

ONCE UPON A TIME

#801
Be The Flame

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ACT ONE

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - DAY - A LONG TIME AGO

Golden hour, sunset. A yellow forest, covered in dry bushes and branches.

CLOSE ON LAND, THE SHOT IS INTERRUPTED BY AN ANIMAL RUNNING.

It's a BABY FOX. We see this beautiful creature running, gracefully. The FOX stops, as it gets closer to *something*.

The scene calms as the fox starts examining this object, curiously. The shot reveals... an egg. The fox's eyes focus on it, then we realize...

It's not just any egg, *it's a dragon egg*.

THE FOX starts moving it with it's little black paw, as if it's confused to what it's looking at. It leans in, smells the egg and steps away a little.

SUDDENLY, THE FOX MORPHS INTO A BOY.

A sweet boy with dark hair and deep gray eyes, goes by Zorro, Spanish for "fox". He has so much, yet wears a modest face. A face of a curious boy, who will tell a story of tragedy and pain.

He picks up the egg in amazement.

ZORRO

PAPA!

THE BOY YELLS, and starts running back, down the path, as the Sun hides between the mountains, still casting a golden light above the land.

TITLE CARD: THE FOREST ON FIRE

EXT. ROYAL CASTLE - NIGHT - PRESENT

The sound of music, laughter and cheering spreads out, through the forest surrounding the Royal Castle. FIREWORKS displaying above the towers, painting the night sky. WE SEE The landscape of UNITED REALMS.

INT. ROYAL CASTLE - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

The folk of newly United Realms cheer to Regina's coronation, while dancing and enjoying the BALL.

All of the heroes finally reunited, rightfully. Tiana and Naveen, Alice and Wish Hook, Emma and Hook, Snow and Charming... all dancing together, with the crowd.

HENRY and REGINA having a mother-son dance, both happily looking at each other.

HENRY
So, how do you feel?

REGINA
(chuckling)
Honestly... a bit tired.

HENRY
Ah. I figured. How about we get ourselves a drink? Maybe... out of this crowd? Like in Roni's?

REGINA
Sounds great.

INT. ROYAL CASTLE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

HENRY and REGINA, leaned against the counter, having a drink together, in silence. A peaceful and meaningful image.

HENRY
What are you thinking?

REGINA
Just... Ah, God. I'm now the Queen of every realm, literally.

HENRY'S face turns a bit upset, thinking of what's burdening his mother.

REGINA (CONT'D)
No, don't get me wrong! I am... beyond happy that I have this title, and that you all chose me to be this... person! I just... I'm thinking of the simpler times. Like when I was a *bartender*!

HENRY
Well, to be honest, I do have some pretty bad memories from that place. And so do you!

REGINA

Yes, but there are also good ones!
For example, Roni's is the place
where you found me! Where you found
your family.

Regina gently takes Henry's hand and sighs, slightly.

REGINA (CONT'D)

I hope our time here lasts
peacefully.

HENRY

Me too, mom.

Both of them, sitting in silence, turn back to the door when
a KNOCKING on the gates echoes the Castle halls.

CUT TO: THE GATES OPENING, WITH REGINA AND HENRY,
WORRIED.

The gates reveal LILY, GASPING IN FEAR, while raindrops
illuminated by the moonlight, fall behind her.

REGINA

Lily?!

HENRY

What's wrong??

THUNDER CRACKLES.

LILY

(gasping)

IT'S MY MOTHER. SHE'S MISSING.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. ROYAL CASTLE - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

SNOW and CHARMING dancing, happily. Finally feeling the sense
of a happy ending, with no worries in the way.

MARY MARGARET

I wish this never ends.

SNOW gently leans her head onto Charming's chest.

DAVID

Yeah, me too. But, you don't have
to worry about anything, anymore.
We *all* have our happy endings
now...

CHARMING says and peacefully closes his eyes, with Snow in his arms. A beautiful scene, a moment they've always wondered when it would come.

THE GATES OF THE BALLROOM open wide, revealing REGINA, HENRY and LILY. All of them in shock, walking through the crowd of people turning to them.

MARY MARGARET

Well, that makes one of us...

ZELENA

Uh, this looks familiar. Can't we have a normal day here?!

ZELENA says and walks to the three. Snow, Charming, Killians, Emma, Alice and others join the group. All of them looking frightened.

ALICE

What is it??

REGINA

Maleficent.

HENRY

She's missing.

LILY

I-I don't know where she is! I looked at our apartment, the Fortress, Granny's, everywhere! I don't know where she could be!

MARY MARGARET

It's okay, we'll find her!

LILY

WHERE?! You're gonna go through every realm?!

REGINA

We'll do what's necessary!

EMMA

Do you have something of her's?

LILY

No! She took her clothes, her staff, her dress, she took all of her possessions!

CHARMING

There's gotta be something we can do.

