

I.

*“Once upon a time there was light in my life
But now there's only love in the dark
Nothing I can say;
A total eclipse of the heart.”*

II.

In this twilight palace, by these stained-glass windows, in this forgotten Cathedral...

III.

Midna could breathe a sigh of relief. How wonderful it was to be free once more! No longer shackled to Zant's cruel regime, she could cast her thoughts once more in whatever direction she pleased. The door was open; the hall of evil deeds was empty.

Perhaps too empty.

Plotting, her thoughts twisted to Link, her old traveling companion of bygone days. It was high time she checked in on the kid; after all, he was spectacularly hopeless on his own, a mute brute unsuited for civilian life. Poor drooling idiot. She ought to pay him a visit.

Besides, there was fun to be had in the World of Light, she could feel it.

The endless plains of Hyrule sprawled out beneath her buoyant body: soaring on invisibly under the moon, glistening darkly in her shadow imp form, gliding effortlessly through air. The starful night glimmered above her and she hummed to herself, looping about nocturnal cloud-pillows in carefree abandon. When Midna was humming, all was well.

All was not well elsewhere that night as Princess Zelda stumbled out onto her bedroom balcony, stretched and hiccuping. Pale moonbeams graced her tiara, shimmering like the wine glass she held in her gloved hand. A sleeping blackness stretched below – her kingdom.

“What a pleasant night,” the Princess murmured, urbane, to comfort herself, for pleasant was not her heart. In her unquiet soul something was amiss, that which she dare not admit to herself even on this loveliest of nights. Lovesickness shook our Princess.

Zelda took a demure drag on cheap wine. *Drat, I'm wasted.* Eyes down, she frowned.

Was it Link?

IV.

A mischievous impess that was not Link arced freely through the aether. Twisting pretzels, aerodynamic acrobatics, Midna zipped by a lonely turret of lonely Castle Hyrule, where lonely Princess Zelda stood drunk on the deck. Midna froze, mid-spin. Forget Link; here was fun.

“Well, if it isn't Her Hyrulian Highness herself,” she spat.

Princess Zelda's heart skipped a beat, and she spilled her drink. *Midna...*

“You startled me, Midna! Please announce yourself more properly next time.” Her speech slurred badly.

Oh my Goddesses, she's drunk as Hell.

Extra fun.

“My, my, Zelda, trashed already? It's only nine-thirty, you know.” Her warm smile betrayed puckish intent. The Princess was taken aback. How dare that impudent imp!

“Late enough, I should think,” prissed the Princess, “for someone such as myself, tied up in

purposeless politics until all hours normally. I must treasure these moments I can call my own, and inebriation (hic!) offers quickest escape.”

An obvious cry for help. Midna sprung.

“Lonely, Zelda? I was on my way to Ordon to see the the Hooded Chump, but I'll stay and *keep you company* if you really want me to...”

“T-that's quite alright... you don't...”

“No, no, I think you want me to stay. In fact,” her eyes narrowed, “I can see you're begging for me to stay.”

Tingling flesh; half-open lips –

A clenched fist.

Shut up, you jerk!

Zelda slammed the door to her balcony shut and stormed into her quarters. Who does she think she is?

Alone, levitating above the ornate royal railing, Midna laughed. Let the games begin.

V.

I can't believe her... Father, what should I do?

A stately painting of the deceased King of Hyrule hung decisively over the quarters where Princess Zelda, unsober, reluctant, lie tearfully on her bed. Her heart pounded, like hammers banging, loud pounding sounds.

I hear the hammers banging, father – your hammers...

Midna sat pensive on the castle roof, kicking her petite feet against the shingles, banging, in thought. Zelda needed to loosen up, have a little fun. That father of hers was a tyrant. Have to break his spell, maybe get a little loose in the process, if you follow.

She wants me. I can tell.

It was plain to see. They had been friends or enemies for decades now, and though she feigned aloofness, Zelda's temperature surely bolted when Midna came near, a sassing imp, a patronizing punk, always confrontational, always *fun*. Nobody else could stand up to the Princess like that.

She likes it rough.

Zelda's father was rough. He held his own with the best of them, an iron fist of political will. Enforcement and strength, duty and honor, get tough or get going. To his daughter, as to his people, he was King.

Could she admit it?

VI.

Knock knock.

Midna, naughtily, knocked. Zelda, tossed, tossed haughtily under the covers.

Go away.

Midna knocked again.

Please, go away.

Bonk.

There was no escape. Heart pumping, Zelda thumped to the latched casement and flung it open.

“Why will you not leave, Midna?” the Princess demanded. Midna swooped into the room, alighting on a wooden trunk stuffed with drinks. She stretched, yawning, knowing.

“I don't know; you just seem so... hungry,” Midna said enigmatically, eyes aflame. Zelda's eyes, gasping, were cold.

