



# Lost Past

*~ Koume ~*

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## Chapter 1: Rescued

Zelda woke with a start. Looking around, her breathing eased, but then, she gasped. She was unable to identify her surroundings. Sitting against the wall, she covered her face with her hands and strained her memory, trying to figure out where she was and how she got there. It came back in bits and pieces. She had run away from Hyrule. she had stumbled into the forest and kept running.. She remembered that when it turned dark, she was tired and sat on the edge of a cliff, not that she knew it was a cliff then. She had fallen off, but that's as far as she could remember. It still didn't answer the question of why she was here.

Opening her eyes, Zelda took a closer look at her surroundings. She was in a house, she could tell that much, but she didn't know where and whose house. The worry on the princess's face made it hard to tell that she was only in her late teens, growing up in Hyrule Castle the whole of her life. Her experience had wizened her and she knew many things about the lore of the Triforce and of Hyrule. She knew many complex arts of magic and sorcery. The only thing she didn't know, was her real past.

"Hello? Is anyone there?" Zelda cried out into the silence, desperately hoping that she wasn't alone, but she didn't want to run into anyone that she couldn't deal with.

There was no response, but Zelda called out again. Still no answer. Zelda started to cry. She hated to be alone. She felt so insecure. Soon, she heard a distant neigh. Zelda found that she was unable to stand. Her leg was paining too much. All she could do was wait. And hope that the horse wold bring help.

"Hello?" a male voice called into the silence.

"Hello?" Zelda replied, "Who is there?"

The male appeared at the door of the room Zelda was sitting in. He looked like he was the same age as her. He carried a sword and shield on his back and Zelda was sure she could see a quiver too.

"Who are you?" Zelda questioned the stranger.

He didn't reply, but bent down and examined Zelda.

"How did I get here?" Zelda asked the stranger, eying him with curiosity.

"I heard a crashing sound last night. When I went to investigate I saw your hand sticking out from under some rock. The cliff probably collapsed. I got you out and brought you here," the male answered. "This is my house by the way," he added off-handedly.

"Oh," Zelda nodded. She was glad that she knew how she got here now.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Zelda. My name is Zelda," she answered.

The male nodded and frowned as if he was trying to remember something.

Zelda guessed that he had heard the name before, "I was named after the Princess of Hyrule. Her name is also Zelda," she added quickly, unwilling to reveal her identity. The stranger sitting in front of her couldn't be trusted. No-one could, "What is your name?"

The male shook his head, "It isn't important."

Standing up, he began to walk out of the room.

"Don't leave!" Zelda cried as she struggled to stand, but collapsed in pain.

"You shouldn't try to stand yet. I think you broke your leg when you fell last night," he bent down and inspected Zelda's broken leg.

"Well that's just great!" Zelda cried sarcastically.

The male looked at her, his eyes were a deep azure and his hair was a gentle blonde, his skin was tanned, "Don't worry. I've broken bones heaps of times. I can help you. I think you should just stay here for a while."

Again, he stood up and walked away.

"Wait!" Zelda called.

Again, he stopped and turned around.

"I don't know your name!" Zelda said earnestly.  
The male sighed, "If you insist. My name is Link."

## Chapter 2: Familiar Strangers

"Link," Zelda said as he left.

The name sounded familiar. She didn't know why though. All her life, she had lived in the castle and never had she met someone named Link. Yet, it was as if she knew him. As if they had met before.

"Zelda.." Link muttered as he walked through the forest. The name was familiar. She did say that she was named after the Princess of Hyrule. But still, she looked familiar. And he could have sworn he saw the mark of the royal family on her dress. The Triforce.

Zelda sat in the same place she was when Link had left. Of course, she couldn't move to a more comfortable place and her leg was still paining. The sun was setting and Link still hadn't returned. She was hungry. She was used to being fed whenever she felt hungry at the castle, but she could no longer do that. Not without revealing who she really was. She had decided that she could trust Link now, but she didn't want to run the risk of any of the guards finding her. She had run away from Hyrule and didn't plan to return. Why had she run away? It was because her father was trying to force her to marry. If there was one thing that Zelda hated, it was the lack of independent choice and here, her own father was trying to make her go against her own beliefs.

"I'm back!" Link's voice shouted through the silence.

Zelda's stomach growled slightly, "Just in time too Link!" she laughed.

Link grinned, "Well, eat up. You'll need as much energy as possible to aid in healing that leg."

Zelda inspected it, "Can't it just heal with magic?"

Link laughed, "Yes, but who has magic to heal it with?"

Zelda opened her mouth to say that she knew the magic but shut it again. Zelda was known throughout Hyrule for her healing magic, but if she showed her talent to Link, he would surely guess who she was. He wouldn't understand why she was out here. He would most probably call the guards to rescue her.

"You're right. Oh well," Zelda said, grimacing slightly.

Link sat next to her, "Don't worry about it Zelda, I'll be here to take care of you. In one or two days, I'll find a fairy fountain. Pink fairies can do wonders for you, but first, I'll need to make sure that you're healed."

Link looked at the cuts across Zelda's face and her dress was torn a little, revealing a large bruise on her right arm.

"Thank you for taking such good care of me Link. If you hadn't found me when you did, I would most probably be dead," Zelda said, tears forming in her eyes.

"It's okay," Link said softly, "I feel like it's my job."

Zelda watched Link walk away again. She wondered where he went and what he did. He knew the forest better than her, of course, but she could tell that he wasn't from the forest. No. Unlike Kokiri, he aged and Kokiri were the only people that lived in forests. It seemed as if he didn't belong here, but forced to live in the forest due to something he, or someone else, had done. Zelda frowned. Link didn't seem like one to do something to cause his exile, it must have been someone else. What cruel person would have done such a thing? The very thought brought tears to her eyes again.

Link mounted Epona and rode into the forest again, this time, for no apparent reason. Usually, he would stay at home, but ever since he brought Zelda there, he felt as if he had only two options. Either stay there and protect her from any dangers that would arise, or go into the forest. The forest was the only place that Link could think clearly, and he needed to do that a lot now. He had to figure out why Zelda looked and sounded so familiar. As far as he could remember, he had never met or heard of anyone by the name, yet, she seemed familiar.

He thought back to when he first spoke to her. He remembered the haste at which she said that she was only named after the princess of Hyrule, whose name also seemed to be Zelda. He knew she was hiding something and a suspicion was rising. Perhaps she was Princess Zelda of Hyrule, trying to run from something or someone. Well, she could trust him. He'd never tell anyone. He had no-one to tell and if she was lying about

her identity, it would be so she wouldn't be taken away anywhere. He didn't really want her to leave. She had been the first person he could actually speak to that spoke back for quite a while now.

"Oh well," Link sighed as he put his hands into his tunic pockets.

He felt something in his pocket. Taking it out, he looked at it. It was a small ocarina with the word Link engraved on it. He remembered the day he had found it. He was sitting in his favourite spot of the forest and tripped over it. He knew that it was meant for him to find. That moment, a song sounded. It was a fast and extremely catchy song. Link listened to it for a while, tapping his foot to the rhythm. Raising his own ocarina to his lips, he mimicked the tune, playing along with it. He heard a voice in his head.

"Link? Is that really you?" a small girl's voice came.

"Yes, this is Link. Who are you?" he replied through his song.

"You wouldn't remember me. But my name is Saria," came the reply.

"How do you know my name?" Link asked.

"I just do, Link," the voice replied.

"Were you the one that gave me the ocarina?" Link asked.

"I was. I thought it the only way I could still talk to you," the voice replied, fading slightly, "I have to go now Link."

"Don't go yet! You haven't told me how you know me yet!" Link said, frowning slightly.

"Goodbye Link. I hope that I can talk to you again." the voice faded as the song stopped.

Link was left playing the song on his own.

"Strange," he said to himself.

He thought over the song, and the conversation with Saria. He decided that he would name the song he learned Saria's Song. Epona neighed and looked at him with curiosity. Clearly, she couldn't hear the conversation, it must have been telepathic. Remounting Epona, he rode back to his house. He was certain that Zelda was the princess of Hyrule and seeing that the only forest that bordered with the one they were in was the Kokiri Forest, of Hyrule, Zelda would know who Saria is.

## Chapter 3: Questions

It was dark and Zelda could hear ferocious growls from the forest. She knew Wolfos lurked the forest at night. She didn't want anything to happen to Link, but after all, he *did* carry a sword and shield with him. The sound of the door opening signaled Link's return. Zelda was glad to have company again.

"Sorry I'm late," Link said, fighting back an urge to bow to Zelda.

"Don't be, I'm just glad you came. I've been sitting in the same place for the whole day and I'm bored," Zelda replied, smiling.

Link sat down near Zelda, "How is your leg? Does it still hurt?"

Zelda pushed down on her leg lightly and winced, "Yes, but only if it touches something."

Link looked at Zelda, "Are you still hungry? Because I am and I still have lots of food left over."

"Thanks," Zelda smiled at Link as he handed her some food.

Link watched Zelda carefully as she ate. She was good at hiding the fact she was a princess. She didn't seem to complain that there were no spoons or forks and she didn't mind spilling food on her dress.

"You're from Hyrule, right?" Link asked after he finished eating.

Zelda nodded while continuing to eat.

"Who's Saria?" Link asked.

Zelda choked, "Saria?"

Link nodded, "Who is she?"

Zelda thought for a while, revealing her knowledge of the people in Hyrule could hint to Link who she really was...

"Who is she?" Link repeated eagerly.