ZELENA

Regina, didn't we see Maleficent in her dragon form today, when we drove to the Castle?

REGINA

We did!

Regina pauses, realizing.

REGINA (CONT'D)

Unless...

LILY

That wasn't her.

EMMA

Then, who was it?!

REGINA

I don't know...

SUDDENLY, RUBY BARGES INTO THE BALLROOM.

EMMA

Ruby?

HENRY

What's wrong?

RUBY

I was on my way to the coronation, when this dragon burned half of the forest! The people also said they saw it take a woman away.

REGINA

That could've easily been Maleficent.

LILY

(shocked)

Oh, my God... What am I gonna do?!

EMMA

We'll figure something out, don't worry.

EMMA looks at REGINA in worry, knowing that this can't be good or, for that matter, easy, at all.

INT. ZORRO'S HOME, DON ALEJANDRO'S *HACIENDA* - NIGHT - PAST

We are in a dark room, with a wooden table covered in papers, and only a single candle, with a flame sitting still.

Above the table, we see a MAN and his SON.

THE MAN, DON ALEJANDRO DE LA VEGA. A wealthy landowner who, despite the riches, never spoiled his son, but taught him modesty and kindness.

The man examines the egg, with his son patiently waiting for a response.

ZORRO

So?

ALEJANDRO

You were right, my boy.

ZORRO

Really?

ALEJANDRO

Yes! This is most certainly a dragon's egg.

ZORRO takes it in his hands, carefully and amazed.

ZORRO

Woah...

ALEJANDRO

Which means it should've already been left in the mountains before it hatches.

ZORRO turns to him, confused.

ZORRO

What, why?!

ALEJANDRO

Because it's a dragon! It's a dangerous creature.

ZORRO

Perhaps I can train him!

ALEJANDRO
 (laughing)
 Silly boy, you cannot train a
 dragon!

ZORRO
 Why not?

ALEJANDRO
 Because they're free creatures! An
 attempt to train one would only end
 up in vain.

ZORRO
 But Papa...

ALEJANDRO
 Son, trust m--

ZORRO
 Come on! I just wan--

ALEJANDRO
 ZORRO.

The boy stops with a sad expression.

ZORRO
 Alright, Papa...

ALEJANDRO
 Now, leave it up the hill first
 thing in the morning. As far as I
 can tell, it's due to hatch very
 soon.

Zorro's still upset. His father looks at him, feeling sorry
 for the boy. He gently grabs his arm.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)
 I know all you want is a friend,
 Zorro... Be careful with your
 powers. As much as they are
 beautiful, they're also dangerous.

Zorro looks up to him, knowing his father just wants what's
 good for him. He smiles a little.

ZORRO
 I know, Papa. I'll be careful.

ALEJANDRO
 That's my boy. Now, go to sleep.
 Papa loves you.

ZORRO
I love you, too.

As Zorro quietly leaves the room, we see Alejandro smile, but the smile turns bitter from worry. He really loves his son. While also knowing that with his son's gift of shape shifting, also comes the burden of immortality. He knows he won't be around forever. But at least, while he's alive he wants to make sure nothing happens to him. Hopefully, it won't...

EXT. OUTSIDE OF THE ROYAL CASTLE - NIGHT - PRESENT

REGINA, EMMA, LILY, SNOW, CHARMING and the others standing outside the gates of the Castle.

EMMA wraps her arm around LILY and walks with her.

EMMA
Come on, let's just all go home and we'll figure something out.

REGINA
(TO EMMA)
Don't get your hopes up.

EMMA
Regina!

EMMA walks up to REGINA, angrily.

EMMA (CONT'D)
What the hell?! She's scared to death!

REGINA
Yeah, well, maybe we all should be!

EMMA
What are you talking about?!

REGINA
Look--

She pulls Emma to the side, while the group crosses the bridge of the Castle.

REGINA (CONT'D)
Not many people approached Maleficent and lived to tell about it. And this... whoever this person is... managed to kidnap her!
(MORE)

REGINA (CONT'D)

We're talking about someone whose powers we can't even comprehend!

EMMA

You missed the part where you stole the Dark Curse from her? I don't remember her using brute force on you.

REGINA

With all due respect, you have no idea what that woman's been through. I've suffered, alright, but I wouldn't wish her sorrows on my worst enemy.

REGINA sighs, as she remembers...

REGINA (CONT'D)

When she would feel blue she wouldn't... rip out hearts like I did. She was much more mature dealing with emotions than me. That's why her power weakened...

EMMA

I'm sorry, I didn't know.

REGINA

No, it's fine, just...

(sighs)

I'm really worried. Like, more than usually worried. I can tell when something's wrong, and now it's off the charts.

EMMA

Don't tell me. Come on, let's go.

The two of them start crossing the bridge, when suddenly...

A ROAR.