Too strong. More casual.

“Hungry for companionship, I mean.” *Safe*. “I wanted to help you enjoy yourself on your night

off.”

Zelda stepped back, placated but skeptical, and, though she tried to hide it, hopeful. “Well,” she sniffed, sloshed, “I have been meaning to mix more with friends...”

It's working. Easy.

Now, perhaps I can...

“Hey Zelda, it's a nice night. Want to go for a walk?”

Zelda's heart leapt.

Assent.

VII.



By lakes, by winding roads and mystic Hyrulian veldts, under bright fresh astral effulgence and milky stars and galaxies, the dark outer reaches of space itself, flowing, endless, open, vast, walked Zelda and Midna, not quite abreast.

“You know, Midna,” breathed Zelda, every tone hushed, magical, tipsy, “It's not often I get to go out like this.”

A smile; she's ready.

Midna brushed closer, hanging wistfully at the Princess's shoulder. She would take her to a magical place, indeed. They walked on.

Soon, darkness encroached. Zelda, startled, glanced upwards: A looming cathedral, full dark shadow cast low by lunar lambency. A royal hall she knew well from her childhood. Her father had built this place.

Her and Midna; *here...*

“P-perhaps we should travel elsewhere,” Zelda protested.

“You don't want to explore inside?”

Hold fast. A magical place befits a magical time, baby.

Zelda's will was running out. Her head swirled, swizzled.

Desperation.

“No, no, no,” she stomped petulantly, “We must leave. Surely your own twilight kingdom calls you back, at this late hour?”

Zelda's gaze caressed diminutive curves hovering before her. Passion. *Midna...*

Nerves throbbed. Shame. What would her father think?

“Please, bitch. I *am* Twilight. *Your* Twilight. What do you think about *that*?” Her eyes burned bright.

Totally eclipsed, the princess stepped back into shadow.

Nothing I can say...

They went in.

VIII.

In her youth, Zelda had seen men working, stacking stone to construct this great Cathedral. The pounding sound of metal on metal, hammers banging. This was the sound of pulsing destiny, her lifepulse; the sound of her father's iron will. Now, her throbbing temples echoed, entering this sacred palace. Zelda's head swirled in Midna's Twilight. Past was future and future was present. Desire was all, and all was well. Midna hummed.

Every now and then I feel a little bit helpless...

Zelda's arms fell to her side, useless.

“Slow music, please.” – Twilight's call, her dark magic. A sultry ballad started up in the wings and glided soothing through the girls' ears. A dance.

Surrender.

In each other's arms, a dance, entwined; graceful embrace. Flow, pulse. *Slow music, please....*

They danced for minutes; eternity.

Bliss.

IX.

And then, suddenly, all ground to a halt with a singular question:

“Are you ready?”

The question rang out like a shot. Halt.

Wrongfooted, Zelda could not answer this summons.

“Well?”

The music stopped. The two stood apart. Pressure; ambivalent silence.

“You know what I'm trying to say? Do you have any idea?”

Zelda could not meet Midna's expectant, interrogating eyes. Her hands, slim tender wrists, behind her back, knotted, unknotted, knotted, unknotted; feet tapped. Her thin draped dress quaked.

Zelda was resolute in pitiful pretended ignorance.

“I d-don't understand... i-it is not... my father's will... I am a p-princess,” she blushed.

She is Twilight. My Twilight.

Midna, for her part, was indignant: the human must succumb, she must learn. She, darkling emissary of Twilight, must have her way; will of the father be damned. The imp could accept no further hesitation, and was forthright:

“Wanna fuck?”

Zelda was aghast. A crystalline imprint of her father peered down from stained glass above. How far her father's watchful eyes seemed now, how far her sheltered childhood had withered. The moonstruck Princess waned. She could hear the end: turn around, bright eyes.

My beating heart... my arms, I can't feel my arms... My head.... Please, not this... Not her, not here... Must I say it? Please, don't make me...

I...

I love you.

“Well?”

Her eyes opened, shrill in streaming moonbeams from transluminescent panes, bloodshot, wistful, inebriated. She looked to her captor.

Yes.

A deep, rattling breath. Her heartbeat –

Yes.

Midna's eyes tightened, focusing slats.

I cannot lie.

Forbidden love –

I cannot resist.

A fanged grin –

Will it hurt?

Aerial approach –

Father, forgive me.

“Sure.”

Victory.

X.

Through the echoing halls, a voice hummed. A tone lulled into unlit hallways, resounding off of concrete barriers, off stone panels, etched Gothic statues' faces, the rainbowed fenestrations of past regimes. The tone was a hum, and the hum meant *all was well*.

Throbbing nerves had been quenched; the hammers, silenced. Tonight, if only for this night, Twilight and Princess were one.

“Forever's gonna start tonight.”