Zelda sighed, after all, Link *did* save her life, "She's a Kokiri. Lives in Kokiri Forest"

Link nodded, that didn't help. He still didn't know how Saria knew his name. Another thing was also troubling him. He had to be sure that Zelda was the princess, "Have you ever met Princess Zelda?"

Zelda almost choked again, "No. I'm just a peasant, the princess wouldn't visit my village."

"Why not though?" Link asked, "Why wouldn't the princess want to visit her loyal subjects? Is she not grateful that she has such loyal followers?"

To Link's disappointment, Zelda didn't react the way he had hoped. She simply shrugged, "Don't know. Too busy maybe."

Link didn't ask any more questions. He didn't want to annoy Zelda. Perhaps she wasn't a princess after all...

"There's something wrong," Zelda observed.

"What?" Link looked up.

Zelda repeated her statement, "There's something wrong."

Link frowned, "What do you mean 'there's something wrong'?"

Zelda frowned too, "You're acting strange around me."

"What do you mean *I* am acting strange? You're the one acting strange!" Link replied angrily.

"I am *not* acting strange!" Zelda shouted.

"Yes you are! Don't deny it!" Link shouted back.

Winning slightly, Zelda stood, propping herself up with a nearby chair, "I am NOT acting strange Link. You don't even know me!"

Link stood too, ignoring Zelda's wince, "Well I'm not the one that's lying about who I really am now, am I?"

Link's words scared Zelda and it was clearly evident in her deep blue eyes, "What... what do you mean?"

"I know who you really are Zelda! There's no need to lie anymore!" Link yelled.

"You... do?" Zelda asked, her voice small and shaky.

"Yes, I do Zelda. Or should I say, *Princess Zelda*!" Link shouted, his eyes glittering with rage.

Zelda was about to start crying, "How did you find out?"

"Do you really think I am *that* stupid?" Link shouted.

"I... I just didn't want my father to find me!" Zelda tried to reason.

"Why did you run in the first place? You should be in the castle with people waiting on your hand and foot instead of here in *my* house with a broken leg, leaning on *my* chair!" Link yelled, kicking the chair that Zelda was leaning against.

Zelda fell to the floor in a crumpled heap, crying from both the fear of Link and the pain from her leg.

"Why did you run?" Link repeated his question, his voice still angry.

"You... you wouldn't understand!" Zelda whimpered.

"Try me!" Link yelled, standing over Zelda.

Zelda cowered, "My father... he wouldn't listen to me! He wanted me to do everything *he* wanted me to do!"

"Oh! I am so sorry Zelda. I didn't mean to yell at you. All you ran away for is so that you could have things *YOUR* way!" Link yelled angrily.

"You won't... tell my father I am here... will you?" Zelda asked.

"I think I will actually!" Link yelled, "I think that I will, so he can drag your sorry butt out of here!"

That was all Zelda needed. Her fear and the willingness to run gave some strength back to her leg, enabling her to stand. Turning to the door, she ran, ignoring Link's yells. Opening it, she ran out into the forest. She forgot that it was dark. She forgot that Wolfos roamed the forest at night. She forgot all the dangers. All she wanted to do was get away from Link and run from the truth. All over again.

"Go away and stay away!" Link yelled as he saw Zelda disappear into the night. He really tried to be nice to her, but he couldn't stand her. He hated people who lied. Letting Epona in, he closed the door. She'd be back. He knew she would. She'd come crawling back, begging him to forgive her and asking if she could still stay. He didn't know what he'd say then... but he didn't care. He'd bother about the moment when it came.

After running for several minutes, Zelda's leg gave way and she fell onto the ground, her leg aching even more than before. Zelda lay on the ground crying. She didn't want to be found, but she didn't want to be lost either. She sobbed so loud that she didn't notice the hungry growls of the Wolfos as they slowly approached the clearing she was lying in...

## Chapter 4: Rescued Again

Zelda woke in the morning, she was in pain. She struggled to move so she could look around. She was in the forest, in a small clearing. She had many cuts and scratches that she knew she didn't have before. She quickly remembered what happened the night before, after she ran away from Link's house and fell down. A pack of hungry Wolfos had attacked her. She somehow managed to drive them away, with a stick she recalled picking up as she frantically groped for something to help her... Now she could barely move.

"Ow... oooww!" Zelda cried in pain as she rolled onto her back and stared at the sky.

That moment, the clouds above broke, letting rain pelt to the ground. Zelda closed her eyes at the pain she felt as the rain hit her wounds, making them sting. She had to find shelter. Looking around, she saw a cave. Slowly sitting up, she dragged herself towards the cave. As she entered the cave, she rested against a wall. Ripping a small amount of cloth from the bottom of her dress off, she held it out in the rain and once she was certain it had soaked up enough water, she applied to one of her wounds as she had learned to do. Her strength was low, meaning that so was her magic level. She wouldn't be able to heal herself with magic.

Link stared out the window at the rain, wondering where Zelda was. He knew that she wouldn't be able to walk and if any Wolfos had found her... Epona looked at Link as if she was blaming him that Zelda was gone.

"It's her own stupid fault," Link said to no-one in general.

He sighed. Zelda, whether he liked it or not, was the only company he had in ages that could talk back to him. He didn't mind being with Epona, but, it was just too quiet. If anything bad happened to Zelda... Link knew he would be unable to forgive himself. Shrugging, Link slowly fell asleep and didn't wake until the next day. It was *still* raining. Link's conscience reared its ugly head. Or maybe Link *cared* for Zelda. He couldn't tell. All he knew was that he had to find Zelda. Find her and bring her back. He was the only one that could help her. Saddling Epona, he rode into the forest, following Zelda's footprints. He came to a clearing, where the footsteps stopped. He examined the ground. There was a mark where Zelda must have fallen. Then, to Link's utmost fear, he saw many Wolfos paw-prints going towards Zelda.

"Zelda! No!" Link whispered in fear.

Epona neighed impatiently and hoofed the ground. There were a few more marks on the ground. Of something being dragged to a nearby cave. Link urged Epona forward. He jumped off when they reached the cave and ran inside.

"Zelda!! Are you there?!" Link yelled, the expression on his face a mix of fear and guilt.

"...Link..." a weak voice came from deeper in the cave.

Link ran forwards into the darkness and knelt down next to a limp figure lying on the ground, "Zelda!!"

Zelda was battered and torn, her head was bleeding, as was her knee and blood and dirt had matted her usually golden hair. The rest of her skin had mud all over it. The princess was dying.

"You're...!" Link gasped as he tried to prop Zelda up.

"...dying," Zelda finished Link's sentence.

"This is all my fault!" Link said bitterly.

"It isn't..." Zelda whispered.

"I won't let you die!" Link told her, taking Zelda's frail hand

"There is nothing you can do Link..." Zelda told him quietly.

Link put his arms around Zelda and lifted her up, carrying her out of the cave. The rain had stopped, but it was still wet. Making sure not to slip, Link climbed Epona, carrying Zelda with him.

"Hyaah!" Link yelled as he dug his heels into Epona's flanks, making her gallop faster than she had ever done before.

Soon, they arrived at Link's house. Carrying Zelda into the house, Link placed her on the floor and ran into his room to find some medicinal herbs. And his ocarina.

"What are you doing Link?" Zelda asked as she struggled to keep her eyes open to observe Link.

"I've got some herbs with medicinal value here. I'm going to put them on your wounds. They may sting, but try not to move," Link told Zelda assuringly.

Zelda watched Link put his ocarina to his lips, "Why are you playing your ocarina Link?"

Link looked at Zelda, "I'm sorry about this Zelda. You may not like it, but I have to tell Saria that you're here."

Zelda merely nodded as she lost consciousness.

## Chapter 5: Zelda's Revival

Zelda woke to the sounds of water dripping. It wasn't the rain... was it? No, it wasn't. Couldn't be. She was inside for sure. Probably Link's house. Slowly opening her eyes, she looked at the source of the sound. It was a young, green haired girl.

"Saria?" Zelda asked.

Saria smiled, "I'm glad you recognise me, princess," Saria cautiously looked at Link, "he knows... doesn't he?"

Zelda nodded, "Yes. He found out. But tell me, how do you know Link?"

Saria gasped, remembering the day she was forced into secrecy, "I've seen him in the forest before."

Zelda nodded, not really wanting to talk anymore.

"You're awake!" Link's voice came from the door.

Saria momentarily paused applying medicine to Zelda's wounds so that she could sit up.

"Hi Link," Zelda greeted him cheerfully.

Link ran to Zelda's bedside and sat, "I'm so... glad you're okay!"

Saria smiled to herself and excused herself, leaving Link and Zelda alone.

"This... it was all my fault!" Link said bitterly.

Zelda put a hand to Link's cheek, "No it isn't. It's isn't your fault I decided to run and it's definitely not your fault that the Wolfos came."

Link closed his eyes, stopping a few tears, "It wasn't *your* fault though."

Zelda smiled, "Yes it is."

Link smiled too. Zelda's smile made him forget everything he thought to be important in the world, leaving only her, "We shouldn't have fought."

Zelda laughed, "I agree to that."

Link stared out of the window, his voice becoming distant, "When you ran away. When I spent a little time alone... I realized something."

"Yes?" Zelda asked, looking out the window too.

Link looked back to Zelda and kissed her softly on the cheek, "I'm nothing without you."

Zelda looked back to Link, "What?"

Link lowered his gaze to the floor, "I know this is really stupid, seeing you're a princess and all... but I thought this a little before I found out who you really were... Princess Zelda, I think I'm in love with you."

Zelda opened her mouth in shock and then smiled. Putting a hand on Link's cheek, she brought his gaze back to her, "Link, I love you too."

Link grinned and the two shared their first kiss.