EMMA and REGINA look at each other in fear and run to the group.

REGINA

What the hell was that?!

DAVID

LOOK OUT!

WE SEE A DRAGON IN THE NIGHT SKY. As the group crouches down, the dragon pierces the dark with the FIRE. It burns down the surrounding trees and the ground.

DAVID throws his sword into the air, in attempt to hit the dragon. The sword misses and falls on the ground.

THE DRAGON rises high and flies away. The sound of wings flapping rips the air.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I think we scared it off.

LILY approaches the blazing fire and puts her hand in it.

LILY

Trust me, we didn't scare it at all. This was just a warning. It could've burned us to ashes if it wanted.

EMMA

Nice. You have any idea how to... defeat this thing, or something?

LILY

I know my mother had her own spell book, but I have no idea where it is.

REGINA realizes the spell book is in her possession since she met Maleficent, back in the Enchanted Forest.

REGINA

(gasps)

I have it!

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - THE MOUNTAINS - MORNING - PAST

A FOX is pacing up the hill, holding a dragon egg in it's jaw. The sky is gray and the sun is on the horizon. The wind is howling, blowing the fox's hairs.

As it reaches the top of the hill, the fox leaves the egg and runs down.

HOLD ON EGG. A baby's hand breaks through the scales.

We hear a newborn's cry. *It's not a dragon, it's a child.*

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

WE HAVE REGINA, EMMA, DAVID, SNOW, HENRY, LILY AND KILLIAN looking for the spell book. Now all casually dressed.

REGINA
(Throwing books)
It must be in here, somewhere.

MARY MARGARET
I found something!

The group walks to Mary Margaret. LILY takes the spell book and sees her mother's horns engraved into the black cover of the mysterious book.

LILY
Woah.

REGINA
Yeah, that's one word for it.

KILLIAN
Can't we cast a spell on it? To lead us to Maleficent.

REGINA
You can't. *I* can. Besides, the spell would be useless. Maleficent is not the current owner of the book. I am. Moreover, my mother was before me.

EMMA
Well then, let's open it, see what's in there.

REGINA
I would give that task...
(gives the book to Lily)
To you.

LILY
Me?

REGINA
You are the rightful owner of this book. Also, you're the only one who can use it. These are spells written for a sorcerer transformable into a dragon.

(MORE)

REGINA (CONT'D)

They were of no use to me, or anyone, for that matter.

MARY MARGARET

I thought you used it. I've always seen you reading it in your chambers, back when I was a child.

REGINA

I read it for entertainment, really. I had to do *something* while you pranced around on balls.

MARY MARGARET

I don't prance! I'm a natural dancer. Right, David?

EMMA

Guys...

The amusing argument stops as the group leans in to LILY.

LILY takes the book, sighs, and opens it.

LILY

What is this? Spanish?

REGINA

Oh, it's in Latin. I forgot about that.

EMMA

Can you read it?

REGINA

Of course I can, I'm a Queen.

DAVID

So what?

MARY MARGARET

All royalty is taught Latin.

DAVID rolls his eyes...

REGINA flips the pages of the spell book.

REGINA

Interesting.

HENRY

Found something?

REGINA

Well not exactly the solution to all of our problems, but it can tell us something very important.

LILY

What?

EXT. OUTSIDE OF THE ROYAL CASTLE, FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

In the place where the dragon burnt down the path and the forest, a few steps away from the Castle bridge, we see REGINA draw out her hand as all the ashes pile up, with magic.

REGINA

(To Lily)

Do it.

HENRY

I'm not quite sure what we're doing.

REGINA

Ash is nonflammable. But it can be ignited with dragon fire, only if the ashes are from a relative.

EMMA

So... If the ashes catch fire, Lily's related to that dragon?

LILY

I don't know a lot of dragons. It would make sense if this one is related to me, right?

REGINA

We just don't know if that's a good thing or not.

KILLIAN

Well, it awfully looks like not.

The group's looks turn worried. They all turn to Lily.

EMMA

Do it, Lily.

LILY crouches down to the pile of ash. Her eyes turn bright yellow and an enormous cloud of purple smoke engulfs her.

As a DRAGON, Lily rises to the sky, letting out a roar. She rushes down to the ground, almost touching it, spits out fire and sweeps back up.

CLOSE ON THE ASHES ON FIRE, REGINA IN FRONT OF IT, WITH A SHOCKED EXPRESSION.

We hear the sound of smoke, as LILY comes closer to the fire.

LILY

Uh... I--

She stutters, not knowing what to think. This dragon that, supposedly, took her mother, is related to her!

CLOSE ON REGINA. She looks down, *as if she realizes something.*

Everyone is shocked, there's a lot of things wrong. And we don't know the half of it.

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - DAY - PAST

We see a HERD OF DEER, prancing through the lush, golden forest. A representation of freedom and family. Creatures, running free, but still stick together.

