays him any notice.

GERUDO WOMAN #1

"Hehehe! A 'kidnapping' would be pointless anyway: the twerp isn't worth one busted green rupee! Let the little rube rot, I say!"

Link SCRUNCHES HIS FACE beneath the stone mask. The boy turns around slowly, facing Gerudo Woman #1, and deftly moves one hand through the air, bothering the FRILLED WRIST of the woman's shirt; several playing cards come tumbling out.

Both Nabooru and Gerudo Woman #2 STAND UP; Gerudo Woman #1 FREEZES. No one speaks for some time.

Link SCURRIES OFF in the background as Nabooru and Gerudo Woman #2 LEAN DOWN against the table, their faces closer to Gerudo Woman #1.

GERUDO WOMAN #1

"This has been a very bad week for me..."

EXT. KEEP YARD - LATE NIGHT.

The towering central keep of Hyrule Castle is surrounded by a green lawn and elegant spruce trees lining the square block of the tower at regular intervals. The HANGING GARDENS drape over the otherwise Spartan tower all along its length. TORCHFIRE illuminates several arched windows higher up in the fortification.

Link RUNS along the deserted paved road leading to the keep and STRUGGLES with the large oak doors leading inside. Finding no way to budge them, the boy circles around the outside of the keep until he finds a narrow window. Link wriggles through this and enters the castle keep.

INT. HYRULE CASTLE KEEP - LATE NIGHT.

Link creeps through the lower floors of the keep, finding them deserted. He moves up stairs at various points, walking through different rooms in the keep. At one point he hears an ECHOING BANGING NOISE (like pots and pans being hit together) as well as a MALEVOLENT CACKLING, far off in the distance.

The boy circles one wall and comes face-to-face with a CASTLE KEEP GUARD sitting in a chair directly in front of him; Link GASPS as the man stares at him intently. After a moment Link notices the pallor in the man's face, as well as his lack of movement: he is dead. A PLATE OF GRAPES lies strewn at his feet.

Link moves past this, coming to a LONG HALL that leads to the main dining room, accessible by a SPIRAL STAIRCASE on the other side of the hall.

Many Castle Keep Guards are in this area, all of the dead in various states of repose— some sitting at small tables along the edges of the corridor and others lying on the floor. PLATES OF GRAPES are set at various places; some have been strewn about the room.

KOTAKE cavorts all around these corpses, CACKLING gleefully and banging the plates of grapes together, taunting the lifeless bodies. She 'offers' some grapes to a dead guard sprawled in a chair.

KOTAKE

"Hehehe! More of this, you say: my good sir? Oh, but I think you haven't taken a shine to 'em! I wouldn't have you gobble up another bunch just to please me. Hehehehe!"

The woman goes about the whole room, similarly TAUNTING various guards' bodies.

Link slowly steps into the corridor and begins walking towards the SPIRAL STAIRCASE at the far end of the room.

CLOSE-UP on Link's MASKED FACE, from profile, as he walks; Kotake CAVORTS around in the background (very out of focus) laughing and banging pans together. Eventually Link's head eclipses the woman's body in the frame; he continues walking. Suddenly all NOISES from Kotake cease; there is absolute silence in the corridor. Link suddenly STOPS walking, drawing a nervous breath; he turns his head to the side: Kotake is standing still, seemingly staring right at the boy.

Kotake moves towards Link as the boy remains still as a statue. The woman passes him, however, by less than a foot, crossing the corridor to another Castle Keep Guard's body. She strokes the dead man's chin.

KOTAKE

"You, my dear sir... care to dance? Hahahahaha!"

Link EXHALES softly and continues walking forward; he reaches the beginning of the grand spiral staircase.

LONG-DISTANCE SHOT of Link beginning the staircase climb from further back in the corridor; Kotake's face is visible in the forefront, still stroking the dead guard's face. The woman's grin suddenly CHANGES; although her face is turned

close to the camera she knowingly SLANTS her eyes towards the spiral staircase, LEERING at Link's back.

KOTAKE

(whispering)

"Or would you, perhaps?"

EXT. UPPER PLATEAU OF GANONDORF'S TOWER - LATE NIGHT.

Link trudges over the ruined debris lining the highest tower of the castle. He wearily climbs over a mountain of loose scaffolding and stones, but then suddenly becomes ALERT; there is a FAINT MUNCHING NOISE coming from father up in the debris.

Link unsheathes Dhise Slaighre and worms over the rocks; eventually he comes to a pile of debris sitting against the actual wall of the upper tower; the MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN is sitting with his massive back against the tower wall, idly eating magic beans.

Link lowers his sword and STARES at the man in disbelief.

LINK

"This is easily the most unlikely thing that has ever happened since I returned to Hyrule. And that's saying a lot..."

The Magic Bean Salesman swallows another mouthful of beans and SQUINTS at Link with barely any interest.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Gooooh... zat a customer, izzit?"

NAVI emerges from Link's clothes and PERCHES on his shoulder; she looks at Link with similar incredulity.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Three beans: fifty rupees. Fixed price..."

LINK

"...fair price, huh?"

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Weather the bleakest of winters, they will..."

A shot of both Link and the Magic Bean Salesman in the same frame, in profile. There is a SHARD OF GLASS sitting in the rubble beside the obese salesman that reflects the scene; in the reflection NAYRU takes the place of the Magic Bean Salesman's body (this reflection is, again, not entirely obvious). This scene lasts only as long as the previous line ("Weather the bleakest...") is spoken.

Link SMILES, and then he LAUGHS at the absurdity of the situation. He shakes his head.

LINK

"I haven't got a rupee to my name. You still deal in woodwinds?"

Link HOLDS OUT the OCARINA OF TIME for the man.

The Magic Bean Salesman takes one look at the thing and SHAKES HIS HEAD.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Ooooh... nah-zat, sonny: too many for the collection..."

Link nods and puts the instrument back in a pocket on his vest. He notices the Magic Bean Salesman STARING at his RIGHT EAR.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN

"Ooooh..."

Link FINGERS the RED EARRING on his ear and DETACHES it.

LINK

"What: you want this?"

Link TOSSES it to the Magic Bean Salesman, who catches it clumsily. Link SHRUGS.

LINK

"Go ahead and take it: I won't be needing it anymore, I don't think..."

Link begins walking past the Magic Bean Salesman, but then the obese man suddenly GRIPS Link's hand; Link RECOILS, and finds THREE MAGIC BEANS in his fist. He looks down at the salesman.

MAGIC BEAN SALESMAN
"Fixed price... fair price..."

Link considers the man wordlessly, and then he NODS; he leaves the salesman, who quickly goes back to MUNCHING ON BEANS, and moves around the tower exterior, quickly finding a SHATTERED STAINED GLASS WINDOW on the opposite side. Link begins moving through this but then STOPS; he examines the TOP of the window, where the INTERLOCKING-TRIANGLE SYMBOL is clearly visible.

Link NARROWS HIS EYES and DRAWS Dhise Slaighre. He steps through this window and enters the upper tower.

INT. HYRULE CASTLE KEEP - LATE NIGHT.

The back of Young Link's HEAD is roughly slammed against the stone wall of the circular staircase; the boy GRUNTS in pain.

KOTAKE holds Link by the shoulders, CACKLING. She again slams the boy's body against the wall.

KOTAKE

"Hahahaha! Foolish little child! What is this? Using the magic of a lesser goddess against us? I am Din's handmaiden, stupid boy, and I will have your bones on a spit!"

The woman forcibly RIPS the stone mask from Link's face; beneath it Link is GROWLING and SNEERING defiantly. When he LOOKS UP at Kotake, however, there is a reflection in his EYES: Adult Link moving up a carpeted, winding staircase, SCOWLING and bearing DHISE SLAIGHRE.

Kotake's FACE suddenly goes LIMP with terror.

KOTAKE

"Oh... uh... uhh... ugh... aaaaugh!"

The woman SCREAMS as she views Adult Link's reflection in Young Link's eyes; Kotake suddenly begins to RETCH violently and then she stumbles against the opposite wall of the staircase. She SCREAMS IN PAIN and slumps against the wall, CLUTCHING HER STOMACH.

BLOOD quickly begins pooling down around her ankles, as if it were cascading from up under her clothing.

Kotake begins BABBLING NONSENSE as her eyes become glassy; she loses consciousness.

Young Link stares at the woman's body without significant emotion; he turns, calmly, and then he starts running up the spiral staircase, taking the steps in twos.

INT. GANONDORF'S CASTLE PEAK - LATE NIGHT.

Adult Link winds his way up a large, red-carpeted set of spiral stairs; far away in the distance the muted sounds of an ORGAN echo, faintly playing GANONDORF'S DIRGE.

Link walks forward resolutely, a SCOWL on his face and Dhise Slaighre in his left hand. As he walks there is a small 'mish-mesh' of the scene: Young Link is barely visible walking by the man's side.

CLOSE-UP on Adult Link's face; the man stops walking momentarily, and then he SMILES FAINTLY. He looks to his right (although Young Link is no longer visible).

LINK

"It's about that time. Try to keep a cool head, at least..."

Adult Link continues climbing up the spiral stairs; the ORGAN MUSIC gets louder as he goes. Eventually the stone walls give way to ELEGANT STAINED GLASS WINDOWS. Link appears more IRRITATED and DISORIENTED as he walks.

We see through Link's MIND'S EYE a great glowing source of light far ahead at the top of the stairs (ie: Link can partially see 'through' the walls, much like infrared vision). The concentrated glow appears to be in the shape of a man hunched down over an organ, but as Link continues climbing the stairs this glow becomes unbearable; Link BLINKS and SHIELDS his eyes as he walks. Eventually Link DOUBLES OVER in pain and KNEELS on the staircase; CRADLING his LEFT EYE. When he moves his hand away from his face there is a MASSIVE CRIMSON TEARSTAIN running down his left eye; the eye itself is again blue, but very irritated and marred with RED STREAKS running through the iris.

Link SNARLS and gets to his feet; he continues walking up the staircase, reaching a LARGE ORNATE DOOR. Link reaches out with one hand, but the door slowly OPENS on its own, slowly swinging inward to allow him entry.

The room beyond is spacious— several stories tall— in the shape of an octagon. Against the far wall is a massive PIPE ORGAN, and beyond that the entire wall is covered with WRITHING BLACK VINES, plastered up against the wall in orderly repose.