Zelda pulled back and gasped. She felt a strange feeling inside her head. Looking around, she felt as if everything was going backwards.

"Link!" she screamed out as she groped for his hand, but she couldn't feel it anywhere.

Struggling to focus her vision, she could tell that the same thing had happened to Link. He looked as if he was spinning around and top speed. Zelda saw everything that she had ever done in her life, all going backwards. She saw her fall from the cliff, going backwards. The cliff reassembled itself and she ran backwards to Hyrule. She saw all the tears she had cried when she found out that she was being forced to marry go back into her eyes. *Everything* was going backwards.

"Aaaargh!" Zelda screamed as she felt dizzy, trying not to throw up.

All of a sudden, everything went dark.

"Ohhh...." Zelda said uneasily and she fell to the ground.

## Chapter 6: Zelda's Dream

"Wake up child," a low, soothing voice spoke.

Zelda stirred, unwilling to open her eyes, afraid to find out where she was, and who the speaker was. The voice sounded male... and old.

"F... father? Is that you?" Zelda asked, her eyes still shut.

"No. I am not the King. Open your eyes. Trust me," the voice replied.

"I won't. How can I trust you? What are you going to do to me? Where is Link?" Zelda asked.

"I will only clarify your thoughts. I sense your mind is very troubled," the voice spoke.

Zelda opened her eyes and squinted. She was in a place that was fully black. The only other thing she could see that wasn't black, was a wizened man standing before her.

"Who are you?" Zelda asked in surprise.

The old man did not smile, but his voice was calming, "My name is Rauru. I am the only remaining descendant of the Great Sages that once protected the land on behalf of the Triforce Goddesses."

Zelda nodded slowly, "Din, Nayru and Farore."

Rauru nodded, "Yes. I am the Sage of Light. The descendant of the Ancient Holder of the Light, who was also named Rauru."

Zelda frowned, "Why are you here though? And where *is* here?"

Rauru looked around sadly, "This... is what is left of the Chamber of Sages."

Zelda frowned, "And you are expecting me to help you, am I correct?"

Rauru shook his head, "No. Not at all. I want to help you."

Zelda sighed, "Unless you can tell me where Link is, you cannot help me."

Rauru smiled, "I can help you by telling you *who* Link is."

Zelda looked up at Rauru, "What do you mean?"

Rauru frowned again, "There is something that you do not know. A life you have lived that you are completely unaware of. You *are* Princess Zelda, are you not?"

Zelda nodded, "I am. But what are you talking about? A life I have lived?"

Rauru nodded, "Zelda, are you aware of time travel?"

Zelda nodded slowly, "Yes... I think I've read something of it. The Master Sword being the ship with which one can sail between the ports of Past and Future," Zelda recited, trying to remember what she had read in the book.

"Very good. But are you aware that people can send time back and never bring it forward again?" Rauru asked.

Zelda frowned, "Yes. I know that people have done that to mend some problems in their own lives, disregarding the lives of others."

Rauru closed his eyes thoughtfully, "You are correct again. Tell me child, how does your father act when you do something that *you* want to do, but he doesn't agree with?"

Zelda turned red with anger, "He will badger me about it until I give it up."

"Exactly," Rauru said, "In your other life, the one you have previously lived, you ignored his wishes. You chose the man you loved, not caring of what your father thought."

Zelda smiled, "Really? Who was it?"

"I'm getting to that," Rauru said impatiently.

"Sorry," Zelda quickly apologized.

"As I was saying, your father didn't like the man you chose. He tried everything to break you two up, but you would never let go of him. He did the only thing he thought possible. He turned time backwards," Rauru explained.

"No!" Zelda gasped, "He didn't!"

Rauru nodded solemnly, "It is true. He did. And then, he forced the young boy that your man turned into to leave Hyrule. Your father dumped the boy in the forest, just beyond the outskirts of Kokiri Forests and erased his memory. Or at least tried to."

Zelda put a hand to her mouth, "Who is he?"

Rauru smiled, "I think you should be able to figure that out yourself."

Zelda gasped, "It isn't! It couldn't be! Could it? *Link?*"

Rauru nodded, "Yes. But it seems that the goddesses had intended you two to be together. You have found each other in this life, haven't you?"

Zelda smiled, "Strange."

Rauru smiled back, "What is?"

Zelda shook her head, "Even though my father tried the very best to keep us apart, I still love Link."

Rauru smiled again, "That's a good child. Well, I think you are ready now."

Zelda frowned, "Ready for what?"

Rauru looked away, "Ready to return. Take my advice. Do not ignore this. Tell Link your feelings. Explain to him what I have told you. And return to Hyrule with him. It's where both of you belong. In Hyrule, together."

Zelda felt light. Everything faded again and she lost consciousness.

## Chapter 7: The Truth

Zelda woke up and looked around. She was still in the bed she was in before and Saria was still tending to her wounds.

"What is the matter, Princess Zelda?" Saria asked.

Zelda's breathing eased a little, she managed to say only one word, "Link."

"He collapsed, I took him to his room. I heard screaming so I came in here and I found both of you lying of the ground, unconscious. What happened?" Saria told Zelda.

Zelda shook her head, "I don't know, but I need to talk to Link."

Saria shook her head, "Not yet, you still have to recover."

"I'm fine!" Zelda pleaded.

"Your leg is still broken," Saria said firmly.

"Not for long," Zelda said as she used her magic to heal it. She had most of her strength back, so her magic worked properly.

"Princess...!" Saria called helplessly as she watched Zelda run out of the room.

When Zelda reached Link's room, he was sitting up, with his face buried in his hands. Sitting next to him, she gently touched his hand.

Link looked up, "Zelda?"

Zelda nodded, "It's me."

"I... I had the... strangest dream," Link told her.

Zelda smiled and shook her head, "I bet it wasn't as weird as mine was."

Link smiled, "There was a man called Rauru...."

"...the Sage of Light!" Zelda finished Link's sentence in surprise.

"He told me... your father, the king..."

"Turned time backwards?" Zelda asked in disbelief.

Link nodded, "How do you know?"

"I had the same dream," Zelda told him, "Rauru told me to tell you about it."

"Yeah, he told me the same. He even told me that we should go back to Hyrule."

"He told me that we belong together, Link," Zelda told him.

Link smiled as he stroked the side of Zelda's face, "We do."

Zelda kissed Link again, this time for longer.

"Zelda, leave Link be, he needs to...." Saria said as she walked into Link's room and saw the two kissing.

Zelda pulled away and bit her lip as she turned red, "Err... sorry?"

Saria stood there, her mouth hanging open in shock for a while and then started to laugh.

"What's so funny?" Link asked indignantly.

"Nothing. Well, anyway. Have you found out what happened back there?" Saria asked.

Zelda nodded, "Saria... what do you know of our *real* past?"

Saria turned red. She remembered that the king threatened her with death if she uttered a word of the truth to either one of them, "Real past? I don't understand," she lied.

Link sat up again and looked into Saria's eyes, "Saria, you can tell me. It's me. Link. You can tell me what you know. Forget all the threats the king made."

Saria gasped in shock, "How did you know about the threats?"

Link smiled irkly, "I guessed."

Saria sat down next to Link and Zelda, "And how did you know that it was the king?"

Zelda's smiled matched Link's, "My father is the type."

"He... he threatened me with my life!" Saria exclaimed, tears forming in her eyes.

Zelda hugged Saria to console her, "Don't cry. I'll make sure he doesn't."

Link pushed on, "So, what do you know?"

Saria stood up and walked to the window, "We were friends. Link, we were best friends. The king just kicked you out of Hyrule, as if you were worthless trash. I remember the day well now, we were in the Lost Woods and the king and his soldiers just came up to us and tied you up. The soldiers left and the king told me that I would die if I told Link or Zelda the truth of the past."

Link looked at Zelda, who was frowning. He took her hand, "Continue, Saria."

"I remember how Zelda reacted when she was told that Link 'ran away'. She cried almost continuously. It was unstoppable. That's when the king put a memory-removing spell on her. She didn't remember anything and couldn't remember why she was so depressed. Unfortunately, that's when the queen died too. Everyone was told that Link had run away, but they all believed that Zelda was grieving over her mother's death. The rest of the population in Hyrule were also forbidden to speak of Link. Anytime the king or his guards heard the name, they would put the speaker to death."

## Chapter 8: The Visit

Zelda sobbed. She couldn't believe her father could be so cold. It was true, the furthest that she could remember was her grieving over the death of her mother. It seemed that there were some things that the heart remembered, even if the mind didn't.

"Zelda..." Link said quietly, trying to comfort her.

Saria didn't leave the window, but she *did* say words of comfort to Zelda. They even stopped her crying.

"Why do you stay at the window Saria?" Link asked, "It's almost as if you can sense something."

"Something bad is going to happen..." Saria said quietly.

"What bad thing?" Zelda asked as she walked to the window too.

"Stay back," Saria warned.

"I don't understand!" Zelda said, worriedly.

Saria didn't remove her gaze from the window, "Zelda, you too Link, hide. Stay out of sight. If anyone looks through any of the windows, they must not be able to see you."

Link and Zelda obeyed without asking. Running out of Link's room, they looked around. There was a window in every single room of the house! There was no where they could hide.

"In here!" Link whispered as he ran to an empty closet.

Zelda hesitated. The closet was very small.

"Come on!" Link hissed as he went into the closet himself.

"Go!" Saria told her, still looking out the window.

Zelda nodded and ran into the closet and closed it.

Lucky for Zelda that she ran into the closet when she did, for there was a knocking at the front door.

Saria walked to it and opened it, "Yes? May I help you?"

As she expected, the king and some of his men were at the door.