We hear an ARROW hit a body. One deer on the ground.

All the other deer scatter.

THE HUNTER approaches the injured deer.

HUNTER

I've got you!

And just when he's about to touch his prey, he gets pushed back, violently.

The scene reveals a young girl. About 18 years old. Her hand reached out as she stands before the injured creature.

This was not just any girl. *This was Maleficent.*

MALEFICENT

How dare you attack such a noble creature?!

HUNTER

You're a witch!

MALEFICENT approaches him, standing too close. Her eyes sparkling with anger.

MALEFICENT

Oh, if that's what you find disturbing, I think you're really gonna like what you see if you ever attack another creature in these woods, again.

She pushes the Hunter with his hand, as he runs away in fear.

Maleficent comes back to the deer, still laying on the ground, lifeless. She crouches down to him.

MALEFICENT (CONT'D)

You are not who you sell yourself as, aren't you?

The deer looks at her and fidgets it's snout.

Maleficent waves her hand, and black smoke engulfs the deer. When it clears out, it reveals a boy.

That boy is ZORRO. Now about 23 years old.

He groans in pain, with an arrow stuck in his chest.

Maleficent takes the arrow and rips it out. Diego screams in pain.

MALEFICENT (CONT'D)

Hold still.

She heals his wound and smiles, slightly. Diego gets up and takes a good look at her. Almost as if he knows her, but can't remember from where.

ZORRO

H-Hi, thank you. So much.

MALEFICENT

I'm Maleficent.

ZORRO

Zorro.

They look at each other, awkwardly. Almost as if they're admiring each other.

ZORRO (CONT'D)

So... you practice magic?

MALEFICENT

I do.

ZORRO

Well... I do, too.

MALEFICENT

Yeah, so I see. You're a shapeshifter.

ZORRO

As it turns out.

MALEFICENT

Do you have any idea how rare that gift is? A shapeshifter is born once in a millennium.

ZORRO

Yes, yes, I know.

MALEFICENT

And if I weren't here, that gift would be completely wasted due to your incompetence.

ZORRO chuckles.

MALEFICENT (CONT'D)

You've got to be more careful. Also, why shapeshift into a deer? Not exactly the most impressive of animals.

ZORRO

(Sighs)

Because... Deer are always in a herd... Like family.

MALEFICENT

You don't have a family?

ZORRO

No, no! I do. I have a father. But... when I said family, I meant... a friend.

MALEFICENT

At least you have someone.

ZORRO

You don't? How come?

MALEFICENT

I was left on a hill as an infant.

ZORRO stops. Could it be the...? No, that was just a coincidence. Also, she's clearly not a dragon.

ZORRO

I'm sorry.

MALEFICENT

No, you're not. You're just saying that to not be a jerk.

ZORRO

(Chuckles)

Well, Maleficent... I'm glad I got to know you. And thank you, again, for saving my life.

MALEFICENT smirks at him, turns around, when A PUFF OF BLACK SMOKE COVERS HER. WE SEE A DRAGON FLY AWAY.

ZORRO stands there, shocked. Can't look away from the DRAGON.

That egg that he left in the mountains, that was her?!

Faith has a funny sense of humor.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. ROYAL CASTLE - WAR ROOM - DAWN - PRESENT

We see the HEROES seated on the round table, just like in PILOT. Everyone looking at each other, nervously.

EMMA

Let me get this straight. You're related to this dragon?

LILY

I guess... I--

REGINA

Well, it's only safe to assume that this dragon... is your father.

KILLIAN

Why would her father do this?

REGINA

That's the thing, I don't know. And I have a feeling we don't wanna find out. If he kidnapped Maleficent--

DAVID

We don't know that.

REGINA

Well, where is she, then?

DAVID

She could've gone on purpose.

SNOW

Without saying anything?

LILY

Doesn't sound like her. I'm not sitting here doing nothing anymore.

LILY rapidly gets out of the chair, in anger, and starts walking towards the door.

EMMA

Lily, where are you going?!

LILY

TO DO SOMETHING.

REGINA

Don't be stupid! All you're gonna
do is get hurt.

LILY

I'm willing to take that risk,
rather than having my nose stuck in
books.

LILY STORMS OUT of the WAR ROOM.

EXT. ROYAL CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

LILY stands in front of the gates of the Castle, getting ready. She's terrified, but she's ready. A puff of black smoke engulfs her. We see her as a dragon, roaring and flying towards the gloomy sunrise.

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - DUSK - PAST

We're above a LUSH FOREST, slightly lit with the last ray of Sun in the sky. A peaceful environment.

