

The Legend of Zelda: Mask of the Boom

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Patron story done for Danuki

“Incredible!” Zelda breathlessly spoke, her eyes aflame with wonder, “I've never seen such glyphs as these before!”

She carefully aimed the Sheikah Slate at the carvings and snapped a few photos. On the last one, the screen flickered and froze up. The princess looked dismayed, pouting a little. “Oh, must it act up now? I do hope Purah finishes her new device soon.”

Link nodded quietly, observing her from a small distance behind. He raised his torch higher, illuminating more of the walls and surrounding area. He certainly hadn't seen anything quite like this either during his travels.

Time has come and gone since the defeat of Calamity Ganon. A quiet peace had fallen over Hyrule at long last, and the duo had spent the time exploring its nooks and crannies. So much had changed for Zelda, and even Link despite having explored a fair bit after waking up. There was so much catalogue and track down.

Their recent journey had brought them to Tarrey Town in the Akkala region. They were talking with the locals, who reported a strange occurrence. After Calamity Ganon first landed in Hyrule Field, the base of a nearby mountain had cracked. A mysterious cave formed from it later, one that gave the residents ominous, uncomfortable feelings.

The duo had since gone to explore it. The cave went deep, deep underground, walking for what felt like miles. Eventually, they had stumbled across, of all things, a ruin. It almost appeared to be a temple of sorts that had sunk into the earth.

Zelda hit the button a few more times on the Slate before it finally snapped another picture. She sighed and took a few more shots while she could. “So very strange...” she commented quietly, looking at the glyphs, “Simply strange.”

Link, despite following her for so long in all of her studies and investigations, did not really understand archeology and such symbols as her. However, he understood why it was strange. All of the glyphs, markings, and more continuously depicted mice and rats. Such a curious thing to focus on for a civilization.

Zelda continued walking, Link keeping pace and holding the torch up so she could see as best as she could. “So many rodents...” she remarked again, stroking her chin, “So many... wait... wait are those...”

She hurried off to the side of another wall and looked at one of the pictures engraved. "Bomb flowers!" She snapped another photo, "I had read about in the castle's library before. They were an ancient flower said to be utterly devastating if handled poorly.

"They were said to be extinct!" Zelda looked curiously at Link, "I wonder what their presence here means?" Link said nothing, just giving the peculiar flower on the wall a look.

He followed her down the passage as she hurried from wall to wall, trying her best to study the images as she saw them. She muttered a lot, most of which he couldn't hear. Some of what he could were things about the Zonai and how, maybe, the temple existed even before their time. He didn't understand but knew it was important to her so did his best to listen.

Their trip down the passage eventually came to a large doorway. Through it was a large, ominous chamber almost as wide and tall as the throne room of Hyrule Castle. Despite its size, the only thing that seemed to be in it were some old torches on the wall and a singular, corroded chest in the center of the room.

Link stepped into the room first to check before giving the princess the okay. She came in and took his torch, using it to light the ancient ones and illuminate the room. The new light showed even more, larger glyphs on the walls.

"Much better," Zelda commented. She looked at the images covering every inch of the room. "Fascinating. I think... I think I might be able to understand what they mean. Give me some time, Link. I'm sure I can figure this out."

Link gave her a nod and watched her head off to the left wall first. She started her careful, mutter-filled examination, fading into her own little world.

Left to his own devices, he turned his attention to the treasure chest in the room. He might as well do his own thing for the time being. See what was in there, check for traps and what not.

The hero approached the old box and opened it. It was a bit rusted, forcing him to really put his back into it before it popped open. A cloud of dust poured out, causing him to cough and swat the air away.

Once it settled, Link looked inside. There was, of all things, a mask.

It was perhaps the strangest mask that he had even seen. It was roundish and gray, the paint applied in a way that gave it a rough, almost fuzzy-esque texture. The eye holes were huge

and round, yellow paint on the inside edges. The mouth was closed and stretched into a wide, painted smile, one that was deep orange. Just above the smile, the mask pulled forward. At the end of that, there was a blue bump, perhaps to represent the nose.

Link stared at it. The mask had a monstrous energy to it. It was almost similar to those hoods that Kilton had given him. However, there was just something more... off about this mask compared to those. He couldn't describe it, but he knew something was just wrong.

"Hmm, yes..." Link looked up. Zelda was already at the wall behind the chest, talking rather loudly. "I think I got it... just a little more..."

It sounded like she had made some sort of progress. Perhaps there was something in those images that could explain what the mask was about as well.