"Well, hello Saria!" the king greeted the small girl smugly.

Saria bowed low, "Welcome to my humble home, your highness."

"You say this is your house?" the king asked, looking around.

Saria nodded, "I have been living in here for a while now. It's very peaceful here and there are no Kokiri running around to disturb me."

Saria brought a chair for the king to sit on, but the king remained standing, "Well, you haven't seen... *him*, have you?"

"You mean Lin..." Saria was about to utter the 'forbidden word'. If she had said it, she would have been killed for sure.

"Yes, I mean him!" the king shouted angrily.

"No, your highness, sir!" Saria quickly lied.

The king nodded and walked to the door, "Well, my daughter is missing. You know, Princess Zelda. I am convinced that she has been abducted by *him*. Tell me if you see her will you? That will be all."

Saria bowed again and closed the door behind the king. Running to the closet, she held it closed for a while, listening carefully, she knew the king was still outside.

"Find him and bring him to me. He will tell me where my daughter is or he will die!" the king roared to his men. There was a sound of many horses galloping away.

"Stay here until I let you out," Saria whispered at the closet and locked it.

## Chapter 9: Return to Hyrule

Quietly walking to the door, Saria opened it. As she suspected, the king was still there.

"Hello again, your highness," she greeted him sweetly.

"Why hello Saria. Again. I see you are going somewhere?" came the king's reply.

Saria shook her head, "No sir, I was just picking some flowers outside my house. It will liven up the place."

"Ah yes, your house," the king said thoughtfully.

Saria felt the king's gaze on her as she bent down and picked some flowers from the bush next to her.

As she walked back, she couldn't resist, "Your highness? I am wondering why you still stay outside my house?"

The king looked taken aback by the question, "Why, I don't know. Would you like me to leave?"

Saria didn't know what to say. She knew that telling the king to leave would be insulting him, so she couldn't, "I... I just am not used to company such as this and besides, there are many hungry Wolfos that roam the forest."

Saria smiled mentally. When she had mentioned the Wolfos, the king looked extremely frightened.

"Well, I have work to do back at the castle. I'll be going now. Thank you," the king stuttered as he mounted his horse and left.

Going back inside, she checked once to make sure there was no-one there and lifted the lock of the closet and opened it. Link and Zelda were sitting inside, kissing.

Saria rolled her eyes, "When you're quite ready."

Link and Zelda quickly pulled apart. Link smiled sheepishly, "Uh... oops."

Zelda's tone was more serious, "That was my father, wasn't it?"

Saria nodded. "He thinks that Link has kidnapped you. He's sent his men out to find you and he wants Link to be brought to him."

Link frowned, "Damn, always the bad guy."

Zelda frowned too, "What do you mean by *always*?"

Link sighed, "A year ago, there were a few guards roaming the forest, looking for '*him*'. I heard them talking about me. They were given to instructions to kill me on sight."

Zelda gasped, "Last year?"

Link nodded, "Yes, why?"

"Was this at the start of last year?" Zelda asked.

Link nodded, "Think so."

Zelda gasped again, "How could father think something like that?"

Link frowned, "What happened?"

"I was sick. The doctors all thought that I had been poisoned or something. They all thought I was going to die," Zelda told him.

"WHAT?" Link yelled in rage, "He thought that *I* would want to kill you?"

"Seems so," Saria said pensively, "I think that the king has just used Link as someone to blame for all that has gone wrong."

Zelda stood up, "That's it."

Link looked at her, "What's it?"

Zelda helped Link stand up too, "We're going back."

"No!" Saria exclaimed, "Didn't you listen to me? They are going to capture Link if they find him!"

"We can go in disguise," Zelda told her.

"But what if they find out who we really are?" Saria asked.

Link spoke up, "We have to go. Rauru said so."

"Rauru?" Saria asked, confused.

"We'll explain on the way," Link told her, throwing Saria and Zelda some cloaks.

The three quietly slipped out of the house, leading Epona out too. Mounting her, Link helped Zelda up and Saria sat on Zelda's lap.

"Go," Link whispered to Epona as he steered her into the denser woods, where he knew the Hylian guards wouldn't go.

On the way to Hyrule, Link and Zelda explained their dreams to Saria, who quickly understood.

"The Lost Woods," Saria said quietly as they exited the forest and entered what seemed to be a maze, full of winding tunnels.

## Chapter 10: An Old Friend

"Which way to go?" Link asked.

Saria looked around quickly and pointed to one, "That one. It's a shortcut to Kokiri Forest."

Link nodded and steered Epona in the direction of the shortcut.

"Back, at last," Saria whispered happily.

Zelda did not share Saria's happiness and neither did Link.

"Where to?" Link muttered under his breath.

"The castle," Zelda replied heavily. She didn't want to go back, yet, she knew she had to.

Riding through the village of Kokiri, Zelda noticed that they all stayed away from them. Oh well, the more secret their arrival was, the more effective it would be.

"It's getting dark!" Zelda exclaimed as they left the forest.

Link nodded, "Yes..."

"Hurry!" Zelda urged Epona, "The draw bridge closes at sunset!"

"Hold on tight," Link told Zelda and Saria as Epona galloped in the direction of the castle.

Luckily, they made it in just as the draw bridge began to close.

"That was close!" Zelda said quietly.

Link nodded in agreement, "Which way to the castle?"

Zelda directed Link to the castle in an undertone, trying to ignore the curious looks the people in the market place were giving them. Link slowed Epona down as they reached the gates of the castle.

Taking on a tour guide pitch, Zelda gave a fake smile, "And, right in front of us, you will find the gateway to the Evil Realm, the residence of the Lord of Evil himself, my father."

"Don't speak that way of the king!" Saria said in a hushed voice, "If anyone hears even *you* talking of him that way, you would surely have to pay the consequences!"

Link looked at the gates, they were tall and had spikes at the top, "How are we going to get inside?"

Letting Saria slide off her lap, Zelda got off herself, "We take the secret entrance. It's the one I've used to get out of the castle on numerous occasions."

Link jumped off Epona, "Where is this secret entrance?"

Zelda walked away, back to the market place, "Follow me."

Epona grunted. It was clear that she didn't want to be left outside the gates of the castle.

"Where do we keep Epona? I don't want to leave Epona here," Link said, looking back at his horse.

"You can keep her with me Link," a voice spoke as a girl stepped out of the bushes.

"Who are you!?" Link asked as he took his sword out in a flash and held it to the stranger's throat.

As the girl stepped back in submission, the moonlight fell on her face.

"Malon?" Zelda recognised the girl.

The girl nodded, "It's me."

Zelda smiled and hugged her, "It's so good to see you again!"

Malon returned the hug, "I came back to Hyrule and as soon as I came, I was told that you were gone!"

Zelda smiled, "I ran away, but you can't lecture me! That's the same thing *you* did."

Malon nodded, "I couldn't bear it Zelda, my father was so lazy and Ingo never treated me good."

"Um... hate to break up your little reunion, but don't we have something to do? And besides, how do you know my name?" Link asked.

Malon smiled, "Link, I'm not surprised you don't know me, but, I'm the one that gave you Epona."

Link gasped, "I remember you! I think. The little red haired girl!"

Malon grinned, "Yep, that'd most probably be me."

"Wow. Well, thank you so much. Epona's been my best friend ever since!" Link said.

Saria was feeling left out. She tugged at Zelda's cloak, "We should be going before it becomes day."

Zelda nodded, "We should. Malon, I'll visit you at the ranch later."

Malon nodded, "Okay, oh, and by the way, I think my father's asleep in the castle again."

"You want me to wake him up and tell him that you've returned?" Zelda asked.

Malon smiled, "Yep. And tell him not to bother coming home."

## Chapter 11: Entering the Castle

"Take care of Epona for me," Link told Malon as he, Saria and Zelda went to the wall to find the secret entrance.

"I will, take care," Malon replied as she watched the trio leave as she patted Epona.

"So, where's this entrance?" Link asked as Zelda stopped and started staring at the wall.

"Here," Zelda replied as she tested some vines that were growing on the wall.

"What?" Link asked in surprise.

"I hope you're a good climber," Zelda replied as she climbed the vines and waited at the top for the other two.

Soon, all three were standing on the top wall.

"Come," Zelda said as she walked towards the top of the bridge and climbed the ladder down into the guard's tower.

"Isn't this a little risky? What if a guard came in?" Link asked as he jumped off the ladder.

"They don't use this thing, they always complain that it's too small," Zelda replied as Saria jumped off the ladder too.

At a run, Zelda left the guard tower, telling Saria and Link to do the same.

"Stay low!" she instructed as she crouched next to a hill.

Avoiding the guards, the trio ran across the lawn and stopped at a wall.

"Uh, Zelda? The entrance is that way," Link said, pointing.

"More climbing," Saria said rather than guessed as she climbed the wall after Zelda.

"Now what? The draw bridge is closed!" Link exclaimed.

"There is only one way to open the draw bridge," Zelda told them as she looked at one of the guards near the entrance, "We have to steal the guard's trumpet."

"How?" Link asked.

"Simple!" Zelda replied as she picked a few chestnuts from a nearby tree.

Throwing them into the water near the guard, Zelda watched as her plan worked. The guard dropped his trumpet in a hurry as he ran to the water and investigated the sound. Zelda quickly summoned the trumpet and blew it.

"Wow!" Link said, impressed as he watched the draw bridge open.

Zelda made the trumpet float back to its original position as the guard quickly ran out of the way of the falling bridge and looked for who blew his trumpet.

"RUN!" Zelda yelled as they ran into the castle.

The guard saw them and made a move for them, but Zelda quickly turned the lever around so the draw bridge closed.