SUDDENLY, A FIRE. A DRAGON FIRE. PIERCES THROUGH THE WOODS, COLLAPSING TREES AND SCORCHING THEM TO THE GROUND. We see MALEFICENT, in her DRAGON FORM, flying over the WOODS. BUT WAIT--

MALEFICENT flies above the trees, when the SHOT is interrupted by an ANOTHER DRAGON. HE FLIES TOWARDS MALEFICENT, as if it's ready to FIGHT. He SPITS OUT FIRE. They dance in the air, above the forest in flames.

WE'RE DOWN IN THE MIDST OF BURNING TREES.

BLACK SMOKE comes CRASHING DOWN on the scorched ground of the FOREST. As the smoke tangles up, we see...

Maleficent and Zorro. Now a few years older than when we've previously seen them. Completely naked... Their bodies covered up with flames and smoke. **Exhausted and gasping**, just looking at one another. Behind them... the forest ablaze, that would later be known as the *Wasteland*.

MALEFICENT

(out of air)

You're getting good.

They both chuckle and Zorro pulls her in for a kiss.

Their lips bound, as the camera slowly rotates around them. All around them BURNING TREES, ROARING FIRE, SMOKE, EMBERS.

Chaos and peace.

EXT. THE ROYAL CASTLE - DAWN - PRESENT

We see the GROUP exit the Castle in fear. Stepping through the gates, all of their eyes fixed on the sky, looking for LILY.

SNOW
THERE SHE IS!

She points to the sky. We see LILY as a DRAGON, flapping her wings through the air.

REGINA
(sighs)
And there she goes being stupid.

SUDDENLY - A DISTANT, YET LOUD ROAR.

REGINA and the other look above themselves, when a DRAGON SWOOSHES ABOVE THE CASTLE AND THE GROUP, HEADING TOWARDS LILY. IT'S WINGS PIERCE the air so hard, making waves of wind beneath them.

REGINA (CONT'D)
Oh, hell no.

THE DRAGON RUSHES TO LILY, as she turns around, seeing the creature heading straight towards her. They RUSH through the air, spitting FIRE on one another.

EMMA
LILY!!

In distance and high above them, the dragons CLASH mid air, when the other dragon FIERCELY BITES INTO LILY'S NECK. SHE ROARS IN PAIN AND CRASHES DOWN on the path to the CASTLE.

SNOW
Oh, no, we gotta help her! Come on!

THE GROUP runs towards LILY on the ground, bleeding and turning her head in pain. As the group arrives, the DRAGON COMES FACING DOWN TO LILY, like a scavenger above it's prey.

EMMA and REGINA quickly react and both turn their hands, creating a MAGICAL BLAST, pushing away the DRAGON. After a while, they succeed. The dragon gives up, picks himself higher in the air and flies off into the distance.

LILY, still in her dragon form, lying powerless, as blood gushes through her long neck. The group standing in front of her, trying to do something to help.

EMMA
 (to Lily)
 Hey, you're gonna be okay.

She whimpers, silently.

REGINA
 She doesn't have strength to turn back, but I can do it.

SNOW
 NO, DON'T. I remember back when she first turned into a dragon, Maleficent said that even a scratch can have fatal consequences. Maybe it's best if she stays a dragon until she heals.

EMMA gently strokes Lily's head, while others, in shock and in worry, look down on the wounded creature.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. ROYAL CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

We see LILY as a dragon, still lying on the path to the Castle, FAIRIES/NUNS all around her, hospitalizing her. The group patiently standing behind, close to the bridge of the Castle.

MOTHER SUPERIOR approaches the group.

EMMA
 How is she?

MOTHER SUPERIOR
 She's... stable. Right now we're using all the magic to help her get better. The wound is deep and dragon skin takes a while to heal. But, don't worry. She'll be okay.

SNOW
 Thanks, Blue.

EMMA, REGINA, SNOW and others move away.

EMMA

I don't understand how a father can do something like that to his daughter.

REGINA

Well, we don't know anything, yet. Who knows what could be the reason. We don't even know if this is her father... could just be some bitter uncle.

HENRY

Her father's Zorro, right?

REGINA

(nervously)
...Yeah.

HENRY

I'd say that's cool, but... It's looks like it isn't.

EMMA grins, nervously.

DAVID

I wish we knew the first steps to take.

REGINA

Well, we should find Maleficent but avoid turning into ashes while attempting it. This is some tough dragon.

SNOW

Should we search the spell book? Maybe we find something.

REGINA

You two get started on that.

SNOW and CHARMING nod and slowly head back to the Castle.

REGINA (CONT'D)

Emma, you and Henry--

EMMA

We'll go check on Lily.

REGINA

...Yeah. I'll go see if Maleficent left some of her things anywhere.

EMMA

Okay. Call me if you find something.

REGINA nods in worry. She TELEPORTS.

EXT. WASTELAND - CONTINUOUS

A puff of PURPLE SMOKE transports REGINA in front of the FOREST BURNED DOWN a long, long time ago. Above the forest, THE FORBIDDEN FORTRESS.