GANONDORF is sitting at the pipe organ, his back to Link. He stops playing just as Link enters the room. There is a long pause.

GANONDORF

"Wherever doest thou wander..."

The man TURNS in his seat and FLIPS his black cape over one shoulder, GRINNING DEMONICALLY.

GANONDORF

"...o very little thing?"

Ganondorf LAUGHS. He slowly RISES off the organ seat and stands before the wall of vines.

NAVI emerges from Link's clothing. She HOVERS beside Link's head, alert.

GANONDORF

"How great a journey— so long and so lonely— just for this:
just to meet me, here..."

Ganondorf takes two slow steps forward; he is still some distance from Link, however. Link SQUARES HIMSELF defensively using Dhise Slaighre.

GANONDORF

"So now, little thing: what is your business? What's the one thing I can give you in recognition of that journey? My head, perhaps? Or my throne? Just what is it, little thing, that you desire most? And just what is it, little thing, that you came back into this kingdom for?"

Link POINTS Dhise Slaighre at Ganondorf.

LINK
"Where is Zelda?"

Ganondorf LAUGHS heartily.

GANONDORF
"Pity, that: such a lack of vision!"

Link takes two steps forward, menacingly bearing Dhise Slaighre.

Ganondorf HOLDS BOTH HANDS out to either side of his body; the WALL OF VINES behind him part in the middle, as if they were a curtain.

ZELDA is ensnared in the thick of the vines, legs restrained together and her arms forced out to either side of her body. Both her eyes are marred with CRIMSON TEARS from the remnants of her Mind's Eye worms; vines are wrapped around her neck and midsection as well.

She GAGS as the vines surrounding her neck SQUEEZE together.

Link stops in his tracks.

Ganondorf's GRIN deepens. He LOWERS his arms.

The vines around ZELDA'S NECK let-up some, enough that the woman can breathe.

Ganondorf holds up a hand with THREE FINGERS extended.

GANONDORF
"Three Golden Goddesses— bathed in holy light—
Three Golden Goddesses made the world, outright.
But Three Golden Goddesses were too much for one site,
So Three Golden Goddesses geared up for a fight!"

LINK
"Catchy song..."

GANONDORF
"Nursery rhyme, actually. One I'm more than familiar with."

LINK

"I've heard better lullabies, though..."

GANONDORF

"Ha! It's no lullaby: it is a call to action. It's one that I learned from a very young age, but one that I've only come to understand quite recently."

Ganondorf REMOVES ONE BLACK GLOVE from his right hand, slowly; Link watches this movement very carefully.

GANONDORF

"Tell me something: what is your history, little thing? What is your... parentage? What is your name, even?"

LINK

"My name?"

Ganondorf NODS slowly.

LINK

"My name is irrelevant."

Ganondorf LAUGHS.

GANONDORF

"Fair enough. But your history, little thing, is not. Do you know what you are, by chance? You do, don't you? You grew up in the Great Forest, but are you a Kokiri?"

LINK

"No, I'm not—"

GANONDORF

"Were you a Kakarian, abandoned to the woods?"

LINK

"No—"

GANONDORF

"Or of the swamp folk, maybe?"

Ganondorf's GRIN deepens.

GANONDORF

"You know, don't you?"

Link NODS, slowly.

GANONDORF

"What are you, then?"

LINK

"I'm a Hylian. I carry the blood of the Old Shores inside me."

GANONDORF

"And who told you this?"

LINK

"Nobody told me. I just... I--"

GANONDORF

"You just... know..."

Ganondorf HOLDS UP HIS BARE FIST and CLENCHES IT; as he does so a shape takes form along his exposed knuckles: a CAFÉ-AU-LAIT BIRTHMARK smeared across several of his fingers, resembling a TRIANGLE when he makes a fist.

GANONDORF

"Blood from the Old Shores is a very mysterious thing. It's the perfect vessel to hold the wills of the Golden Goddesses..."

Link STARES DOWN at his own semi-exposed chest, noting his own BIRTHMARK. He looks back up at Ganondorf.

GANONDORF

"...for people like myself: for those who would embrace it!"

LINK

"You are a Gerudo!"

GANONDORF

"Maternally, little thing. My worthless birthmother existed only to accept the fruit of pure Hylian blood. What else but a Hylian's blood could overcome the force of Gerudo breeding? What else could cause a Gerudo woman to bear a son?"

Ganondorf TIGHTENS his fist; his BIRTHMARK begins to GLOW.

GANONDORF

"What else could bring forth the perfect vessel for Din's triumph?"

A BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT explodes from Ganondorf's fist; a ball of lightning sails through the air towards Link.

NAVI hovers in front of Link and BRACES HERSELF; the ball-lightning hits her and then COLLAPSES into her frame in another FLASH. Once this clears Navi is left hovering in the air, SNEERING.

Ganondorf SCOFFS and SNAPS HIS FINGERS; there is a 'WHOOSHING NOISE' and a train of BRIGHT PURPLE LIGHT (identical to the one from pg. _____). The purple light reaches Navi, who POSES WITH HER ARMS EXTENDED FORWARD; there is another FLASH of GREEN LIGHT that nullifies the purple. When the flashes clear Navi is left hovering in the air; the fairy SLOWLY MOVES HER ARMS AND LEGS into a 'KUNG-FU-STYLE' pose- taunting- and WIGGLES HER BROW.

Ganondorf SNICKERS and NODS.

GANONDORF

"12 years is time enough to learn a few tricks, I see..."

The man slowly turns around and faces Zelda, who is suspended several feet behind him. As he WALKS TOWARD the woman Link BRACES Dhise Slaighre and moves forward.

Ganondorf quickly RAISES A HAND; the vines along ZELDA'S MIDSECTION suddenly constrict, causing Zelda to CRY OUT in pain.

Link STOPS.

GANONDORF

"A bastard desert prince... a noble royal lady..."

Ganondorf STROKES ZELDA'S CHEEK, prompting a look of REVULSION from the woman.

GANONDORF

"...and a fairy-bearing wanderer. The differences are startling, really..."

Ganondorf again FACES Link.

GANONDORF

"...but the common, uniting factor is undeniable! We are all bearers of the elder blood, and we are all pawns for our Goddesses' wills."

LINK

"Their wills? They're not mutually exclusive! I honor them all--"

GANONDORF

"But you belong to one, and only one. The power you have within you is unimaginable, and it is not the thing for child's play! These toys are too much for you: I command you to return them to me!"

LINK

"You can't honestly believe the Goddesses are using us to fight some kind of divine proxy war? That's insane!"

Ganondorf CROSSES HIS ARMS; the man SNORTS through his nose. His BREATH is visible in the musty room.

GANONDORF

"I'd certainly object to the rules, too. If I happened to represent a lesser Goddess, as you do..."

Ganondorf again TOUCHES ZELDA'S CHEEK, GRINNING.

GANONDORF

"Oh, Farore's quite the wise one, but that wisdom wasn't enough, it seems, to overcome some very human frailties in her chosen vessel..."

Zelda LOOKS TO ONE SIDE with a resigned and forlorn look.

LINK

"Don't you touch her!"

Ganondorf again LOOKS at Link.

GANONDORF

"And you! To come here, and now: such irrational actions, befitting an Irrational Goddess!"

A noise like MUFFLED SCREAMING sounds from the rear of the chamber (near the door Link entered through); two LARGE

CREATURES slowly lumber out of the shadows of the corners and into the light of the room. Both are extremely large (about the same dimensions as the Iron Knuckle). One of them is a bulky terror of skeletal material and the other is a bloody, fleshy thing. Both wear LARGE HELMETS on their heads identical to the one worn by the Iron Knuckle.

These are, respectively, the BONE KNUCKLE and the FLESH KNUCKLE.

Link doesn't face these newcomers, but WATCHES as they approach from behind, stopping about ten feet away from him and standing at ATTENTION.

GANONDORF

"By the way: do you think she called out for you? Your little Kokiri friend, I mean? You've seen so much death that I'm sure you're somewhat hardened to it all, but poor little— what was her name? Saira? She was different. You didn't see her death, because she died all alone. There was no one to comfort her, no one to cradle her broken body, no one to even hold her hand as she slipped into the void. Do you think she called out for you? Do you think she warbled out your name while she lay dying? If she did, do you think it was in a tearful plea, or a bitter curse?"

Link's LIPS TREMBLE.

Ganondorf's GRIN WIDENS.

GANONDORF

"Would you like to know? Hahahaha!"

Link LOWERS Dhise Slaighre, ENERVATED.

Ganondorf SNICKERS and tousles Zelda's hair.

GANONDORF

"All your precious Sages are dead, and their little plan to 'purify' this land of my presence is at an end— that's old news— but you needn't worry: the 'judgment' you so desperately desired will most certainly take place! Judgment is Din's specialty, after all! Once we've prepared to the Temple of Time I can grant both of you your wishes at once: two 'Heroes of Time' are better than one, after all!"

Link and Zelda EXCHANGE GLANCES.

GANONDORF

"With the blood of your bodies watering the Sacred Ground I will unlock the door to the Goddesses' domain! In the Sacred Realm I shall meet Din Herself, and she shall bathe me in her radiance! With that power in my hands I shall take the other Goddesses' powers as well, since their chosen vessels will no longer need them! Their divided powers shall become one in my presence, and it shall be... it shall be glorious!"

LINK

"You're insane!"

The FLESH KNUCKLE and BONE KNUCKLE take several steps toward Link, closing the gap on either side of him.

GANONDORF

"Oh: to think that 12 years ago I had all the pieces of the puzzle right in front of me, but to be so blind! I've learned all the simple parlor tricks of 'magic' this world has to offer— but what mere run-off that is compared to the great power beyond this plane! I've taken control of a kingdom as powerful and as vast as any this world has to offer, but what simple fodder it all is compared to the power of the Goddesses! How long I've waited to receive their glory! Time enough that nothing need be rushed..."

Gannodorf again STROKES ZELDA'S CHEEK.

GANONDORF

"...time enough to even let the two of you bask in the embrace of your... 'friendship'."

Link GLARES at Ganondorf.

GANONDORF

"Hehehe! Come, now: I'm not ungrateful for your assistance, after all, and the old legends don't call for virgin sacrifices. There's even time enough for a brief 'duet', if you two should wish it!"