"You're good at this!" Link said grinning.

"Yeah," Zelda said as she caught her breath, "You'd be good if you had to do that since you were small too."

"I'm surprised the guards still fall for the same trick!" Saria said.

Zelda shrugged, "The guards here have two weaknesses, they're thick and they're too competitive. If they knew something, they wouldn't tell the other guards unless it threatened their own lives and they wouldn't notice something unless it went up to them and tapped them on the shoulder."

"Which way do we go?" Link asked looking at all the different corridors and staircases.

"Straight. We're not in the main castle yet," Zelda replied as she walked forwards.

Saria and Link followed, cautiously looking around for guards.

"Out here," Zelda whispered, opening a door that led to the courtyard.

The courtyard was very big and led to many different gardens. Zelda walked to the large oak doors of

the actual castle.

"Come on!"

The trio went inside. Link looked cautiously at Zelda, "And from here...?"

## Chapter 12: The Confrontation

Zelda turned red. It wasn't hard to tell she was angry. Ignoring Link's question, she took his hand and went to another pair of large oak doors.

"FATHER!!!" she yelled as she pushed the doors open.

Many guards ran towards Zelda, their lances pointing to Link's neck as his hood fell off.

"LEAVE HIM!" Zelda screamed as she let out a wave of magic that made all the guards freeze in their positions.

"Zelda! My daughter! I am so glad that you have returned to me! I see that you have outsmarted your capturer!" the king said, beaming as he hugged Zelda.

"GET AWAY FROM ME!" Zelda screamed shrilly as she pushed her father away.

"I... I don't understand!" the king said as he stumbled backwards.

Standing over him, Zelda looked straight into his eyes, "Link... did... not... capture... me... HE SAVED MY LIFE!!!!"

"Nonsense!" the king shouted as he stood up, "Clearly, he has cast a mind-control spell on you!"

"No he hasn't, Father! I know the truth now! I know that you turned the time backwards and that you sent Link away from Hyrule. You don't have to lie anymore because I KNOW EVERYTHING THAT YOU'VE KEPT FROM ME!!!" Zelda screamed.

"The... truth?" the king asked as fear came across his face, "What truth, child?"

"DON'T ACT LIKE YOU DON'T KNOW!" Zelda yelled angrily.

"You... know?" the king asked.

"It's about time you realized!" Zelda screamed.

"But... how? SARIA!" the king saw Saria standing in the doorway.

"No, not her, Father," Zelda said before the king could do anything.

"Then who?" the king asked.

"It was I," a voice came from behind the throne.

"Rauru?" the king asked in fury, "It was *you*?"

Rauru nodded solemnly, "I always told you that your selfishness was going to be your downfall. Look what you have done to yourself. You were so self-absorbed that it cost you your own daughter."

"You... traitor!!!" the king spluttered in rage as he ran towards the sage.

"Stop it!" Zelda screamed, "Leave Rauru alone! It isn't his fault that you are so selfish!"

Link stood in the middle of the throne room, next to Zelda, puzzled. He didn't know what to do. He didn't even know why he was here. Looking at Zelda's face, he could tell she was very angry.

He lightly touched her hand, "Calm down."

Zelda sighed, "I wish I could, but I can never forgive my father for what he has done to me... to *us*. He is the one to blame and he is blaming others for his faults!"

Link nodded and looked back to the doorway, where Saria was standing. He smiled at her, urging her to come forward, which she did.

To Link and Zelda, Saria felt like a child. An insignificant child. She knew that she wasn't really. In fact, she was a little older than Link. But it didn't show on the outside. The only people who knew her real age were her and Link. The Kokiri never spoke of their age. It wasn't necessary or anything worth talking about and Link... she doubted that he even remembered who she was. Sure, he knew her name, but a name was just that. The memories they had shared before he was forced to leave... and even before the king turned the time back... those memories would never return. Time was like a mind controller. Making you forget of the had-beens and remembering only what is going on. And of course, Link would have wanted to forget about Hyrule. Who knows what the king had done to him... what he had threatened Link with before he was abandoned in the woods.

Saria's thoughts were interrupted by a hand being placed on her shoulder, "Hey, what's wrong?"

Saria looked up. The owner of the hand and the voice was Link. Sniffing a little, she shook her head,

"Nothing. It's nothing important."

Link smiled, Saria could tell that he knew she was upset.

"Link, I don't know *how* you got your filthy hands on my daughter, or how you could convince my most trustworthy advisor to help you, but I guarantee that you will not get away with this!" the king yelled.

"Don't drag Link into this!" Zelda screamed loudly.

Ignoring his daughter, the king continued, "Link, from now on, you are banished from Hyrule. Place a foot in my kingdom and you will certainly die. As for you, Zelda, to minimize the risk of this happening again, you are now forbidden to leave the castle. I am going to make security even tighter and there will be at least two guards outside your room at all times."

"What?!?!" Zelda screamed, "You can't do this! You can't banish Link! And you can't do that to me!!!"

"Watch me," the king told her as he called upon some guards to take Link away.

"LINK!!!!" Zelda screamed as she watched the guards drag him away, taking Saria with them.

"Zelda!!" Link shouted back, wincing in pain as the guards purposefully knocked him into a wall.

"Take the princess to her room," the king told some guards as he left.

"You can't do this to me," Zelda said as the guards grabbed hold of her hands, "Let go of me!!!"

"King's orders," the guards said as they forced Zelda up the stairs.

## Chapter 13: Short-Lived Reunion

Zelda sat at her desk crying. Finally, she had found Link, after years of being separated from him and being oblivious to his existence. She had fallen in love with him and then what happens? She was forced to live her life separated from him again, this time knowing he was there, and being in love with him! The thought of it brought even more tears to her.

"Princess Zelda, please, stop crying. It will do no-one no good," Zelda's maid pleaded as she had been doing ever since Zelda had been locked in her room.

"How can I Vera?" Zelda asked as she turned around, "How can I stop crying? How would you feel if your father forced you to live your entire life without the man you loved?"

Vera went silent. Of course she didn't know how it would feel. She had lived in the castle all her life and was never allowed to go outside to meet a man to fall in love with in the first place, "I'm sorry princess. In that case, I probably cannot even estimate the pain you are going through in the first place. But please, is there nothing I can do to help you?"

Zelda sighed, Vera was more of a friend to her than a maid, "There is nothing. You may leave if you want. I know that I'm not exactly the easiest person to spend time with when I'm crying."

Vera nodded. Bowing, she left, "Call me if you need any help."

Zelda nodded and rested her head on her desk. Vera was right, there was no point in crying. Looking out the window, she realized that the sun was setting. That meant that dinner would be in a few hours. She wondered what arrangements had been made for dinner. If she would be able to go to the dining room or not. A Wolfos howl signaled nightfall.

"This is so boring," Zelda muttered as she got up and walked to her window.

The grounds were dark. She could sneak out. If only the guards weren't outside her room, not letting her go anywhere.

"Link?" Zelda noticed a shadowy figure walking towards her window.

The figure stepped into the light. To Zelda's joy, it *was* Link

"How did you get here? How did you sneak past all the guards?" Zelda asked in a whisper.

Link smiled, he wanted to speak, but was afraid that he would be caught.

Reading his thoughts, Zelda nodded. "Ladder. Hurry up."

Zelda threw the rope ladder that she had used to run away down to Link so he could climb it.

"Do you always keep a ladder in your room?" Link asked, smiling as he climbed into Zelda's room.

Zelda smiled too, "Yep. It's how I get away from the castle."

Link's smile faded and he kissed Zelda, "I missed you."

Tears formed in Zelda's eyes again, "I missed you too."

Pulling the ladder up, Link gave it to Zelda, who put it away.

"Is Saria...?" Zelda asked as she kissed Link again.

"No, she doesn't know I came back. I didn't want to bother her again," Link replied.

"Oh," Zelda said as she held Link, kissing him for longer this time.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAARGH! GUARDS! COME QUICK! COME QUICK! BRING THE PRINCESS!" a shrill scream caused Link and Zelda to quickly pull away.

"Hide!" Zelda whispered.

"Where?" Link asked, looking around quickly.

Opening her closet, Zelda pushed him in, "Stay here until I let you out, okay?"

Link nodded as Zelda kissed him quickly and locked the door.

"Princess!" a guard quickly burst into the room just as she finished locking her closet.

"Yes? I heard a scream, what is wrong?" Zelda asked innocently.

"I think that you should come with me," the guard told her as he took her arm and led her down the hall.

"Why are we stopping?" Zelda asked worriedly as they stopped outside the king's study, "Why are we

stopping outside my father's study? What happened?"

The guard grimaced slightly and opened the door, taking Zelda inside.

What Zelda saw next made her scream and fall to the floor.

## Chapter 14: False Accusation

"Princess! Are you okay?" the guard woke her up.

"Was it a dream?" Zelda asked as she sat up.

"I'm afraid not princess. Your father, the king, he really is dead. A servant found him murdered here, in his study," the guard replied with great sorrow.

"It... it can't be!" Zelda stammered as the guard had to quickly support her from fainting again.

"I'm sorry Princess Zelda," the guard replied.

"I... I need to get back to my room!" Zelda exclaimed, remembering Link was still there.

"Can you walk, or do you want me to carry you? You seem weak," the guard said.

"I can walk!" Zelda snapped as she stood up and ran to her room, locking the door behind her.

Running to her window, she closed the curtains so no-one would know Link was there. She went to her closet and unlocked it.

"What happened?" Link asked as he stepped out of the closet and noticed Zelda's tears.

"My father... they found him dead," Zelda weakly replied.