She TURNS AROUND (Same as in the scene from Enter The Dragon) and remembers the tree Maleficent burned that was still on fire, of course, long gone now. She looks at the FORTRESS nervously. She remembers the day she met Maleficent...

REGINA'S FOOTSTEPS ECHO through the HALL. She gets to the DOOR of the THRONE ROOM. She hesitates... The last time she was here, she stole the Dark Curse from Maleficent. The Evil Queen is in the past, now, but certain places still have the ability to trigger some unpleasant emotions and memories.

Nervously, she opens the GATES. We are now in the THRONE ROOM, where Regina met Maleficent.

The DOOR REVEALS A MAN, SITTING IN A CHAIR NEAR THE FIREPLACE. Dirty blond hair, piercing blue eyes, in his 40s.

REGINA'S NERVOUS FACE FLASHES TO ANGER. SHE APPROACHES HIM AND SLAMS THE DOOR BEHIND HER.

REGINA

You bastard. What the hell are you doing?!

MAN

Your Majesty! Always a pleasure.

REGINA

Cut the crap, ZORRO. What are you doing? Where's Maleficent?!

ZORRO

You don't really expect me to tell you that, do you?

REGINA

FINE. Let's talk about something else. Like how you nearly killed your daughter today.

ZORRO puts on a bitter smile, as if he's not happy with what he did. REGINA shakes her head in disbelief.

REGINA (CONT'D)
 (quietly)
 Why in the hell are you doing
 this...

ZORRO
 (chuckles menacingly)
 Don't you already know?

REGINA
 You know I don't.

ZORRO
 Oh, right. You didn't bother to
 find out.

Zorro taunts her.

ZORRO (CONT'D)
 And if you just took an interest in
 your dear old friend, Mal, you'd
 know what I was after. But, since
 when does the Evil Queen care about
 anyone else's happiness but hers,
 right?

Regina looks at him with anger.

*What the hell happened between them? What does he mean by
 "took an interest"?*

ZORRO (CONT'D)
 You're the reason why Lily isn't
 with her mommy dearest right now.

REGINA
 Oh, no. If you think you can put
 the blame on me, you're wrong.

ZORRO
 Really? Because the way I see it is
 we're both partially responsible
 for what's happening right now.

REGINA
 I really don't know what you think
 you're gonna get from me by guilt-
 tripping.

ZORRO

Oh, nothing. No, you're of no use to me. The task is one I must perform myself. I just always found it fascinating what regret can do to people.

REGINA

If you knew me well enough, you'd know that regret's not really my thing.

ZORRO

Hm... maybe.

ZORRO quickly gets up from his chair, FACING REGINA. *The scene gets more intense.*

ZORRO (CONT'D)

(angrily)

But when you find out what you could've stopped all those years ago, the only thing you will be able to feel is regret.

REGINA stares at him, defiant, but at the same time intimidated by his threats. So many thoughts going through her head. WHAT IS HE PLANNING?!

ZORRO stares into REGINA'S eyes, full of hate. He TURNS AROUND quickly, and walks out of the THRONE ROOM.

REGINA stands there, not knowing how to react.

What has she done?

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - NIGHT - PAST

WE'RE IN A DARK, YET PEACEFUL FOREST, in the middle of a small clearing, surrounded by oak trees.

ZORRO, the same age as before, approaches the scene.

ZORRO
Maleficent?

He shouts lightly, but seeing she's not there, he decides to sit on a fallen tree. Crickets chirping. He patiently waits for his new companion; a teacher and a lover. He gently smiles to himself... he's finally happy. He has someone.

His thoughts are interrupted by SHOUTING of PEOPLE, in the distance, coming from the local VILLAGE. ZORRO turns his head to see distant TORCHES and PITCHFORKS, accompanied by loud murmur of people. He quickly gets up from the log, confused and scared, he paces to the crowd.

JUST OUTSIDE OF THE FOREST, WE SEE THE HUNTER IN FRONT OF A MOB OF ANGRY VILLAGERS. Mind you, he's the same HUNTER that hunted down ZORRO a few years back.

HUNTER
WE SHALL BEAR NO MORE!

HE SHOUTS, AND THE CROWD SHOUTS EVEN LOUDER.

ZORRO exits the FOREST, only to come face to face to an angry mob. He wonders what this is about, and he's not liking this situation at all.

As the villagers see him, they quiet down for a bit. Zorro approaches the HUNTER, but still staying within a distance.

ZORRO
What is happening?

THE HUNTER turns around.

HUNTER
OH, LOOK WHO IT IS! Our village shapeshifter!

ZORRO understands that this has got something to do with him, still not quite sure what.

THE HUNTER turns to the MOB.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
 This man right here... BURNS OUR
 WOODS, OUR CROPS!