Ganondorf looks at Zelda, SNEERING.

GANONDORF

"We could see how well you fare with a woodwind..."

Ganondorf LAUGHS HEARTILY.

Link SNARLS.

Ganondorf looks back at Link.

GANONDORF

"Or did I misread the motive behind that blind devotion of yours? Hehehe! How very like Nayru you are, little thing!
How very pathetic you truly are!"

LINK

"But important enough for your needs, huh? Indispensable enough, huh?"

GANONODORF

"I figured you had some small part to play in all this early on, but as to your actual possession of a Goddess' will, no. That was a startling revelation to me; quite the coincidence..."

LINK

"Coincidence?"

Ganondorf LOOKS at Zelda, smiling, and again tousles the woman's hair.

GANONDORF

"All those visions you saw— images of Dhise Slaighre, your 'all-powerful' weapon of evil's bane— they weren't ever meant for you— or at least they weren't sent with you in mind— and yet somehow they found a way into your skull after all..."

Both Link and Zelda's eyes BULGE slightly; Zelda LOOKS at Ganondorf with SURPRISE.

GANONDORF

"It was fortuitous, really: I suppose that if she were the only one to receive those visions then we'd have never gotten that pesky little sword out of the ground, would we have?"

Zelda's face ROILS with sudden anger, devolving into unspeakable RAGE.

INT. DINING HALL OF THE CASTLE KEEP - LATE NIGHT.

Young Link approaches the top of the circular stairs; there is a HEAVY OAK DOOR at the top, barely open an inch, allowing bright light through a small slit. A WHIMPERING NOISE is audible on the other side and then a WOODEN BANGING SOUND. The WHIMPERING then resumes.

Link puts his EYE up to the crack in the door: we see into the room from this perspective.

A large room with an oversized table sits on the other side of the door. All around this are PLANTS growing in a stone trough, where they approach the many windows on all sides of the room and disappear outside (to 'hang' in the air). Several LARGE EARTHENWARE JARS dot the walls as well, containing small plants.

The table is SET with an ornate meal; the far chair (the one furthest from the door) is knocked over and a large section of the WHITE TABLECLOTH is messily strewn down around the chair. Massive BLOOD STAINS grace the cloth and trickle over the floor.

Link MOVES his face a little, allowing a little more of the room near the table to come into focus; suddenly a small body goes crashing against the table from off-screen. Zelda- in elegant eveningwear- lands beside the table with a PAINED WHIMPER.

CLOSE-UP of the girl lying on the floor; she cradles her RIGHT ARM, which appears injured. There is the sound of FOOTFALLS, slow and deliberate, and then two CRUEL-LOOKING BLACK BOOTS come to stand beside the supine girl.

Zelda looks UP with tearful eyes; her lips TREMBLE.

A dark hand reaches down and effortless LIFTS THE GIRL up by the neckline of her dress; Ganondorf draws Zelda up close to his face, suspending her in the air and SMILING DEVILISHLY. We see a smear of what appears to be HUMAN BLOOD all along his lips and mouth.

GANONDORF

"Dinner not to your liking, Highness? Or should I say your Majesty, hmm?"

Zelda's lips MOVE with an inaudible gibber; the girl appears highly traumatized.

Link's EYE BULGES as he looks through the crack in the door; the boy's brow soon FURROWS into a look of ANGER.

GANONDORF

"Not much for polite dinner conversation either, eh?
Hehehe! That's fine, too..."

Ganondorf lifts the girl closer to his head, still SMILING.

GANONDORF

"You know: I prefer my kings served medium rare— truth be told— but when it comes to princesses..."

Suddenly, without warning, Ganondorf forcibly KISSES the girl on the lips; Zelda WRITHES in revulsion, and when Ganondorf moves his face away from hers Zelda's lips and mouth are ringed with blood stains (transferred from the blood on Ganondorf's face).

Ganondorf slowly (vulgarly) LICKS HIS LIPS.

GANONDORF

"...those taste just fine raw, I think. Don't even need seasoning! You're certainly sweet enough on your own, aren't you?"

Ganondorf then VIOLENTLY SHAKES the girl, prompting a PAINED SHRIEK from Zelda.

GANONDORF

"And I'm going to need you to keep being sweet, too. Because if you're not then so help me you'll be put out for dinner with the wild beasts, and they will eat you raw!"

There is a faint sound behind Ganondorf— before the man can turn around an EARTHENWARE JAR is suddenly smashed against his forehead; Link is standing on the dining table. As Ganondorf CRIES OUT he drops Zelda, who lands hard on the stone floor. Link jumps down onto the floor and firmly grips the shocked girl's hand, forcibly leading her back out of the dining hall and down the circular stairs.

INT. GANONDORF'S CASTLE PEAK - LATE NIGHT.

GANONDORF

"And now the ignoble story of the fairy-bearing wanderer and his broken-shell-of-a-princess comes to an end..."

Zelda's face is still contorted in anger; Link stares at the ground, but then looks up.

LINK

"12 years ago, all those visions. That was you?"

GANONDORF

"It's an easy thing, tricking a weak mind!"

LINK

"You manipulated the mind of an innocent little girl for your own selfish gain?"

GANONDORF

"Well, she certainly needed an impetus to start helping me in my plans, didn't she? I thought that outright asking might not be the best approach!"

Ganondorf LAUGHS as Link and Zelda STARE AT EACH OTHER; Zelda slowly twists her RIGHT HAND in its vine-bonds: she holds a SHINING BLACK MARBLE in her palm.

Link SMILES.

LINK

"By my count, though, you've made two serious mistakes, you nipple-ripping pig-faced coward..."

Ganondorf's grin suddenly turns into a SCOWL.

GANONDORF

"Wh- what did you just say?"

LINK

"You heard me, 'Ganon'! You may be a fat, greedy pig of a man, and you may have sucked the life out of this kingdom for 12 years straight, but there're two things I don't think you counted on."

Link holds up his right hand, bearing a single digit.

LINK

"One: you actually think you know the will of a deity. You don't, and you can't!"

GANONDORF

"Ah, because of course you do, right? Hehehe! Well, then: just what else have I neglected, hmm?"

Link MOVES A SECOND FINGER up to join the first.

LINK

"Second, and most importantly: you don't- and you can't- possibly know the will of a princess!"

Link moves his THUMB away from his fist as well; we see the THREE MAGIC BEANS tucked away in the remnants of his fist.

Link looks at Zelda and WINKS.

Zelda SCOWLS and FLICKS HER WRIST; the shining black marble sails through the air and lands directly in front of Ganondorf. It EXPLODES IN A FLASH OF LIGHT, blinding Ganondorf, and Link pitches his three MAGIC BEANS through the air; they impact the vines holding Zelda in various places, causing the vines to 'ripple' and wither. At the same time Ganondorf COLLAPSES to his knees and HOWLS in pain.

Zelda falls forward over the ground, where Link catches her (the woman's limbs appear slightly numb from her lengthy time in the restraints).

The FLESH KNUCKLE and BONE KNUCKLE lumber forward, passing Ganondorf as he still reels on one knee.

NAVI flies into a space between Link and Zelda and the two Knuckles; POSING MENACINGLY. When the Knuckles continue approaching Navi goes 'spreadeagle' in the air; a SHIMMERING CURTAIN of green light 'explodes' out from her body, hovering like a transparent wall. The Knuckles LUNGE for Link and Zelda, but when their weapons pass into this shimmering curtain they are STUCK, as if encased in drying cement.

Navi GRINS SAVAGELY and SLAMS HER HANDS TOGETHER; the curtain of green light EXPLODES into BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT, engulfing the Knuckles' blades and most of the creatures'

WEAPON-WIELDING ARMS. When the light fades the Knuckles' weapons have disintegrated and each of their arms is DISFIGURED.

Navi COLLAPSES onto the ground after this, PANTING; a small sprut of BLOOD trickles from one of her nostrils.

Link leads Zelda out the large door he entered through; as they flee Link hears Ganondorf SCREAMING AFTER HIM.

GANONDORF

"Boy!"

Link TURNS in time to see Ganondorf on his feet with his FIST in front of his face; the TRIANGLE BIRTHMARK on his fingers again glows and again a volley of ball-lightning sails through the air.

Link stands in front of Zelda and BRACES himself; holding Dhise Slaighre in front of his face. He SNARLS as the lightning reaches him and then SWINGS the sword through the air, as if hitting a baseball.

The lightning hits the sword's blade head-on and then continues through Link's hands and into his body, sending the man reeling backwards and landing hard on the floor.

Zelda RUSHES to his side.

ZELDA

"Wha- what were you thinking?"

LINK

(dazed)

"It seemed... kinda like a good idea at the time..."

Link COUGHS UP a small plume of smoke as Zelda helps him to his feet.

LINK

"Now, though: I'm thinking run."

The pair race down the spiral staircase with the Flesh Knuckle and the Bone Knuckle directly on their heels.

NAVI arrives at the doorway between the Knuckles and the fleeing Link and Zelda. She again POSES MENACINGLY and

again makes herself 'spreadeagle' in the air. The FLESH KNUCKLE proceeds forward and Navi quickly GESTURES in its direction, causing an eruption of WHITE LIGHT that dissuades the Knuckle from proceeding.

This activity causes SIGNIFICANT PANTING from the fairy and leaves her flying ERRATICALLY in the air, no longer in perfect hover. (This part of the scene is without any ambient sound or music except for Navi's HEAVY, LABORED BREATHING).

SLOW, DELIBERATE FOOTFALLS sound from behind the Knuckles; Ganondorf slowly walks up between the Knuckles, staring at the fair with an UNSETTLING SMILE.

Navi tries to appear MEANACING, but another spurt of BLOOD from her other nostril runs down her cheek and the fairy continues WOBBLING in the air. After a tense few seconds Navi SIGHS HARD and falls from the air, landing softly on the ground on ALL FOURS, COUGHING.

Ganondorf slowly ('idly') walks past the Knuckles towards the doorway.

Navi begins CRAWLING towards the spiral staircase (ie: moving at a hopelessly pathetic rate).

Ganondorf stands over the fairy, still looking down at her with a SMILE. He slowly RAISES ONE BOOT in the air, pausing for a considerable time, and then SLAMS IT DOWN HARD; the boot lands on Navi's LEFT LEG, CRUSHING part of it.