Link didn't really like the king that much, but when it came to the fact that he was Zelda's father, he was as important as anyone else, even more important for that matter, "Oh no!"

Link let Zelda fall into his arms and start crying, "But the worst part is..."

"Yes?" Link asked, patting Zelda's back.

"If they find you anywhere in Hyrule, they'll suspect that you killed him," Zelda replied, standing up properly to look into Link's eyes, "That's why I'm afraid to let you go, but can't let you stay."

"What do I do then?" Link asked, his voice revealing his worry.

"I think I may be able to help you with that," a voice spoke.

"Rauru?" Zelda asked, immediately recognizing the voice.

A ball of yellow light appeared and formed Rauru, "Yes, it's me, I think I might be able to help you."

Link narrowed his eyes at the sage, "No way. We listened to you last time and look what happened."

Rauru sighed, "I must admit, I failed to foresee the unlikely events of today, but you must trust me this time. Of course, the choice is yours..."

Zelda looked at Link. She could tell that he didn't trust Rauru that much, but he didn't seem to want to reject the help.

"What's your plan?" Link asked, looking up.

Rauru sighed, "I will sneak you out of Hyrule. Stay in the woods and I will bring you back here tomorrow."

Link grinned, "Yeah, that sounds like a good enough idea."

Zelda beamed, "Then it's settled."

Rauru nodded, "I'll give you a little time with Zelda. Call me when you are ready to leave."

Link and Zelda nodded as they watched the sage transform into a yellow ball of light again and disappear.

"We're so lucky we have Rauru's help!" Zelda whispered, smiling.

Link nodded, "And to think I couldn't trust him a few seconds ago."

Zelda's smile faded, "I'm going to miss you Link."

Link laughed a little, "Why? I'm going to come back tomorrow!"

Zelda hugged Link, "Tomorrow's too far away."

Tilting Zelda's face up, Link kissed her, "I love you."

"I love you too Link," Zelda replied.

"I should be going," Link said, reluctantly letting go of Zelda.

"You're right," Zelda replied sadly.

"Rauru!" Link called, trying to stay as quiet as possible.

Rauru's signature ball of yellow light reappeared and formed Rauru, "Yes? Are you ready?"

Link nodded, "Yep. Let's go."

That moment, Zelda's door opened with a crash. Many guards filed into the room, all their swords raised to Link's throat.

"I knew I heard you!" a guard spat.

"What are you doing?" Zelda asked as she struggled to Link's side.

"Stay away from him Princess Zelda, the man's a murderer!" the guard told her.

"What are you talking about?!?" Link and Zelda cried at the same time.

Two guards grabbed Link's arms, holding him down, "We are taking you prisoner for the murder of the king."

"He didn't kill my father!! You have the wrong person!" Zelda cried, struggling from a guard's arms.

"Take care of Zelda for me!" Link yelled at Rauru, who silently nodded.

## Chapter 15: Link's "Escape"

"Leave," Zelda said shortly, looking at Rauru.

"What?" Rauru asked, raising a hand to Zelda's shoulder in an attempt to comfort her.

Zelda moved away so Rauru couldn't reach her, "Just leave Rauru. Perhaps Link is right. Every time you try to help, it always ends in disaster. Maybe you should just go."

Rauru opened his mouth to plead, but closed it. He knew there was no point in trying to reason with the princess. She had her father's stubbornness, but her mother's gentleness.

"Are you going or not?" Zelda asked impatiently.

Rauru sighed, "I'll leave."

Zelda watched in satisfaction as the sage left her room. She felt numb. She didn't know what to feel. What to do. She was happy that Link didn't have to leave the castle after all, but she knew that he was suffering. She could feel it.

Lying on her bed, she waited until dinner. Going down to the dining room silently, she ate as slowly as she felt like. There was no more father to rush her, telling her that there would be some royal outing the next day and she needed sleep. She wanted to pass time as quickly as possible. She had a plan.

"Good night Princess Zelda," Vera said as she left Zelda's room, turning the light off. The princess and she had just been talking. Actually, Vera was comforting the princess. Again.

"Night, Vera," Zelda replied as she feigned sleepiness.

Zelda waited. She had to make sure that everyone was asleep. She knew that the guards wouldn't bother guarding her room in the night and there was no more king to punish them for it.

Silence.

Quietly getting up, Zelda lit a small candle and went to her closet. Taking out a coat, she put it on. Then, she took out another one and carried it. The dungeons would be cold.

Walking out of her room, Zelda's eyes darting in every direction, making sure that she wouldn't be caught.

Quickly going down the stairs, Zelda took the secret entrance behind a hanging tapestry. It was the quickest way to the dungeons. She had seen her father take this way so many times before. She knew Link would be the only prisoner held down here, so any of the sounds would have to be the guards. She stopped and wondered how she would get past them. By the sounds of it, there were around five and the dungeons were quite small.

"It's so cold down here!" a guard complained.

Zelda stifled laughter. Of course. It was so simple. Why hadn't she thought of it before? Mentally thanking the guard that had just spoken, Zelda put on the other coat, leaving her hands free. Whispering a spell, she held her hands up as a blue mist came out of them. With the help of the cold already in the dungeons, she would be able to freeze the entire dungeon in a relatively short time.

"Yes!" Zelda said victoriously. The whole of the dungeon was now frozen. That would include the guards.

Carefully stepping down the icy steps, Zelda found her way to the guards' chamber. Thawing the keys, she took them off their hook and pocketed them. She walked through the many rows of cells, looking for Link's. Finally, she found it. Running towards it. She melted the ice blocking the lock and fit the key through and turned it.

"My poor Link!" Zelda cooed as she bent down and thawed Link.

Link shivered, "What happened? Zelda? Why are you here? How did you...?"

Zelda grinned, "I froze the place. All the guards are frozen. Come on, let's get out of here!"

Zelda took one of her coats off and wrapped it around Link to keep him warm.

"What are we going to do now?" Link asked as they walked out of the dungeons.

Zelda shrugged, "Let's get out of here."

"Get out of where? Hyrule?" Link asked as they exited the dungeons.

Zelda nodded, "Yeah. I know this is wrong, me being the princess and all..."

"Queen," Link corrected her, "I heard the guards talking. You're now the new queen of Hyrule."

"Whatever," Zelda said impatiently, "I know it's wrong, but I hate this place."

Link frowned, "Where else do we go then?"

Zelda turned and started to go up the stairs, "We go back to the forest. Come with me, we can't risk you being captured again."

Link nodded and silently followed Zelda.

## Chapter 16: Equipping

"What are you doing?" Link asked. They were in Zelda's room and Zelda was rushing around, removing things.

Zelda paused for a moment and looked at Link, "I'm getting the stuff I need."

Link sighed as he leaned against the wall, he knew this would take a while.

"Done!" Zelda said in a few minutes.

Link looked at Zelda, expecting to see a large bag, but instead, Zelda was just carrying a small bag, "What's in the bag?"

Zelda smiled, "You'll find out."

"When?" Link asked as he rushed to keep up with Zelda who was now walking down the hall.

"Soon enough," Zelda said as they stopped at a large tapestry. The picture of the king was on it.

Brushing the tapestry aside, Zelda revealed the secret door behind it. Opening her bag, she took out a bundle of keys and carefully fitted one into the large lock, causing the door to creak open.

"That was what you had in your bag?" Link asked.

Zelda grinned, "Keys to every single part of Hyrule Castle. Only one person has the bundle. It belonged to my father. I stole it from his room."

Link nodded, "Where are we?"

Zelda's expression turned serious as she opened another door.

"WOW!" Link exclaimed. In this room, there were rows and rows of weapons.

Zelda walked to a certain wall and took down two swords and two shields.

Carrying them back to Link, she gave them to him, "Here. According to legend, these are rightfully yours."

Link looked at the weapons. They were large and Zelda seemed to carry them with ease. He opened his mouth to ask why they were so light.

"It's a protection spell," Zelda said, reading his thoughts, "People will attempt to steal them, realise how light they are and assume they are fakes."

"Oh. In this protected state, are they...?" Link asked.

"Powerless," Zelda replied, "The Biggoron Sword wouldn't be able to slice a blade of grass in this state."

Link placed the swords and shields on the ground and picked up the large sword, "I suppose this is the Biggoron Sword?"

Zelda nodded, "Yep. The most powerful sword I've ever heard of."

"Wow!" Link said.

"It's actually quite heavy, you'd need to carry it with two hands," Zelda added as she watched Link swing it with one hand in ease.

"Are you going to take the spell off now?" Link asked, looking up at Zelda.

"Have you ever had a sword before?" Zelda asked.

Link nodded, "Yeah, once. When I was a kid, I think."

Zelda nodded, "in that case, I suggest you put them all down."

Link obeyed and watched Zelda as she closed her eyes and started muttering words very quickly.

"There, see how heavy they actually are now," Zelda said as she stopped muttering and opened her eyes.

Link picked the smaller sword up first. It was quite light, he could probably carry the smaller shield while using it. Trying it out, he slashed into the air.

"I must say, I am impressed, you seem to be a skilled swordsman. Only someone like you would be able to use the Master Sword with the skill you have," Zelda praised Link.

Link turned slightly red and picked up the smaller shield. He was right, he *could* carry both the sword

and shield at the same time.

"That's the Hylian Sheila by the way," Zelda said, looking at the shield.

"And this one?" Link asked as he picked the other shield up.

"Mirror Sheila. There's no need to put the Master Sword away when using it. It is big and quite powerful, but it is extremely light," Zelda replied.

Link nodded and put the Mirror Sheila down and picked up the Biggoron Sword.