THE CROWD SHOUTS IN ANGER.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
 IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE
 SOMEONE'S WEE CHILD WONDERS OFF
 INTO THE FOREST ONLY TO BE SMITTEN
 BY THE FIRE OF THIS CREATURE.
 (Turns to Zorro)
 Tell me, Zorro. How does it feel to
 be a monster?

ZORRO ANGRILY RUNS TO HIM, PUSHES HIM BACK.

ZORRO
 Call me a monster one more time, I
 dare you.

THE HUNTER laughs, malevolently.

HUNTER
 I wonder if you'll be so tough when
 you see our leverage against you.

THE HUNTER and the CROWD move away, REVEALING-- MALEFICENT,
 CHAINED DOWN. VILLAGERS HOLDING HER CHAINS, WHILE SHE TRIES
 TO ESCAPE THEM.

ZORRO
 MALEFICENT!!

HUNTER
 Quite the leverage, is it not? Now,
 we both know that you'll do
 anything in order to assure your
 partner in crime is safe.

ZORRO IS IN ANGER, UNLIKE ANY ANGER WE'VE EVER SEEN. HE
 STARES INTO THE EYES OF THE HUNTER, WHEN--

HIS EYES TURN YELLOW, PIERCING THROUGH THE DARKNESS. A BLACK
 SMOKE COVERS HIM, WE HEAR ROARING, AND THE DRAGON MANIFESTS
 IN FRONT OF THE MOB.

ALL OF THE PEOPLE, SCARED FOR THEIR LIVES, START RUNNING,
 SCREAMING, PUSHING OTHERS, PEOPLE FALLING. PURE CHAOS.

But this wasn't just a warning. This was a punishment.

ZORRO OPENS HIS JAWS WIDE, WHEN A STREAM OF FIRE COMES
 THROUGH HIS MOUTH, CRASHING INTO THE PEOPLE.

HE SWINGS HIS HEAD AROUND, MAKING FIRE SPREAD EVERYWHERE. WE HEAR PEOPLE SCREAMING IN AGONY. He spares no one; the children, the animals...

We hear houses crashing down, as the village slowly fades from existence...

In the midst of smoke, fire, bones and burning flesh... We're above Maleficent, looking up at the dragon, admiring him.

When the last cry for help has passed, a cloud of black smoke crashes down in front of Maleficent. As soon as the smoke clears, we see Zorro immediately fall to the ground, like life has been sucked out of him. Maleficent comes to him, kneeling down.

MALEFICENT

Zorro? Zorro!

ZORRO

(Gasping)

I'll be alright, you needn't worry.

She gently strokes his hair, holding his hand, as he exhales.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - CONTINUOUS - PAST

WE'RE ON A HILL, ABOVE THE DESTROYED VILLAGE. SILENCE. We still see the flames and smoke, peacefully passing around.

WE MOVE AWAY. We see MALEFICENT and ZORRO, looking down at the village, around it the FOREST burnt to the crisp. They sit, quietly, on the precipice of the hill.

ZORRO

I didn't know I had that in me.

MALEFICENT

You just needed a push. Thank you.

ZORRO

What are you thanking me for? What else was I supposed to do?

MALEFICENT

Eh, you're right.

MALEFICENT chuckles, ironically.

MALEFICENT (CONT'D)

They all deserved this.

ZORRO

What is it about us that people
always feel repulsed by?

MALEFICENT

Our nature. When people don't
understand something, they learn to
fear it.

ZORRO

My father never feared me, and he
isn't like us.

MALEFICENT

You got lucky. I don't even know
who my parents are, neither the
reason why they'd abandon me.

ZORRO hesitates to say something.

ZORRO

...You don't know this. But, when I
was but a child, I found an egg. A
dragon egg. I brought it home, but
my father wouldn't let me keep
it... So I left it here. On this
very hill.

ZORRO looks at her, subtly trying to explain it. MALEFICENT
looks at him, confused, but after a second, her face
straightens.

MALEFICENT

My egg.

ZORRO

...Yes.

This is difficult to comprehend. ZORRO worries she grew
angry.

ZORRO (CONT'D)

Oh, I know I should've kept you, I
had no idea there was a child in
there--

MALEFICENT

You didn't know. It would be silly
to hold that against you now.

ZORRO

Thank you... for understanding.

The scene grows melancholic.

ZORRO (CONT'D)
Wh-What happened to you? After I
left you here?

MALEFICENT
A spinster found me, she took me
in. She was the only mother I knew.
I used to watch her at the spinning
wheel for hours, as a child.

A slight nudge to Sleeping Beauty.

MALEFICENT (CONT'D)
But... when I showed signs of
magic, she was frightened by it and
she abandoned me, as well. People
just can't accept it. Never could.

Zorro looks at her, sad. He realizes how happy he is to have
a father who doesn't look at him differently because of his
gift. He wishes it were the same for Maleficent. But nothing
can change the past...

