

Restless

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1. Restless

RESTLESS

How can you just merely pet a lion and expect it to be tamed? A spirit as free and as bold as Link's was unable to stay in one place. His wind did not waft, but it rushed. His eyes did not gaze, but they pierced. The restless soul within his flesh forced his feet to move and his eyes to turn. After all, he couldn't help it-- after handling a sword destined to banish evil to the bowels of hell, he could not stand still. After vanquishing the Dark Lord, Ganondorf, he had forgotten his life from the distant past. When he turned around on his road leading into eternity, he could not see what was left behind.

It was once a life of stillness, a life of silence, a life of time being frozen. But such is not a way for a lion to live. The tamer to stay him was powerless and his chains were snapped. Or perhaps they bound him? Perhaps he was bound because he was free.

Link would rest for only a very short while before the voice of adventure beckoned him again. His place of refuge-- his sanctuary-- was the grand Hyrule Castle. There remained the Princess Zelda, a graceful and fair maiden with a healing hand that would touch the invisible scars on the lion's heart. She was his tamer. When Link dug into his memory, he could see the time he last saw her as clear as he could see the hand in front of his face.

Link hung his right hand at his side while he held the satchel that was swung over his shoulder with his left. Zelda, who stood before him, seized the hand that was free and held it gingerly between hers. Skin to skin, she stroked his fingers that were not covered by that tough gauntlet. Zelda almost lifted Link's hand to kiss it, but restrained herself from doing so. Their relationship wasn't so deep as to fill the hole with a million scarlet roses. Instead, she offered him her sweetest smile and wished him well.

Link slipped his hand from her grip and turned from her. One step after the other, the restless soul within him pushed him to go forward, shutting out everything. Letting the drapes fall over his life and lifting the curtain to the road of adventure. However, he turned back once. There was Zelda with her unwavering gaze. It might have been the sun bathing her precious skin, but a glistening light fell from her eye and trailed down her cheek. A tear? Why would a princess such as her weep for a dusty and dirty commoner that sought journey?

Link wandered into the chilling mouth of Snowpeak. The snow-covered mountains glared down on him with dominance and the water that was frozen forever shimmered under the sun's gaze. The air was crisp and one could see evermore into the throat that was the space between the mountains. Link tucked his cloak over his shoulder a little more and continued to crunch the way through the snow. The wind's voice was louder here-- much more distinct... like a wolf howling its prayer to the moon in the middle of the still night.

Link kept his thoughts to himself-- talking silently to his other half that never existed. Swaying from one idea to the other and dwelling on some while abandoning others. Everything

shattered, however, when a crunch that did not emanate from his own feet pressing through the snow sounded in the distance. Link froze as still as the ice that surrounded him.

The sword sheathed on Link's back rang when he stroked the hilt with his fingers. The satchel he held crushed against the ground. Link cautiously moved his eyes from here to there, seeking the one who was invisible. Heard, but unseen. Wind. The growling of the trees. Silence. Link had almost lifted his hand from the hilt of his sleeping sword when he heard another noise. A gasp, a bark-- he couldn't tell what it was. But he turned around to find a monster, clothed in wrinkly green skin and hard leather armor. One of Ganondorf's followers?! Perhaps one of them remained alive after his defeat, still obeying what is now emptiness.

It leapt toward him, raising its club to strike. Link awakened his sword and cut through the inferior weapon and slashed the beast. It let out a high gurgle as violet blood flew from its chest. It collided with the snow, staining its pure essence with its black malice, twitching uncontrollably. Link dug his blade into it once more and relinquished his sword when the cries of the beast fell silent.

Link found no time to relax, however. This time a crowd of monsters lay behind him. He turned and narrowed his steel blue eyes as more encircled him. A single sweat droplet rolled from his forehead and down his face. One of the monsters raised its club as Link clenched the hilt of his sword. Then in one moment, everything clashed. The beast swung its club, Link prevented the strike on his body with a clash, and the droplet of sweat fell from his nose and ran through the snow. Link leapt from one monster to the other, banishing those he touched to the everlasting fire. Some carried clubs, some carried bows, and others carried curved blades.

Leaving a trail of deep violet blood behind him, with only a few scratches, he turned around again to thrash his blade through. However one of the monsters had taken a bit of ice in his grotesque hand and hurled it at Link's eyes. Link yelped at the sting from the harsh snow and covered his eyes gingerly with his hand, gritting his teeth. A heavy weight fell on his back. Pain. An oozing warmth slid down his shoulder as the beasts tore off his cloak that guarded him from the air. A cold metal slashed at his side as he felt something strike his head. Link squirmed, swinging his sword, hitting some bodies, trying to regain his sight.

At last managing to open his eyes, Link's sword flew through the air, howling and ringing its cry of war. Though his arms ached with excruciating pain, he slew every monster before him. But as he turned around, a sting throbbed in his leg-- an arrow pierced itself through his shin. Link fell to the ground, snow flying all around him. The last monster that remained alive stood over him, knocking another arrow and aiming it at his forehead. Link stared death in the face, but he mustered the last and thrust his blade through the abomination's belly. It groaned for a moment, and then fell backward and crashed with death on the snow. A crimson puddle lay under Link as he frantically gasped for air, letting his sword fall from his hands, and gripping the gash on his side with cooling blood. The lion hunted-- the lion fallen. Link closed his eyes.

Color. A swirling mirage of violets fading into oranges and oranges fading to blues. Swirling colors. Drifting from one to the next. Link felt light. Nothing, floating, drifting. He felt as if he glided through the air, but remained still. A land of dreams. Was this the freedom he sought? A face. Not quite there, but distinct. Link tried to reach out toward it, but his fingers

wouldn't respond. He closed his eyes. A warmth. One different than the blood that had streamed down his body. It caused him to open his eyes once more. Zelda. The maiden-- the tamer. She gave her sweet smile once again, staring down at him with honest eyes. Why was she there? Why would she, a woman of high society, bow herself before someone like him? Why would...?

Love.

Link could see it in her eyes, swirling just as the colors. It was open-- open as a field under the clear sky. Link was too blind to see, too clouded by the illusion he thought was the truth. He could feel his heart open up-- the curtains of life lifting, shedding light on his deprived spirit. It was love. It was love that had fallen down Zelda's cheek, it was love that wished him well, it was love that had stroked his hand... and he was too blind to see. He could feel moisture growing in his eyes as Zelda brought herself lower. He could feel her warm breath brush his lips as she faded to a wind that embraced him while Link closed his eyes.

A cold finger touched Link that caused him to look upon the world his body remained in. Snow-- snow fell from the brightly clouded sky that stared down upon Snowpeak. Stillness. Everything was still, everything was silent, and time was frozen. The lion was tamed and his bond were set, or rather, broken. His wind did not rush, but it wafted. His eyes did not pierce, but they gazed.

"I'm going home..." Link whispered.