Navi's HEAD SPASMS UP and the fairy GNASHES HER TEETH TOGETHER.

Ganondorf removes his boot and LAUGHS sadistically.

Navi ROLLS OVER onto her back, lying spread on the ground and still PANTING hard. A SHADOW comes over her entire body.

Ganondorf's SNEER DEEPENS as he holds his foot over Navi's body. The pair STARE AT EACH OTHER. After another considerable pause Ganondorf BRINGS HIS FOOT DOWN.

Immediately before the boot crushes her body Navi's face CONTORTS WITH EFFORT; GREEN LIGHT explodes from the fairy's

body and another SHIMMERING GREEN CURTAIN of light explodes before her. This immediately sends Ganondorf REELING backwards, sailing through the air and into his Knuckles—who all fall down into a heap.

Navi immediately takes to the air and looks down on Ganondorf, who looks back up at the creature with HATEFUL EYES.

Navi SPITS BLOOD at him.

NAVI
"Fucker!"

The fairy immediately DARTS down the spiral staircase, moving EXCEEDINGLY FAST.

INT. HYRULE CASTLE KEEP - LATE NIGHT.

Young Link races down the spiral staircase, leading Zelda by the hand; the girl moves in a SHOCKED DAZE and Link must prod her onward.

Once the pair reach the bottom of the stairs a TORTURED SCREAM erupts from up the staircase. Link sees a SHADOW quickly descending the stairs and pushes Zelda behind him.

Ganondorf rounds the stairs and GLARES at the boy.

Link quickly unsheathes his OYSTER KNIFE and SNEERS at the man, again pushing Zelda behind him.

Ganondorf slowly approaches the pair. He speaks with UNSETTLING CALM.

GANONDORF
"I'm... going to visit... such pain on you. I'm... going to carve you, piece by piece, with a trillion non-fatal wounds. You'll wish, first, that you had never been born. Then that I'd never been born. Oh, you'll wish... the Golden Goddesses... never gave your father the idea to stick your mother in the first place!"

Ganondorf LUNGES FOR THE CHILDREN at the end of this speech (on the line '...in the first place'). Link suddenly RAMS HIS KNIFE against the side wall by the staircase entrance,

SEVERING a rope and causing a HEAVY METAL PORTCULLIS to come down between the man and the children.

Ganondorf SCREAMS and moves one arm through the gate, desperately reaching for Link. Unable to do so the man brings his arm back through the gate and stares at the children intently.

Link turns to Zelda and motions for her to RUN; the girl half-heartedly moves away down the corridor. Link looks back at Ganondorf one last time. Ganondorf POINTS AT LINK and speaks very calmly.

GANONDORF

"I am going to kill you, little thing. Do you hear me? I am going to kill you!"

Link GLOWERS at the man and then turns away, racing after Zelda.

Link searches for Zelda and finally finds the girl down another flight of stairs, TREMBLING in a corner beside a table. The boy tries to get her to her feet, but Zelda merely WHIMPERS IN FEAR each time Link tries to take hold of her; Link recognizes the girl's distress and awkwardly kneels down beside her; he carefully puts one hand on the girl's shoulder, holding it as she sobs.

ZELDA

"I- I- Impa... s- she said she'd be there. She'd be there! F- for me! W- w- why would she leave me? Where did she go? Why did she go? W- w- where... where?"

Link MOVES his body around so that he is kneeling in front of the girl; he takes hold of both her shoulders, patiently staring at her.

Eventually Zelda LOOKS UP, still tearful. The girl SNIFFS loudly, and then sounds more composed.

ZELDA

"W- we have to get away from here, don't we? We have to move."

Link NODS.

Zelda stands up with Link's help. Both children hear a LOUD BANGING noise from back in the corridor.

Link LOOKS AROUND quickly, finally noticing a small DEPRESSION in the floor against one of the walls. Zelda comes up and stands beside the boy.

ZELDA

"What're we going to do? How can we escape?"

Link looks the girl UP AND DOWN, then stares at the depression in the floor; the boy gently takes Zelda's hand and moves her up against the wall.

Zelda looks at the boy CURIOUSLY.

Another LOUD BANGING NOISE from back in the corridor startles both children; Link quickly STOMPS on a small foot pedal against the wall; this causes the depression Zelda is standing on to give way: it is a small REFUSE DRAINAGE SYSTEM. The girl vanishes down the hole.

Link quickly CLOSES this hidden floor tile and FACES the corridor he entered through, SNEERING as another LOUD NOISE sounds.

EXT. KEEP YARD - LATE NIGHT.

Zelda slides through a small tunnel, emerging in the flower beds outside the keep with a thud.

Zelda stands up, disoriented, and stumbles out of the manicured trees and onto the keep lawn. The SOUND OF SOMEONE APPROACHING, however, forces the girl back into the shrubbery. Zelda hunkers down, trembling, and tries to 'worm' through the bush in the other direction from the noise. When the noise stops the girl pauses, lying with her face against the dirt.

Suddenly a strong hand PULLS Zelda out of the dirt with a SCREAM; the girl is deposited on the keep lawn and looks up to see IMPA, standing over the girl and SMILING WARMLY.

INT. HYRULE CASTLE KEEP - LATE NIGHT.

Link quickly races down a side corridor in the keep; the boy retrieves a pan of grapes beside a dead keep guard and

BANGS THE PAN against tabletops, chairbacks and other furniture as he races through the keep.

Link runs through many corridors making a racket, however he soon grows SUSPICIOUS by the lack of any obvious pursuit. Link passes a window and notices ZELDA and IMPA crossing the keep yard.

At this point there is a 'mish-mesh' of the scene; Adult Link and Zelda are moving over uneven flooring and going down STEPS (these are not present in Young Link's timeframe). As the pair move Adult Link runs RIGHT THROUGH the body of Young Link, and as he is moving down a staircase their heads are ABSOLUTELY EVEN. The man turns his head, very briefly, exposing the IRRITATED REMNANTS of the mind's eye worm in his left eye. This perfectly overlaps with Young Link's own left eye. This scene is very brief, and then the 'mish-meshing' effect is gone.

At the moment Young Link's eye lines-up with Adult Link's eye the boy GASPS. He is still staring at Impa and Zelda as the pair run off across the lawn.

Link DROPS the pan at his FEET (camera stationary on the pan lying on the carpet). Link goes DASHING OFF down the corridor at top speed.

EXT. GANONDORF'S CASTLE - LATE NIGHT.

Link and Zelda reach the bottom of Ganondorf's Castle and confront the imposing main PORTCULLIS. Link manipulates the PULLEY controlling it and it rises slowly. When it's raised enough both he and Zelda dart beneath it, followed by Navi.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP of a pair of crossed legs on the ground; Link and Zelda race over the front terrace of the castle and both stop on sight of the person before them.

NABOORU is staring into her lap, with her hands wrapped over her midsection, as if meditating. Upon Link and Zelda's approach the woman looks up with a smile.

The woman bears a FROSTBITE WOUND on one shoulder and a severe HEAT BURN on the other. There is a CUT along one of her cheeks.

Link appears STUNNED.

LINK
"Nabooru?"

NABOORU
"Hello."

The woman gently LEANS to one side, getting a slightly better look at Zelda.

NABOORU
"And her Highness..."

Zelda NODS confusedly.

Nabooru looks back at Link.

NABOORU
"You took your sweet time, didn't you? And I thought I might never meet up with you, again."

LINK
"But... that monster—"

Nabooru MOTIONS BEHIND HER WITH HER HEAD. Camera PAN UP reveals the CORPSE OF VOLVAGIA; the creature is spanning the entirety of the partially-destroyed VINE BRIDGE and it is no longer afire (ie: its smoldering body appears to be made of flesh).

Nabooru SMILES.

NABOORU
"I do not mean to bore you; it is a long story..."

LINK
"Bless your thieving heart! We've got to go, now!"

Nabooru SHAKES HER HEAD.

NABOORU
"You may go: finish your mission. Mine is not done, yet..."

ZELDA
"Ganondorf and his agents are right behind us: you must come with us!"

NABOORU

"Beg pardon: I must do nothing. I choose, however, to do my duty. I will keep this pass for you, as long as possible."

Link OPENS HIS MOUTH.

NABOORU

"More words will only earn you less time to work with. I suggest you go, now."

Link nods slowly, pulling Zelda by the hand. As he passes Nabooru the woman SMILES SEDUCTIVELY.

NABOORU

"After all: I'll always have the chance to meet up with you again... won't I?"

As Zelda passes Nabooru she looks down at the Gerudo.

ZELDA

"Th- thank you..."

Nabooru SQUINTS at the woman.

NABOORU

"Have we... no, we certainly have not. What sense would that make?"

Link and Zelda stumble over Volvagia's corpse, struggling to cross the ruined vine bridge.

CLOSE-UP on NABOORU'S FACE, with Link and Zelda in the background; the woman SMILES BROADLY.

Nabooru removes her hands from her body; there is COPIOUS BLOOD STAINS on the bricks beneath her body and her clothing is marred with BLOOD STAINS all along her abdomen.

NABOORU

"Still: there is something familiar, there. Hehehe!
Confound it all: Din take these foolish vagries of the mind!"

The woman SLUMPS OVER, eventually falling to one side, resting her head on the brick floor of the terrace.

NABOORU

"Din take...m- me..."

Zelda and Link make it across the chasm; Link helps the woman descend Volvagia's snout.

ZELDA

"What do we do? Where are we going, now?"

LINK

"You and Ganondorf have competing ideas about what's supposed to happen over at the Temple of Time. If he's right then we'd be damning ourselves by going back there, but if we're right then it's the only way to put an end to his rule. Well, I don't know about you, but given everything else that's happened so far, I'm willing to go on a little faith..."

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - VERY EARLY MORNING.

Impa leads Young Zelda through the main entrance to the temple of time. She deposits the young girl in one of the pews of the main chamber, where Zelda PANTS with fatigue.

ZELDA

"Wh- what do we do, now? Why are we here?"

Impa sits in the pew beside the girl, SMILING WISTFULLY.

IMPA

"Now... we obey the will of the Goddesses..."

Impa STROKES Zelda's hair, but then suddenly GRABS it forcefully.

IMPA

"...and we are here to see that will through!"