"This is heavy!" Link exclaimed as he struggled not to drop it.

"It takes a while to get used to," Zelda said, helping Link put it down.

"Oh," Link said, flexing his fingers.

Zelda walked to another wall, "But I may be able to help you there."

"What do you mean?" Link asked, walking after her.

Zelda handed Link a pair of gauntlets, "Here, the Golden Gauntlets. They increase the power of your arms. You could even throw monoliths with these beauties."

"Cool!" Link exclaimed as he put the gauntlets on and picked up the Biggoron Sword again, this time, with much more ease.

"Does it help?" Zelda asked eagerly.

"Yep!" Link nodded, "I could carry this with one hand!"

"And finally," Zelda said as they walked to another wall, "Boots."

"Boots?" Link repeated, looking puzzled.

Zelda nodded, "The Hover Boots, which enable you to hover in the air or above water for a brief moment and the Iron Boots, allowing you to sink to the bottom of any body of water and stops you from being blown away by the wind."

Link smiled in wonderment as he tried both boots on, "But with the Iron Boots, when I go underwater, I'd have to hold my breath right?"

Zelda slapped her forehead, "Oh, right! I forgot. The two tunics."

"Tunics?" Link repeated.

Zelda handed him two tunics, "The Goron Tunic, you can withstand high temperatures whilst wearing it, also makes you resistant to fire and the Zora Tunic, enabling you to stay underwater for as long as you like, providing you with all the air you need."

"That would help," Link said, nodding.

"Okay, NOW, finally, are the few little extra things you'd need," Zelda told him.

"Such as...?" Link asked.

Zelda handed things to Link one by one, giving their name and stating their use until she was sure that he was fully equipped with what they would need.

Zelda nodded solemnly as they left the weapon room, "Come on, let's get out here."

## Chapter 17: Punishment

Link and Zelda crept through the main hall of the castle quietly. It was dark, so no-one would see them. They almost reached the door when they heard a scream.

"Wha-?" Link was startled, but in a flash, Zelda quickly found the source of the scream and had silenced it.

"Shhhhh!" Zelda whispered to the young girl whose mouth she had covered. It was Vera.

"What? How? Princess Zelda!?" Vera exclaimed in a hushed voice.

"You mustn't tell *anyone*," Zelda told the young girl.

Vera nodded, "You're planning to leave again, aren't you?"

Zelda didn't answer, she was looking around, "The guards are going to come soon. They are going to ask you why you screamed. TELL THEM NOTHING ABOUT SEEING US. Tell them you were startled because you almost fell or something."

Vera nodded silently, afraid to speak.

"We should be going," Link said impatiently.

Zelda nodded and placed a hand on Vera's shoulder, "Before I go, I must say this; you've been more than a maid to me, you've been a friend. My best friend in fact. I must say, Malon and I were close, but after I was forbidden from seeing her, you have become the closest friend I've ever had."

Vera tried not to cry as she embraced the princess. They quickly pulled apart at the sound of footsteps.

"What's that?" Link whispered.

"I'll check," Vera whispered bravely. Raising her voice, she looked into the darkness, "Who is there?"

"The guards. We heard noises. We came to investigate," came the reply.

Link and Zelda looked around in panic, trying to find somewhere to hide.

"In here," Vera whispered as she ushered them into a closet.

Link and Zelda nodded as they quickly climbed into the closet and closed the door.

Zelda heard a guard address Vera, "Who are you? Why are you still up?"

"I...I...I..." Vera stammered.

Zelda shut her eyes tightly, silently praying that Vera would come up with a good story the guards would believe.

"I came because I thought that I needed to tidy this area up a little," Vera said.

"Oh really?" a guard asked, his voice sarcastic, "I heard more than just one person in here."

"There... there was no-one else," Vera mumbled.

Zelda pressed her ear against the door of the closet. She heard a guard mutter something to the other guards and heard footsteps. Soon, she heard footsteps again, the guards must have gone somewhere and returned.

"You were right sir, we couldn't find her. She wasn't in her room," a voice spoke.

Zelda's heart sank, they knew that they were talking about her.

"And we couldn't find *him* either. Maybe he had escaped and kidnapped the princess...?" another voice said.

Zelda had to stop herself from screaming. They knew that Link had left the dungeons.

"Don't be such a fool!" another guard yelled, "You KNOW that wasn't what happened. The princess freed him. They are trying to escape!"

Zelda heard Vera gasp.

"You! Girl! You knew all along, didn't you? You're trying to cover up for them!" the guard spoke again.

"That's... not true! I knew nothing of their escape!" Vera stammered.

"You lie!" the guard yelled.

Zelda heard the next few things go by very quickly. The sound of a sword being unsheathed, Vera

screaming and a thud.

"Let the servant's death be a lesson to you, men. If you play around with your position in the castle and betray us, you are only making your own death sentence," the guard spoke as footsteps died away.

## Chapter 18: Revenge

Zelda looked at Link. He was as pale and shocked as she was, but she didn't want to stay silent.

Opening the closet, she ran to her fallen friend. Sinking to the floor crying, she looked at Link, "Link, lend me your sword."

Link hesitated. He knew what she was going to do.

"GIVE ME THE SWORD!!" Zelda screamed.

Link nodded quickly and handed Zelda his Master Sword.

"I'm gonna get that piece of..." Zelda muttered as she stood up, wiping her eyes.

"Here," Link said, handing her the Hylian Shield, "Take this too. Just in case. Oh yeah, and I'm coming with you."

Zelda did not respond, she had already run off the direction she heard the guards leave in. As she expected, the guards were hurrying back to the hall. They had heard her screaming.

"YOU KILLED VERA!!!" Zelda screamed.

"She betrayed us," the leader of the guards, the one who Zelda suspected had killed Vera, replied coolly.

Zelda held her sword up to the guard, "And who said that YOU could take charge after my father's death?"

Footsteps behind Zelda told her that Link had arrived.

"So. Link. We meet at last. I must say, it will be a great pleasure to kill you," the guard said, sneering.

Link nodded, "And who might you be?"

The guard laughed vainly, "Why, I am Aron, the head of all the guards here."

"Aron eh?" Link muttered.

"Prepare to die Link," Aron told him, unsheathing his sword.

The sound of Aron unsheathing his sword again reminded Zelda that he had killed Vera. Blocking Aron's path, she looked at him, her jaw set, "You'll have to get past me first."

Aron laughed again, "Oh, how cute. Zelda wants to fight."

Zelda kicked Aron in the stomach, causing him to fall to the floor, "That's QUEEN Zelda to you."

"You're not serious?" Aron asked, a hint of worry in his voice.

"I'm serious alright," Zelda replied, making the tip of her sword touch Aron's throat, "Dead serious."

Aron frowned and slid away from the sword so he could stand up, "I'll go easy on you."

Zelda smirked slightly, "Your problem, not mine."

Before Aron had the chance to figure out what Zelda was doing, she stabbed him, causing him to fall to the floor.

"How could you be so... fast?" Aron gasped as he clutched his wound, preventing the blood from flowing out.

"I told you it was your problem you were going easy on me," Zelda said plainly and raised her gaze to the other guards, "Any more volunteers?"

In a clank of metal armour, the others had run away.

"Wimps," Zelda muttered, handing the Master Sword and Hylian Shield back to Link.

"Uhhh... thanks..." Link stammered, watching Aron die, in shock.

"Let's get out of here," Zelda told him as she opened the door and went outside.

Link followed, giving one last glance to Aron as he breathed his last breath and lay dead on the cold floor of the castle.

## Chapter 19: Epona's Song

"We'll need to hurry," Zelda muttered quickly to Link as she walked out of the castle at a quick pace, Link having to jog to keep up.

"Where are we going to go though?" Link asked.

"Back to the woods. It's the safest place I can think of at the moment, all I want to do is get out of Hyrule," Zelda replied.

Link found they were in Hyrule Market, "And if anyone recognizes us? You ARE aware that they're going to send a search party to hunt us down."

Zelda didn't stop walking, but it was clear that she hadn't thought of that before, "Well... we'll worry about it when it happens."

"It's going to take a while to cross Hyrule Field," Link stated as they stopped at the drawbridge.

"I was wondering when you wanted your horse back," a voice spoke.

Zelda turned around, immediately recognizing the voice, "Malon."

Malon nodded, her ruby coloured tresses bouncing, "It's me. And I've got Epona here too."

Link looked around, "Where?"

Malon hummed a short tune and Epona neighed, trotting towards them, "It's a song that my mother made, I called it Epona's Song, she likes it."

Link took out his ocarina and copied the tune, "Like that?"

Epona neighed warmly and Malon smiled, "Yep, exactly like that. It will call her from anywhere."

Zelda smiled, "Thank you Malon."

Malon smiled slightly, "I suppose you're leaving?"

Zelda nodded, but then stopped, "Malon, I think you should come with us."

"Me? Why?" Malon asked, startled.

Zelda's eyes filled with tears so Link hugged her.

"It's Vera... isn't it?" he asked softly.

Zelda nodded as a few tears rolled down her cheek.

"Come," Link told Malon, "It'll be fun."

Malon blushed slightly, "Okay, if you guys want me to."

"There aren't enough horses," Link observed, looking at Epona.

Malon took Epona's reins, "I'll be back, with more horses."

Link and Zelda nodded as they watched Malon ride towards the ranch.

In a few moments, Malon returned, with two more horses.

"Here, Link, Epona is yours, you can have the chestnut one Zelda, and the white one's mine," Malon said, handing Link and Zelda the reins of their horses.

After all three were mounted, they rode to the Kokiri Forest. The sun was rising and they had only a short time until daylight to leave Hyrule.