ZORRO
I'm sorry.

MALEFICENT
Don't be. They finally all paid the
price.

She says and looks down at the burning village.

This sorrowful moment is interrupted by--

ZORRO'S FATHER.

Only steps away behind them.

ALEJANDRO
Zorro..?

They are both startled by him.

ZORRO
Father?

ALEJANDRO
Zorro... What did you do?

ALEJANDRO says, clearly afraid of the answer.

ZORRO
They took Maleficent, I had to. You
have to understand.

There's fear in Alejandro's eyes. They both sense it.

ALEJANDRO

Oh, Zorro...

ZORRO

(Angrily)

They finally paid, Father!

ALEJANDRO

I didn't raise you like this. The villagers have always told me you were a danger. I always protected you. And you go and use your gift from the Gods for an evil like this?

ZORRO

Evil? And what are they, Father?

ALEJANDRO shakes his head in disbelief.

ALEJANDRO

This wasn't supposed to happen.

He says as he starts to walk backwards, away from the two. Zorro's confused by his reaction.

ZORRO

Father?

As ALEJANDRO walks away from them, ZORRO tries to follow him, but MALEFICENT grasps his hand.

MALEFICENT

Zorro, don't. It's not worth it.

ZORRO

What are you talking about? That's my father!

MALEFICENT

Who is ready to abandon you for showing your true nature!

ZORRO hesitates, not knowing what he should do. He looks into Maleficent's bright eyes. They love each other deeply, which is why he stays by her side.

As he watches his own father walking down the hill, leaving him, tears fill his eyes. But, a sad look quickly turns to *hatred*. He turns to Maleficent, with a tear rolling down his cheek.

ZORRO

I swear I won't ever, ever leave you.

MALEFICENT

I know you won't. And I won't ever leave you. Being abandoned, you never wish it to anyone.

Their eyes lock.

MALEFICENT (CONT'D)

I love you.

ZORRO

I love you, too.

They both look down at the village, again.

ZORRO (CONT'D)

Let's leave this place. We could go wherever we want. Someplace nice. We could build a castle, if we want! Or a little house in the woods!

MALEFICENT

I think I know where we should go. Remember the forest where we first made love?

Zorro smiles, remembering the moment where he felt truly happy, touching her skin while the hellish fire surrounds them. He nods.

ZORRO

Let's go.

MALEFICENT

Really?

ZORRO

To the end of the world. As long as it's with you.

They smile, happily, at one another. Maleficent takes Zorro's hand, and they both JUMP FROM THE CLIFF. While falling, the black smoke engulfs them and reveals two dragons. They pick up in the air, flying side by side... into the night.

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT

PITCH BLACK. WE HEAR ECHOING FOOTSTEPS.

A MAN IN A CAPE WALKS IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA, REVEALING WHERE WE ARE. THIS IS A DUNGEON.

As the mysterious man walks further away from the camera, the shot reveals--

MALEFICENT. IN SHACKLES, TIED WITH CHAINS. SHE'S ON HER KNEES, TRYING TO ESCAPE.

THE MAN-- IS ZORRO.

HE WALKS TO HER, HOLDING A PLATE.

SHOT: ZORRO PUTS THE PLATE ON THE GROUND, IN FRONT OF MALEFICENT. ON THE PLATE, BREAD AND VEGETABLES.

MALEFICENT LOOKS UP TO HIM. ZORRO GRINS, MALEVOLENTLY.

ZORRO

Eat up.

MALEFICENT

If you're going to kill me, KILL ME.

ZORRO

Why would I do that? You're my leverage.

MALEFICENT looks to him, confused.

ZORRO (CONT'D)

(chuckles)

Well, maybe later I will, but right now... you're the key for everything.

MALEFICENT

What in the hell do you want?!

ZORRO

I want our daughter.

MALEFICENT pauses.

MALEFICENT

WHAT?

ZORRO

That's right, my dear. Lily is my own flesh and blood.

MALEFICENT

How is that possible... You were long dead when I conceived...

ZORRO

Then, how do they all know I'm the father?

MALEFICENT

I told Lily you're her father because... You're the only love I've had in my life. You were the closest thing to a father figure... Zorro, please. Why are you really doing this? How are you alive? How are you Lily's father?!

ZORRO

You wouldn't understand the reason. Why should I bother?

MALEFICENT

BECAUSE I LOVE YOU. AND YOU LOVED ME.

ZORRO

I still love you, Maleficent.

MALEFICENT

Then why are you keeping me here? Why are you doing this to me?

ZORRO

Right now, you're a means to an end... for something... far, far bigger. And trust me...

(pause)

you don't wanna know what.

He says, mysteriously, and walks away. Maleficent grunting and trying to free herself from the chains.

ZORRO'S CAPE COVERS THE CAMERA.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END