Zelda CRIES OUT in pain at the same time that Young Link lets out a LOUD WAR CRY; the boy TACKLES Impa from behind, forcing the woman to double over violently and slam her forehead into the pew in front of her. Link and the woman STRUGGLE on the floor, and when Impa rolls over it is revealed to be KOZUME- not Impa.

The old woman GRABS LINK'S THROAT and holds him against the carpet.

ZELDA attempts to get the old woman off the boy, but Kozume PUSHES her out of the way. The old woman CACKLES.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK: Link and Zelda move up the Temple of Time's staircase. They are pursued by the FLESH KNUCKLE and BONE KNUCKLE, however before the creatures can intercept Link and Zelda they encounter a SMALL REDEAD blocking their path.

The Knuckles stop in their tracks, considering the little ReDead. Eventually they begin to move forward.

A STRANGE, GUTTERAL COOING suddenly sounds from all directions; a SWARM of ReDead appear from all directions, awkwardly stumbling up to the Knuckles. Both Knuckles begin ATTACKING the creatures, but the sheer number of ReDead ensures that, within moments, both Knuckles are BURIED under a dogpile of zombies.

Following this there is a LOUD RUMBING NOISE, and suddenly GANONDORF bursts forth from the ground about fifty meters away from the temple entrance, his body supported by many black vines. The man LAUGHS darkly and holds his fist in front of his face, firing multiple rounds of BALL-LIGHTNING from his fist. The shots miss their marks and Link and Zelda enter the temple.

The pair race past the rear row of pews before the vines behind them BURST THROUGH the granite rear of the temple; Ganondorf emerges from the granite dust billowing through the air and launches another BALL-LIGHTNING salvo.

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK: NAVI darts down through the air, attacking Kozume's face in an effort to keep her from strangling Link. The woman SLAMS Link's head against the carpeted floor and deftly CLAPS HER HANDS in front of her face; this effort effectively CRUSHES NAVI between the woman's hands.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK: One of Ganondorf's ball-lightning shots nearly hits Zelda, although Link pushes the woman out of the way. At the very last second, however, NAVI flies up directly in front of Link, her face an inch from his, as the ball-lightning impacts directly against her back, effectively INCINERATING her (perhaps slow-motion for this very brief scene... if it must be done...)

Navi's simultaneous death in both timelines (and in the exact same location) causes an 'explosive rupture' between both timelines (a temporary, 'LSD-ish window').

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK: BLACK ASHES fall in copious amounts from Kozume's hands, scattering over Link. The boy plasters his hands over his head and rolls his head backward, SCREAMING IN AGONY (note: the pain presented here appears to have an actual PHYSICAL component to it as much as an emotional one).

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK: the man falls forward onto the ground, following the shockwave of the ball-lightning. Thick GRANITE DUST obscures much of the temple scenery. When he ROLLS to one side he can see Kozume through the 'LSD-ish window' sitting on top of Young Link, CACKLING. Link instinctively STABS Dhise Slaighre into the 'LSD-ish window', where the sword hits its mark: Kozume is struck in the side, and the woman SCREAMS IN PAIN while falling over to one side. When Link gets to his feet he checks Dhise Slaighre's blade: fresh red blood graces the blade and it MAGICALLY DRIES as he watches.

As the GRANITE DUST settles Ganondorf emerges from the haze, still suspended on many black vines. Many other vines enter in his wake, tearing HOLES in the temple in certain places as they hover, menacingly, all around the rear of the temple.

Link stands beside Zelda and watches as all these vines enter; he looks around at various parts of the temple CEILING, beginning to show cracks. Link's EYES move across this scene until they come to a FRACTURED PILLAR sitting right beside Zelda.

Ganondorf LAUGHS.

GANONDORF

"So: who will be first, then?"

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK: Kozume is lying against a row of pews, bleeding profusely. The woman holds a hand over her side in disbelief, GIBBERING.

KOZUME

"F- fresh... k- kid! This time... we'll get serious! R-
right... Kotake... right?"

Young Zelda watches Kozume babble, as the delirious woman is vaguely staring in the girl's direction.

KOZUME

"...b- wh- what's that thing ov- over your head? Huh? I- I do n- not have one, too! I... can't... I- I'm only fou- I'm only four- I... all for a- a- stupid... kid..."

Kozume's eyes GLASS OVER; the woman dies.

There is a LOUD NOISE from the temple entrance: the big doors leading outside are THROWN OPEN and a SINISTER SHADOW graces the doorstep.

Zelda STARTS, then gets up and runs over to Link.

The boy is ROLLING on the ground, openly CRYING and holding his hands over his face and eyes. A SMALL SPURT OF BLOOD is training out one of his nostrils.

Zelda STRUGGLES to hold the boy still; eventually she gets Link's attention by holding him down while staring at him with SERIOUS EYES.

ZELDA

"We have to get away from here: we have to move!"

The girl gets Link to his feet and the pair move off down one of the ANCILLARY CHAMBERS in the temple; they dart amongst rows of pillars until Link slows. Unable to go any further the boy COLLAPSES in a dark corner, CURLED INTO A TIGHT BALL and SNIFFLING, WRITHING in physical and emotional pain.

Zelda sits in the corner with Link. She appears as if she is about to SPEAK, but the girl closes her mouth; she crosses her legs and pulls LINK'S HEAD up against her lap. She STROKES the boy's hair.

ZELDA

(whispering)

"I'm... so sorry! For everything! I am..."

Link TREMBLES in the girl's lap; he is still SNIFFLING.
They remain this way for nearly thirty seconds.

Zelda gently moves the boy's head out of her lap and slowly stands up.

ZELDA

"Listen: no matter what happens, don't make a sound, okay?
Just stay here, and stay quiet..."

The girl MOVES OFF down the row of pillars.

SCENE-CUT to ADULT LINK: Ganondorf hangs in the air,
suspended by vines, LAUGHING heartily.

Link APPROACHES the man, coming to a stop right beside the
FRACTURED PILLAR.

LINK

"What were you looking for, again? A 'Hero of Time', right?
You want one, you have one!"

GANONDORF

"But now the two of you haven't got the time for your
little 'duet'. That's hardly heroic, isn't it? Too bad!
Pity your disobedience, little thing!"

LINK

"Disobedience? Actually, I've always pitied my impulsivity.
It's a real problem, sometimes..."

GANONDORF

"Indeed..."

LINK

"Zelda, here, probably pities the juvenile little 'martyr's
complex' she was living with for all those years. It takes
a heart of stone not to have regrets, after all..."

Ganondorf LAUGHS.

GANONDORF

"Should I pity my heartlessness, then?"

LINK

"No: in your case I would pity your lack of architectural knowledge."

Link suddenly THRUSTS all his weight against the fragile FRACTURED PILLAR, causing the pillar to CRUMBLE; a good portion of the roof also comes undone and begins crashing down in large chunks.

Link immediately DIVES on top of Zelda, forcing the woman onto the ground while he covers as much of her body as possible.

More of the ceiling begins to cave in; several columns of black vines move up to protect Ganondorf's body, however he soon disappears under the massive granite rubble that rains down all around him.

The deafening CRASH of the falling ceiling is audible; in its aftermath the entire chamber is choked with STONE DUST. DEBRIS is everywhere.

Eventually Link STIRS beneath a pile of rubble; the pews have given him and Zelda some protection. Link MOANS in pain, while Zelda rolls to one side, resting beside him; she is unconscious but breathing regularly.

Link STRUGGLES to get up, and does so again; each time he finds himself stuck. He looks behind him and realizes that he is PINNED beneath stone rubble from the waist down. He STRUGGLES more in vain, and then COLLAPSES, exhausted. He stares back at the large BED OF VINES on the other side of the chamber; most of that area is buried under debris.

There is MOVEMENT among the vines, however.

Link lazily CRACKS his neck; he notices a BULGE in the back of Zelda's clothes; the tip of a short bow and a small quiver of broadhead arrows. Link slowly removes each and then sets a broadhead in the bow, POINTING it at the movement in the vines.

GANONDORF slowly emerges from the mess, BLEEDING from several cuts and bruises; his LEGS appear broken. He struggles with his arms to emerge from the vines before seeing Link, aiming an arrow at him. He says nothing.

After a brief pause Link FIRES the arrow; it hits Ganondorf's RIGHT HAND dead-on, pinning it to the broken wooden base of a pew that he was holding for support and provoking a SCREAM from the man.

LINK

"You just wait right there, Ganon. The Goddesses will be with you shortly..."

Link COLLAPSES beside Zelda and SIGHS.

LINK

"It's true: I wasn't the Hero of Time... but I know who is. Goddesses help him: I know who it is..."

SCENE-CUT to YOUNG LINK: the boy is still huddled-up in the dark corner of the temple. He WIPES HIS EYES and sits up, SNIFFLING. He looks down at his hand, noticing all the snot and tear stains, as well as some blood from his nose.

LINK'S HAND slowly CLOSES into a fist; it TREMBLES as the boy's brow FURROWS. Link SNARLS.

Young Zelda CREEPS through the ancillary chamber in the temple, ALERT as small NOISES sound in the distance; suddenly, however, Ganondorf emerges from behind a pillar and grabs the girl. Zelda STRUGGLES and SCREAMS as the man drags her towards one of the temple's ancillary exits.

Link suddenly ATTACKS from the rear; SLICING into GANONDORF'S CALF with his oyster knife. This causes Ganondorf to DROP Zelda near the doorway. The man TURNS, screaming with rage, and roughly PUSHES Link headfirst into the stone wall of the temple side; during this time the man also unsheathes the LONG BLACK DAGGER from his belt.

Ganondorf immediately STABS Link once in the back as the boy is pinned against the wall. Link GASPS (he does not scream), after which Ganondorf DRAWS THE KNIFE out of the wound.

Link STUMBLES to the ground as Ganondorf LAUGHS. Dazed, he touches the front of his green tunic, which SPOTS UP WITH BLOOD as he feels it. Then the boy jumps up and LUNGES at Ganondorf with enough force to make him lose his balance; he falls down at the doorway.

Zelda quickly gets to her feet and PULLS A CORD at the doorway; a PORTCULLIS comes down in freefall, CRUSHING Ganondorf's ANKLE. The man SCREAMS IN RAGE and KICKS Zelda through the portcullis with enough force to send the girl against the far wall of the doorway, where she lands unconscious.