## Chapter 20: And Again...

"We can't keep running like this," Malon told Link and Zelda as they entered Link's house.

Zelda looked in Malon's direction, "What else is there to do?"

Link nodded in agreement, "There's nothing else we *can* do."

Malon looked pensive, "But tell me, how did the king change the *real* present?"

Zelda closed her eyes, "Time control."

"Then why don't you just take time back again? This time, because you know what happened, you should remember each other!" Malon exclaimed.

"You're right! I think it'll work," Zelda said, smiling and looked at Link, "What do you think?"

Link grinned, "If it works, I'm in. I'm sick of hiding."

"We'll just have to call Rauru then," Zelda said.

"Yeah, Rauru can turn the time back for us," Malon said without thinking, but quickly covered her mouth with her hand.

"How do you know Rauru? Only selective members of the Royal Family know him! I didn't even know him myself until a few days ago!" Zelda asked.

"I... I..." Malon stammered.

"Yes?" Link asked.

"I talked to her before," a voice spoke as a yellow ball of light transformed into the Sage of Light, Rauru.

"Rauru!" Zelda exclaimed, recognizing the figure.

"I told her my plans and asked her to somehow tell you two so that we could carry it out with your consent," Rauru explained, looking at Link and Zelda reassuringly.

"Well, I'm with the idea, it's a very good one," Zelda said, smiling.

"Me too," Link added.

"Then it's certain. We'll just have to get to the Temple of Time," Rauru told them.

"But we just got here!" Link complained, "It took almost a full day!"

"I can transport you, or at least one of you, two of you will have to fly with Kaepora," Rauru said thoughtfully.

"Kaepora? Who's that?" Link asked.

There was a flapping sound outside and a voice answered Link's question, "I'm Kaepora Gaebora. The wise owl, protector of Hyrule."

Link looked at the owl in shock, "An... owl?"

"You can go with Rauru, I'll go with Malon and Kaepora," Zelda told Link as she began to walk outside.

Malon followed, "I guess we'll be seeing you in the Temple of Time."

Holding Link by the arm, Rauru transformed into a ball of light and waited outside.

"Come on, let's go!" Zelda told Malon as they both hurried outside.

"Hold on tight girls," the owl told them as he spread his large wings and took flight.

Before they knew it, they were all inside the Temple of Time.

"Are you ready?" Rauru asked as he opened the door to the Chamber of Time.

"I'll stay here," Malon said, staying where she was.

"You ready?" Link asked, taking Zelda's hand.

Zelda looked back at Malon, "Thanks Malon, I hope we meet again."

Malon nodded, "Me too, bye."

Zelda looked at Link and they followed Rauru.

"Now, what you will have to do is place your hands on this pedestal and read out the words engraved onto the stone," Rauru told them.

"Okay," Zelda said, nodding.

Rauru walked away, "Good luck. If everything goes right, we'll all be sent back in time exactly as far as your father sent us back last time."

"Thanks Rauru," Zelda called as he left the room.

Zelda looked at the pedestal in the middle of the room and then at Link, "You ready?"

Link nodded, "First, I have to do one thing."

Zelda looked at Link with curiosity as he held her and kissed her.

"I love you," he told her as they pulled apart.

"I love you too Link. When we're sent back in time, we'll keep our memories. When you find yourself in the past once more, please, come to the castle," Zelda replied.

Link nodded as he placed his hands on the pedestal. Zelda did the same and they began to recite the incantation written in the stone in unison. They felt a strange feeling. Similar to when their memories had returned to them. They saw everything in their lives going backwards, but it stopped.

Zelda opened her eyes and looked around. She was in one of the gardens of Hyrule Castle. Looking down at herself, she smiled. It had worked. She was now an eleven year old girl again. Running down the large stretch of grass to the lake, she stood there, staring at her own reflection. There were so many things that she hadn't noticed, hadn't payed attention to before. This was her second chance, to live her life again.

"Zelda?" a small voice asked.

Turning around, Zelda let out a giggle. Hiding behind a bush, stood a small ten year old boy dressed in green, "Link!"

Link smiled shyly and walked towards Zelda and hugged her, "It's so good to see you... again."

## Chapter 21: A King's Confession

I paced my study. I couldn't believe it... That good for nothing boy actually managed to get his memory back, as well as my daughter...

Of all the precautions I took to prevent them from ever meeting... ever knowing of each other... it happened right beneath my very nose!

I want to kill him. Just rid of him... then I'd have nothing to worry about... except for Zelda hating me.

"Sire?" a guard interrupted my thoughts, walking through the door.

"What?" I snapped back. I really wanted to be alone at the moment. Alone so I could figure out my next plan of action...

"Sire... do you think he's actually left?" the guard asked.

I paused for a moment and the fool thought that I don't know who he was talking about.

"I mean Li-"

"I don't care!" I yelled at him, "I don't care if he's hidden in your armour, as long as he doesn't lay one finger on my daughter!"

"Sorry... sire..." the guard shrank back, out of the room.

I sighed. I needed to talk to Zelda. I really needed to talk to her. She must be so angry at me now... My heart sank, just thinking of what my wife would be thinking, up from the Sacred Realm... she would have handled this a lot better than I did... though... I could tell she actually liked the boy... I never could imagine why. He was as good as a peasant. I don't care if he saved the world.

Walking down the hall to Zelda's room, I paused for a moment, collecting my thoughts – and courage – before I was going to knock.

"I love him, Vera! I... I can't live without him!"

"There there, Miss... maybe your father the King will soften up eventually and let you see him..."

I heard Zelda crying and her maid trying to cheer her up.

"No, Vera! He won't! I know him! He's just a cold... heartless... cruel monster! He doesn't care about me! He doesn't care about anything except for himself! I could just kill myself and he wouldn't care! I'll prove it! Oh, I hate him so much!"

I heard some shuffling noises and my hand went for the handle, but I stopped myself.

"Miss Zelda! You don't mean that! You're not going to kill yourself! Please don't, Miss! You are like a sister to me!"

I thanked her... whatever the maid's name was... I knew she stopped Zelda from killing herself. I, however, wasn't happy. She hated me.

*Oh, I hate him so much!*

Those words lingered in my head. I had failed. I had failed as a King when I had given in to Ganondorf's manipulations before. I had failed to keep Zelda away from that stupid boy. And I had failed as a father.

Slowly, I made my way back to my study and found Rauru standing in front of the door.

"You..." I glared.

I suspected he was up to something... He was to blame for the reason Zelda remembered her past.

"Yes, it is me," he replied, glaring back.

"You're up to something," I said accusingly.

He laughed, "That's quite rich, coming from *you*."

"Well, I know that you're going to do something," I growled, "Don't think I'm stupid, Rauru."

The sage laughed again.

"Me? I'm not up to anything... I'm not underestimating you, your highness, you're the one underestimating the boy."

"He's been banished! I have nothing to worry about!" I yelled.

"Your daughter has already chosen him over you once and she will do it again and again, how many ever times she has to," Rauru said, his eyes gleaming with something I have never seen in his eyes before. He

was threatening me.

"What do you know that I don't?" I asked. I had to admit. I was worried now.

"You think he'll give up so easily?" Rauru asked, "Do you remember when he was on his quest to save our country from Ganondorf, in our other timeline? He never gave up, no matter how bad the odds looked."

"What are you saying...?"

Rauru gave me a look that told me the answer to my question was obvious.

"He'll come back for her. Whether you like it or not. He's going to return and maybe your daughter will run away with him... the more you distance the two, the more you are pushing your daughter away... and I think that banishing him was the final move. You've lost her. Do you realise that?"

I fell silent. I... lost her? My own daughter...

*Oh, I hate him so much!*

Rauru was right. It was too late...

"What... what can I do...?" I whispered.

"Nothing," Rauru said, walking away, "You can sit back and watch your daughter run away with Link."

Under usual circumstances, I would have yelled at Rauru for using the forbidden name... but I didn't this time. There were worse things to worry about...

Suddenly a plan formulated in my mind. If he was on his way back to the castle right now...

I had to risk it. Zelda would hate him, he would probably be sentenced to death... and if I failed... I would not have to witness my severe failure. With Zelda hating me, I had nothing left for me anyway.

Walking into my study, I opened the drawer and took out a small vial of purple fluid. I've had this with me for so long that I have forgotten why it came into my possession in the first place, but I didn't care anymore.

Lifting my head, I tipped the vile poison into my mouth and swallowed it, trying my best to ignore the revolting taste.

If I remembered right, it would slowly but surely close down all functioning systems in my body, until I died. With the time I had left, I put the cork back on the vial and replaced it in the drawer. My head was spinning now, but I knew I had to do this. If I was found dead with no traces of anything around me, knowing my head guard, Aron would most probably immediately blame the boy. And that was what I was relying on.

I was becoming weak... I staggered and then I fell.

Lying on the ground, I felt whatever was left of my strength escape me, my consciousness still in full function... though I knew that it too would soon be shut off.

If I could, I would have smiled. I knew he was on his way here. He would come to the castle. Probably sneak straight to my daughter's room. They would find me dead. He would be blamed.

It was a brilliant plan.

I lay there and waited for any sounds that may alert me to the fact that the boy was in my castle. I didn't hear him, but I kept listening...

Of course I wouldn't hear him. Her room was on the other end of the hall. They would both be quiet so as to make sure that no-one heard them. She was smart, my little girl. Definitely with her mother's wisdom. Only this time, I would win. I would be dead, but I would win.

I lay on the ground with every last thought of mine running through my head, until they were all gone.

I felt no more. I breathed no more.

I was dead.

But did I win?

- The End