Link FALLS onto his rear, breathing with difficulty. Still dazed, the boy reaches around his back, aimlessly feeling his wound there. BLOODY SPIT soon forms at the corners of his mouth.

The boy looks over at Ganondorf, who is SCREAMING as he TWISTS HIS LEG in the portcullis' grip. Link CALMLY RISES, holding a pew for support.

GANONDORF

"Little... bastards! Bastards, all! AAAARGH!"

Link TURNS AWAY from this scene and begins TROTting down the pew rows, towards the ceremonial hall.

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - DAWN.

The SOUND OF A CHILD'S SHOES ON MARBLE, frantic, DRAWING CLOSER over time, accompanied by A CHILD'S HEAVY, LABORED BREATHING.

Link comes racing into the hall in the distance, running unsteadily. His LABORED BREATHING sound is louder. A CLOSE-UP as he stumbles against a WHITE MARBLE WALL reveals copious BLOOD STAINING; he is leaving a TRAIL OF BLOOD as he runs up to the CIRCULAR ROCK PLATFORM.

A TORTURED SCREAM erupts from far away down the hall.

Link collapses near the PLATFORM, crawls on his knees and then lands FACE DOWN on the floor. A TRAIN OF BLOOD moves over the MARBLE FLOOR from the boy to the base of the PLATFORM. AN EERIE HUM rises.

THE BOY'S EYES reflect the circular stone platform; unnatural WHITE LIGHT rises. Link's HEAVY, LABORED BREATHING rises also; the breaths come quicker and his eyes fall to unsteady saccades.

SLOW ZOOM ON THE BOY'S EYES.

Link's BLOOD curls around the uneven ground around Dhise Slaighre. The ground itself is GLOWING with an ethereal light.

All the parts of the ground stained with Link's blood begin to BOIL, and then FRACTURE; a FISSURE develops in the ground and a MASSIVE HOLE swallows much of the ground, including Dhise Slaighre, which disappears from view. A MASSIVE SHAFT OF WHITE LIGHT erupts from the hole.

EXT. TEMPLE OF TIME - (CONTINUOUS).

The SHAFT OF LIGHT explodes out the top of the temple, rising up into the Hyrule sky.

EXT. SAND TEMPLE AT CLOSSUS OASIS PLAIN - (CONTINUOUS)

A desert oasis, complete with palm trees and rocky caverns in the distance. A MASSIVE HUMANOID FIGURE has been carved out of a sheer cliff face (a very intricate representation of Din); beside this is a pyramidal building with the same ORNATE TOWER seen in the other temples back in Hyrule; this is the SAND TEMPLE.

FAR AWAY in the distance the immense light of the Temple of Time is barely visible.

The SUN is rising from behind the Sand Temple (ie: to the west, and the Temple of Time lies to the temple's east). All at once a great SHAFT OF LIGHT explodes from the Sand Temple's ornate tower, rising straight up into the air.

EXT. FOREST TEMPLE - (CONTINUOUS)

The canopy of trees in the Sacred Forest Meadow cannot conceal the massive light beam emitted by the Temple of Time.

Suddenly a SHAFT OF LIGHT explodes from the Forest Temple's ornate tower.

EXT. WATER TEMPLE - (CONTINUOUS)

CAMERA SHOT from BENEATH the water at Zora's Font; the massive light from the Temple of Time is visible even beneath the water.

Suddenly a SHAFT OF LIGHT explodes from the submerged Water Temple's ornate tower. A massive plume of BUBBLES also radiate out in all directions in the light's wake.

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - (CONTINUOUS)

The old windmill churns lazily in the pre-dawn breeze; light from the Temple of Time is VERY visible from here.

Suddenly a SHAFT OF LIGHT explodes from the windmill's top; this effectively DESTROYS most of the upper windmill, including all the blades, which scatter wildly. All that remains on the structure's top is the ornate tower of the Shadow Temple.

A CONCENTRATED BEAM OF ENERGY suddenly bursts from the windmill's ornate top, traveling over the land on a direct intercept course for the Temple of Time. We see THREE OTHER BEAMS as well, emanating from their respective temples.

EXT. TEMPLE OF TIME - (CONTINUOUS)

FOUR BEAMS OF ENERGY converge on the temple.

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - (CONTINUOUS)

The MASSIVE VERTICAL SHAFT of white light is TEMPERED by the other energy beams; it explodes into chaos, leaving a MASSIVE, UPRIGHT TRIANGULAR VISUALIZATION in its wake; the image GLOWS YELLOW.

Another SHOCKWAVE FLASH rocks the temple.

SCENE-CUT to a STARK WHITE FIELD; a very old man in ceremonial robes stands facing the camera. This is RAURU. He OPENS HIS EYES.

SCENE-CUT to another STARK WHITE FIELD; PRINCESS RUTO stands facing the camera. She OPENS HER EYES.

SCENE-CUT to another STARK WHITE FIELD; SARIA stands facing the camera. She OPENS HER EYES.

SCENE-CUT to another STARK WHITE FIELD; IMPA stands facing the camera. She OPENS HER EYES.

SCENE-CUT back to the Temple of Time; the upright triangular visualization glows BRIGHTER.

FOUR BRIEF FLASHES of all four temples (the Sand Temple, Forest Temple, Water Temple and Shadow Temple) erupt across the screen.

The HUMMING NOISE inside the Temple of Time grows very DISCORDANT.

SCENE-CUT: EXTREME CLOSE-UP on RAURU'S FACE; the man appears SERENE.

SCENE-CUT: CLOSE-UP on one of the STRANGE FOSSILIZED FOOTPRINTS in the remnants of the sacred ground.

SCENE-CUT: back to RAURU; the man SMILES KNOWINGLY.

SCENE-CUT: to SARIA; the girl appears DEEPLY TROUBLED.

SCENE-CUT: to Link, lying on the stone floor, still PANTING ragged breaths.

SCENE-CUT: to PRINCESS RUTO; the Zora appears ANGRY.

SCENE-CUT: to LINK'S BLOOD, still trailing over the ground.

SCENE-CUT: to SARIA; the girl's face is SCRUNCHED IN ANGER and a TEAR rolls down her cheek.

SCENE-CUT: to Impa; the woman bears a look IDENTICAL TO RAURU'S.

Impa DRAWS A DEEP BREATH.

EXT. SAND TEMPLE AT CLOSSUS OASIS PLAIN - (CONTINUOUS)

A MASSIVE BLAST of GREEN LIGHT explodes from the temple, again heading for the Temple of Time.

EXT. FOREST TEMPLE - (CONTINUOUS)

A MASSIVE BLAST of RED LIGHT explodes from the temple, again heading for the Temple of Time.

EXT. WATER TEMPLE - (CONTINUOUS)

A MASSIVE BLAST of RED LIGHT explodes from the temple, again heading for the Temple of Time.

EXT. KAKARIKO VILLAGE - (CONTINUOUS)

A MASSIVE BLAST of GREEN LIGHT explodes from the temple, again heading for the Temple of Time.

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - (CONTINUOUS)

These beams of light all converge on the UPRIGHT TRIANGULAR VISUALIZATION: the two RED BEAMS and two GREEN BEAMS 'nullify' each other, culminating in a strong white color.

CLOSE-UP on PRINCESS ZELDA'S unconscious body, trapped behind the portcullis gate.

CLOSE-UP on the UPRIGHT TRIANGULAR VISUALIZATION: the thing 'resonates' with a STRANGE PITCH and a FRACTURE develops along one side.

CLOSE-UP on GANONDORF; SCREAMING and STRUGGLING to free his crushed leg from the portcullis.

CLOSE-UP on the UPRIGHT TRIANGULAR VISUALIZATION: ANOTHER STRANGE PITCH sounds, DISCORDANT to the first, and another FRACTURE develops along an opposite side.

CLOSE-UP on Link; the boy is down to bleak AGONAL RESPIRATIONS.

SLOW ZOOM ON THE BOY'S EYES. In Link's reflected eyes we see a THIRD FRACTURE developing in the upright triangular visualization, along with a THIRD STRANGE PITCH, again, DISCORDANT to the others.

We see the fractured triangle COME APART, reflected in Link's eyes; the fractures EXPLODE WITH LIGHT, leaving three separate pieces of the whole entity left.

This is the TRIFORCE.

Link's BREATHING STOPS; the boy's eyes grow GLASSY.

PAN OUT from the ceremonial hall; a final SHOCKWAVE rises from the glowing Triforce, and this one BLANKETS the entire screen in white.

EXT. SACRED REALM.

The sound of an ADULT'S HEAVY BREATHING.

FADE IN FROM WHITE.

Adult Link stands in a field of absolute whiteness. The man walks forward, feeling a STRANGE FLOOR beneath him; he leans down and feels the ground, realizing that it is PURE WHITE GRASS, swaying in a gently breeze.

Suddenly the sound of BIRDS is audible, low at first, and when several WHITE TREES begin distinguishing themselves from the background that noise gets louder.

A 'sunrise' is cresting the horizon far away (one shade of white on another, but it allows for SLIGHTLY more contrast in the scene): there is a great valley in the distance, filled with mountains, forests and rivers, and at its center is a MASSIVE PYRAMID structure.

Link follows the field of white grass away from this scene; eventually he reaches an area covered in shrubbery and low-lying plants surrounding a small stream. 'FACELESS FIGURES' move around this area at their leisure (they are humanoid, but their features are distorted. They do NOT resemble the Golden Goddesses)

Adult Link notices YOUNG LINK sitting on a tiny bridge overlooking the pond, facing his adult counterpart. The boy stares down at his body, PATTING his clothes, and looks around in CONFUSION. Sitting right beside him (although never put to close-up) are the fairy ocarina and Adult Link's red earring.

The boy finally NOTICES his adult counterpart.

Adult Link begins walking towards the child, but a HAND on his shoulder stops him; Link turns to find Adult Zelda behind him.

ZELDA

"Not over there. His path is a different one..."

LINK

"Different?"

ZELDA

"One... that has ended."

Adult Link again looks at his younger counterpart; Young Link is still sitting on the bridge, legs dangling, LOOKING UP at the faceless figures walking all around him with trepidation.

ZELDA

"I'm sure the Goddesses will look after him. He deserves that much—"

LINK

"He deserves more than that."

ZELDA

"People don't always get what they deserve..."

The woman walks across the white grass field, stopping at a white tree overlooking the great valley.

ZELDA

"This reminds me of the orchard. Do you remember when you took me there?"

The woman LOOKS BACK AT LINK, SMILING FONDLY.

Link nods; he produces the OCARINA OF TIME.

LINK

"A real place for 'devoted hearts'..."

Zelda's smile quickly FADES as she surveys the ocarina.

Link NOTICES THIS; he looks at the ocarina QUIZZICALLY, not understanding her reaction, and puts it away.

LINK

"So... our 'paths' haven't ended?"

Zelda SHAKES HER HEAD.

ZELDA

"No. Don't ask me why I know, either. I suppose I shouldn't know: it's all just a feeling— but... I trust it. I know other things, too—"

LINK

"Ganon? I mean: Ganondorf? Did we get him? Is he dead?"

ZELDA SHAKES HER HEAD.

ZELDA

"He is not dead, but he is trapped. Imprisoned. And he does not have the power to return."

LINK

"Imprisoned? Where?"

Zelda SPREADS HER ARMS.

ZELDA

"In this place: where the glory of the Goddesses shines."

LINK

"But, still: he isn't dead? His 'path' hasn't ended?"

Zelda LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, pensive.

ZELDA

"That... that was not the will of the Sages..."

LINK

"The Sages? They didn't deal with him?"

ZELDA

"They did. Just not the way we assumed they would."

LINK

"They had the power, though—"

ZELDA

"And they operated on the basis of unanimity: it was... it was a split-decision, I think: two for death, two for life..."

Link STARES AT HIS FEET.

LINK

"Saria... she could never hurt someone, I guess. Even if she was hurting the person who killed her. The Zora princess may also have been too compassionate—"

ZELDA

"You don't understand: I think they both wanted him dead."

LINK

"What? But—"

ZELDA

"Saria didn't want revenge against her killer; she wanted revenge against your killer!"

Link SNORTS through his nose. He shakes his head.

LINK

"Impa, and that old guy: Rauru—"

ZELDA

"Rauru and Im— and the Shadow Sage: they both demanded imprisonment—"

LINK

"It makes no sense!"

ZELDA

"Just because it's senseless to you or me—"

LINK

"doesn't... make it senseless."

Zelda CROSSES HER ARMS; she laughs, faintly.

ZELDA

"Irrational, maybe..."

Link suddenly LOOKS UP at Zelda; he NODS slowly.

LINK

"Yeah: 'irrational', huh?"

The man suddenly begins to LAUGH HEARTILY.

ZELDA

"What is it?"

LINK

"I... I know that what I want is not always what other people want, and not best for them. And sometimes what I want is not even best for me. It's not hard to understand a

human's motivation— most of us, anyway— but as for the rest out there, well, that's a guessing game you're bound to lose. When it comes to Goddesses, after all—"

ZELDA

"Who could truly know the will of a deity? Right?"

Link NODS. Zelda FACES the great valley, staring at the magnificent PYRAMID in the distance; strange WHITE BIRDS fly past it in formation.

ZELDA

"Ganondorf— Ganon— was wrong about the power in the Sacred Realm. That doesn't make us right about any of it, though."

Zelda FACES LINK and lowers her head.

ZELDA

"But: what I feel here, and the information I'm getting from this place, it all feels so very real: so very clear. You're justified if you don't trust it—"

Link STEPS FORWARD.

LINK

"I've always trusted it, Zelda. I've always believed you could feel what you say you could feel."

ZELDA

"Really? Because I didn't—"

LINK

"No more of that, now—"

ZELDA

"Not until we were in Ganon's tower; not until he confronted me with his crimes."

Link SCRUNCHES HIS FACE.

LINK

"But... he said he gave you false visions—"

ZELDA

"And he did. But there was more: I saw more than he anticipated, and in retrospect a lot more than he ever wanted me to see. I didn't just see the things he planted

in my head. I saw what I needed to see! What I saw was a—
a— I—”

Zelda BOWS HER HEAD; when she returns it to level her eyes are slightly TEARY.

ZELDA

“I saw a boy dressed in green: a towhead.”

Link LOOKS TO ONE SIDE, uncomfortable. The man UNSHEATHES Dhise Slaighre and CASTS IT TO THE GROUND; it lands in the white grass.

LINK

“That we certainly didn’t need, did we? The legend about that thing was nothing but hot air.”

ZELDA

“If the legend of the Sages is true, then that is true, also—”

LINK

“It was never of any use to us!”

ZELDA

“Maybe neither of us are particularly ‘masterful’.”

There is a PAUSE; Link stares down at the sword, considering Zelda’s words.

LINK

“Or maybe not yet, huh?”

ZELDA

“That blade... its time will come.”

Link NODS.

LINK

“Hopefully ours has passed. I’m... I’m tired. I feel old—older than I should— and I feel spent.”

Zelda’s eyes TREMBLE.

ZELDA

“What we’ve done here— the mistakes we’ve made along the

way and the things we've done— they happened, and they can never be rectified, fully. But... but time is a river..."

LINK

"`There is no countercurrent'..."

ZELDA

"But there are eddies. Be sure that the Goddesses will look after us: we deserve that much."

LINK

"What are you saying?"

Zelda EXTENDS A HAND.

ZELDA

"Give me my ocarina, please? I'm not a princess giving a command, but—"

Link pulls the OCARINA OF TIME back out of his vest.

LINK

"You never had to give orders to me, you know..."

Zelda takes the ocarina from Link and as she grips it her hand comes into contact with Link's; their hands remain that way for a moment.

ZELDA

"You can never completely fix your mistakes... but you can go back, sometimes..."

LINK

"Go back? To Hyrule, you mean? We can go home?"

Zelda NODS.

LINK

"That's fine, then. You can rebuild. We can rebuild. It'll be hard work, but still—"

ZELDA

"We... won't need to rebuild..."

Link TILTS HIS HEAD.

LINK

"The current layout leaves much to be desired, Majesty."

ZELDA

"I'm not a queen: I'm a princess. When we go back I will be, at least."

Link BLINKS in confusion; eventually his eyes BRIGHTEN.

LINK

"We- we get to go 'home'-home? We get to go back-"

ZELDA

"12 years: payment for time served. We can finally live our childhoods..."

Link GRINS EAGERLY and LAUGHS.

LINK

"Oh, my! I- that's incredible. Fantastic! Oh, Zelda: that makes up for ev- well not everything, but some things! Oh: oh man! Can you imagine! I mean: every adult wants to be a kid again, yeah: but for us! For this nightmare to be over! We can get back to having real nightmare, like real people do. And sweet dreams; it's been awhile since I've had any of those! Oh: and I'll go on whatever adventure you want, too! Chase down a nest of octorock, get you some water lilies from the deep forest. Hell: I'll even get you the ranchers' special reserve milk from Lon-Lon Ranch! I could live a lifetime doing those things-"

Link has been WHEELING around, ANIMATED, during this speech; when he faces Zelda he STOPS, however. The woman is staring at him with a FORLORN SMILE; TEARS are streaming down her face.

Link takes the woman's state into account. When he speaks again he is far more SUBDUED. He spreads his hands to either side.

LINK

"I- uh... we're not- we're not going to remember any of this, are we?"

ZELDA

(choking up)

"There are things a child should never remember, and things a child should never have to live with..."

Link APPROACHES Zelda; the woman BOWS HER HEAD sadly before him.

LINK

"I- I would risk that, if I could--"

ZELDA

"You can't. Y- we... deserve to, but--"

LINK

"People don't always get what they deserve. Right?"

ZELDA nods; eventually the woman BURIES HER FACE in Link's chest, SNIFFLING. Link respectfully EMBRACES her.

LINK

"Everything else, though? The things that deserve to be around?"

ZELDA

(muffled in Link's chest)

"They'll be around..."

LINK

"And the- and what we've lost?"

Zelda pulls her head out of Link's chest.

ZELDA

"The Sages..."

Link looks at the woman, EXPECTANT.

ZELDA

"...will be with us, always..."

A TEAR falls down Link's cheek. The man NODS.

ZELDA

"Some things may be different, but almost nothing will be: it would take a force of will stronger than anything the human heart possesses to breach the timelines. A thought... an idea..."

Zelda slowly CARESSES Link's cheek.

ZELDA

"A memory; they all evaporate faster than rain on a hot road. Only supreme strength of will could even begin to leave the faintest hint of a memory, and only a level of devotion impossible for a human to achieve could break the bonds of time outright."

Zelda moves her hand away from Link's face; she holds up the Ocarina of Time.

ZELDA

"When we return to our old timeline— to a place where peace once again exists in Hyrule— everything we've known since then will be gone. All that's left for us is to live."

Link NODS.

LINK

"In peace..."

Link rests his head against Zelda's forehead.

LINK

"It... isn't enough..."

Zelda suddenly raises her head and KISSES Link on the lips; this kiss lasts some time before Zelda terminates it and steps backward.

ZELDA

"It'll have to be..."

Zelda puts the ocarina to her lips.

The woman launches into a slow, lilting rendition of ZELDA'S LULLABY.

Slowly, over the course of the song, the WHITENESS all around the couple grows, until almost everything is blanketed in a start white; the ocarina notes ECHO, ghostly, and slowly Link and Zelda's bodies, too, fade into WHITENESS.

EXT. TEMPLE OF TIME - MIDDAY.

FADE IN FROM WHITE.

The camera is DESCENDING, pointing straight down at a cobbled stairway leading right up to the Temple of Time.

LINK is lying on his back on the cobbled street. He is again an 8-year-old, and this Hyrule is the one from 12-years prior.

Link is wearing his Kokiri tunic and flaccid green nightcap.

The boy is UNCONSCIOUS. He slowly STIRS on the path, STRETCHING HIS ARMS and yawning. Eventually the boy OPENS HIS EYES and they BULGE; Link SCREAMS and rolls to one side.

DHISE SLAIGHRE suddenly lands on the cobbled street with a CLANG.

Link approaches the blade, cautions, and EXAMINES IT, noting all the STAIN MARKS on the blade. The boy notes a certain symbol on the hilt (the interlocking triangle symbol) and LOOKS UP at the Temple of Time's entrance; where a similar symbol rests in the stained glass window.

INT. TEMPLE OF TIME - MIDDAY.

Link walks through the entire temple, lugging the sword, until he reaches the SACRED GROUND beyond the altar. The boy walks around this area until he discovers the SMALL SLIT in the floor; Link clumsily positions Dhise Slaighre upright in an attempt to get the blade into the hole; suddenly the sword SINKS DOWN forcefully into the floor, 'SNAPPING' into position with a loud noise.

Link STEPS BACK and considers the sword; the boy SHRUGS and GRUNTS, then turns around.

As Link walks away we see DHISE SLAIGHRE'S BLADE in extreme close-up (and in focus); all the STAIN MARKS on the blade begin to 'boil' off the weapon, revealing the absolutely unblemished, shining blade underneath.

As Link walks past the edge of the sacred ground the boy notices a STAIN in the marble floor; it is a FAINT TRAIL OF BLOOD.

The boy considers this stain with an INVOLUNTARY SHUDDER; he quickly leaves the Temple of Time.

EXT. CASTLE TOWN - AFTERNOON.

Link moves through a THRONG of people lining the main street. At once point the boy bumps into a young girl; when they both turn to look at each other we see 10-year-old MALON. She gives Link a QUIRKY SMILE as she passes.

Some townspeople are engaged in idle conversation as they line the street for a big event.

TOWNSPERSON #1

"Well: I hear what I hear, and I trust the source. And what I hear is that, yup: you can't trust the Gerudo!"

TOWNSPERSON #2

"But for their prince to just up and disappear from court like that? That isn't so much sinister as strange!"

TOWNSPERSON #1

"Yeah: it is strange, for a strange lot of people! Good riddance, says I! At least the Royals can attend to more important matters at home, rather than spendin' all that time playing dress-up with dirty desert thieves!"

Townsperson #1 is chewing a PEANUT; he idly TOSSES the shell into the street.

Link is struggling to move through the crowd; at one point the boy tries moving into the empty street to get by, but suddenly a guard blocks his path, just as a TRUMPET sounds.

TOWNSPERSON #3

"Ah: well here they come now!"

A small CARAVAN of ornately-dressed people cross through the street, most in horse-driven carts or on elegant litters.

One such litter, far more elegant than any other and with a sheer satin draping, comes moving down the street born by six bearers. Princess Zelda sits cross-legged inside, idly TURNING the OCARINA OF TIME over in her hands, STARING at the instrument intently.

One of the litter-bearers accidentally steps on the PEANUT SHELL in the road, FALTERING; the disturbance is enough to JAR the little and cause Zelda to BOBBLE the ocarina; it goes SAILING out of the litter, bouncing along the cobbled street.

Link immediately forces his way into the street and RETRIEVES the ocarina. Several guards RUSH the boy but he rises and comes face-to-face with Zelda, who has leaned very far out of the litter to retrieve the instrument.

Several guards GRAB Link's body and hold the boy, however as he already has Zelda's ocarina they wait for him to give it back to her; there is a PAUSE as Link and Zelda LOOK AT EACH OTHER. Link slowly hands the instrument up to the girl, who slowly receives it.

Instantly the guards carry Link back over to the curb, roughly depositing the boy on the ground. Zelda's litter quickly MOVES OFF.

Link LOOKS BACK at the litter and opens his FIST; the ORNATE MOUTHPIECE of the ocarina had broken off in the fall and Link now holds it.

Zelda stares down at the broken ocarina in her lap, then briefly looks behind her at the crowd. The girl again faces forward, but her eyes are WATERY; TEARS begin welling up and running down her face.

Zelda puts a hand to her cheek; she appears GREATLY SURPRISED by this weeping and considers it with obvious PUZZLEMENT.

The crowd around Link quickly begins to depart after the Royals' passing; Link idly DROPS the ocarina mouthpiece to his side.

Several TEARS stream down the boy's cheek. Link puts a hand to his cheek; like Zelda, he appears GREATLY SURPRISED by this weeping and considers it with obvious PUZZLEMENT.

Eventually Link walks away; as he does so a random passerby inadvertently STEPS on the ocarina mouthpiece on the ground, completely destroying it.

Link comes to the Western Exit of Castle Town; unlike the dramatic main drawbridge this exit is a small, simple gate. The hillside PLUNGES down dramatically immediately to the front, and the sun shines brightly on a series of green hills and valleys as far as the eye can see.

Link considers this terrain with a COCKED HEAD. The boy begins walking forward, only to be NUDGED from behind; Link turns his head and vaguely realizes it's a horse. The boy keeps walking.

However, again, a horse NUDGES the boy. Link SNARLS and moves several feet out of the way, continuing his walk. When he still hears HOOVES behind him the boy SPINS AROUND.

EPONA (fully adult) is standing before Link, NUDGING the boy's head gently with her snout. Link considers the riderless horse with PUZZLEMENT. He circles around the mare, taking note of the BRUISES on her side.

Link LOOKS AROUND, but seeing no one he SHRUGS and walks off again.

And, again, Epona NUDGES the boy's neck.

This time Link brings his other hand up around his neck, STROKING Epona's face; as he performs the gesture he appears DISORIENTED by its spontaneity. Link LOOKS into the horse's eye, still unsettled by the mare's patient following of him.

Link again circles the horse and, finding stirrups and a saddle, clumsily tries to get on top.

Epona instantly 'DIPS' her body, bouncing Link directly into the saddle; Link WOBLES unsteadily, but then quickly takes Epona's reins in exactly the right positions. The boy looks down at his own hands, again PUZZLED.

Link turns Epona to face the path of green hills and valleys winding away from Castle Town; he takes in the view.

Eventually another horse comes up beside the boy: the Happy Mask Salesman, burdened with his heavy rucksack, scans the view as well. He looks at Link with his UNSETTLING SMILE.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"So, my young friend: your business in Castle Town is at an end? Did you see the princess, at least? Did you keep things interesting? Hehehe!"

Slow CAMERA ZOOM on the Happy Mask Salesman.

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"I've always found the world to be such a very interesting place, for those who make life interesting, at least. Of course, my little friend, there are those who don't so much set out to make things interesting, but nonetheless very 'interesting' things tend to happen to them. It's a funny thing, about interesting things, too, because they're never quite isolated events, when you get right down to it. That is to say that trouble always tends to follow trouble, my little friend, and--"

LINK

"Link."

HAPPY MASK SALESMAN

"Hmmm?"

Slow camera pan until Link is revealed STARING OUT at the terrain ahead. The boy turns and FACES the Happy Mask Salesman, smiling good-naturedly.

LINK

"My name: it's Link."

The boy again faces the horizon and, with a gentle kick against Epona's side and a SHOUT, he goes galloping off down the hillside, moving away from Castle Town and towards the hilly trail ahead.

FADE TO BLACK.

The film's CLOSING CREDITS roll over the screen against a black background; the music playing is the CLOSING CREDITS THEME from the Legend of Zelda: a Link to the Past. A CHORUS of male singers vocalize the main melody.

After perhaps twenty seconds of credits the screen brightens; the camera slowly pans across the dramatic hillsides in the distance as Link rides Epona near the

forefront, moving at a fast gallop (ie: moving about the same speed as the camera) as the credits continue to roll.

A NOTE ON THE CREDITS: The cast of actors is not recognized until near the end of the song, when the CLOSING CREDITS music finally launches into a rendition of the LEGEND OF ZELDA MAIN THEME (its first appearance in this film). At this point the actors' list is shown and the male singers providing vocalizations sing actual words to the music.

The LYRICS are as follows, however they should be sung in Scots-Gaelic (ie: 'Ancient Hylian') using a close-enough translation that the words still rhyme and make sense:

 "True, from
 The desert to the shore
 And over the heights
Above which the eagles nest,
 There's not one alive
Who'd so mercilessly strive
 For that power deep inside
 His heart
As it beats to the rhythm of the dawning.

 But, there,
 His secret is revealed:
 He'd go for Hyrule,
 Its people,
 The land,
 Its sea, too
 And, yet, his secret:
He'd go (for) its princess,
 For bright velvet eyes
 Afire
In the light of the dawn ever rising.

 Soaring
 From one land to the next
 And into that Realm
Beyond which no eagle flies
 His guides far above—
 Wisdom, courage, and love—
 Set him out far beyond
 The touch
Of the light of the dawn ever rising."

During this part of the credits (where the main theme is sung) Link and Epona drive even faster and harder; eventually Link 'STANDS UP' in the saddle, apparently enjoying the breeze in his face. As the song ends the camera PANS OUT and away, showing the boy and his horse riding off fast for the horizon, soon growing into small specks.

By the time the CLOSING CREDITS THEME has ended the camera is stationary in the sky, looking towards the horizon, and it FADES TO BLACK as the music ends.

For the rest of the credits Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal" should play (yes: I'm serious).

The credits should be timed such that, by the time this song is fading out the credits are finished, and just before the music totally fades away we see TEXT on the screen in the LOWER LEFT CORNER, slightly closer to the screen's center than the last time it was seen (ie: at the beginning of the film):

ON BLACK the title, in the LOWER LEFT:

"The Legend of Zelda"

FADE IN:

EARLY MORNING.

A wooded copse of trees near a rustic hillside; Epona mills about in the background and a small MAKESHIFT TENT sits in the foreground.

Young Link is lying supine on the grass. The boy slowly sits up, SCRATCHING HIS HEAD and YAWNING.

A FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER falls off his chest and into his lap; the boy looks down at it, curious.

Link OPENS the paper and a SMALL WHITE FLOWER falls out of the folds; as Link examines it we see a very small speck of RED on the flower's inside (similar to an Eighteen-Day Blusher, although the petals of the flower are not the right color).

Link sets the flower aside and opens up the paper, holding it in front of HIS FACE (it is thin, transparent paper and handwriting can be made-out through the opposite side, albeit not very easily).

The part of the paper the audience can see states: "May they keep you safe."

Link moves the paper away from his head, leaving his FACE to take up most of the screen; the boy stares DIRECTLY AHEAD and GRUNTS quizzically.

ON BLACK, CENTER:

"Ocarina of Time"

“...THE WEAPON FOR STAYING WHATEVER DISASTER...”



“...FOR HE WHO WIELDS **DHISE SLAIGHRE** AS A MASTER.”