Link stood up, about to walk over and show her his peculiar find. Just as he was about to, his eyes fell back onto the mask. They lingered there, taking in its shape... its round, silly shape and visage.

His attention eventually turned to those empty eye sockets. He gazed into them, one minute, then two, perhaps even three? He stared. They seemed to stare back.

They stared back with yellow. Yellow eyes with black pupils that pulled into spirals. They spun and spun, pulling him deeper into it. He couldn't look away. Wait... was that smile bigger now? Bigger, more sinister... more inviting?

Link's mind emptied of his own thoughts as his hands slowly flipped the mask over. *Put it ON.* The hands lifted the mask slowly towards his mask. *Put it ON, HEHEHE.* The mask grew closer. *Put it ON, SILLY!* Closer and closer. *Put it ON AND GO BOOOOM!*

"Link, I think I understand!" Zelda called out to him, her back still turned. "I think I put it all together! This room, these symbols. It's about a treasure, probably what's in the chest! I think... I think it's something about containing the soul of a bombchu, a monster from long ago.

"This treasure grants whoever possesses it the spirit of the bombchu. It can bring about great disaster... or something silly or fun? I'm not exactly sure of the translation or what these expressions are on these glyphs over here, but I think it's something of that nature."

Link couldn't even hear her. The mask went up against his face, its cold, dusty back side surface touching against his cheeks.

Then, it clamped down. The hardened, almost wooden-esque like material turned malleable and soft, pressing into and then wrapping around his head. His senses came back to him, but it was too late to do anything.

Link groaned and stumbled back, almost like he was going to fall. However, he caught his balance and simply hunched forward. He was almost motionless outside of the rumbles and shakes that came off of his body.

His long, pointed ears especially seemed to rumble. They vibrated, slowly getting wider and rounder, pink fuzz sprouting on the inside. They nearly tripled in width, forming a rodent-esque look as gray fur covered their outsides.

“Hmmm?” Zelda began to turn. “Did you say som-OH GREAT HYLIA!” She gasped, finally realizing what was happening to her champion as he groaned and quaked.

“Link!” She rushed to his side, holding her hands out. “What's wrong with-” He stepped back, motioning her to stay back. It was the least he could manage, burying his masked face in his hands. It felt as if everything was shaking from not only him but to the room itself.

His eyes clamped shut. *What's happening?! He fidgeted, the mask feeling hotter and softer against his mug. I can't... I can't think straight! BOOOOM!* His brow furrowed. *My mind is BOOM. Everything's all BOOMY BOOM! I CAN'T... can't...*

Zelda slowly reached a hand over and placed it on his shoulder. “L-Link, what is hap-”

“*WOWIE-WOWZERS!*” Link suddenly cocked his head up and yelled at the top of his rather silly, goofy sounding voice, “*BOOOM!*”

His eyes opened. The mask's eyes opened. All was one and the same. Big, round yellow eyes appeared, eyes with spiral-esque pupils. They seem to stare through her.

“*BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!*” Link said again, his face and mask pulsing. Everything stretched even wider than the mask did before, pulling in an unending, unnerving grin full of yellow, clenched teeth. The front pulled forward, morphing into a narrow, bouncing muzzle, especially the top half with its long, beanie blue nose.

“Wha... what?!” Zelda stumbled back, tripping over her feet and falling into her bum. Link hardly noticed it or even the gray fur crawling over the entirety of his rodent mug.

After what felt like an eternity, Link stood straight again. His eyes blinked several times, the yellow, crazed gaze never leaving him. Gray fur slid down onto his neck and under his tunic and out of sight.

It almost seemed like he forgot the entire world and where he was until his head cranked around at everything, taking it all in. Eventually, his attention fell on the princess, who flinched. His grin seemed to positively glow seeing her. *"HIYA, TOOTS! WHAT'S A PRETTY THING LIKE YOUSE DOIN' DOWN IN THIS DINGY, DANG'DUMP, BOOM?"*

"HUH?!" It would be clear to anyone that Zelda was completely taken aback by what was going on. Beyond the obvious physical changes, there was that goofy, silly voice that Link spoke with. The accent was pure ridiculous... let alone the fact he was speaking at all was cause for concern and confusion.

However, it was not remotely obvious to Link and whatever he had become. He slipped right beside her, standing right over and looking at her with such a curious, creepy, unchanging expression. *"WHAT'S DA MATTER? CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE, KA-BOOM?"*

Then, he was at eye-level with her. His body dropped several feet until he was, at most, knee-height with her. He was almost kiddish-looking if not for the fur that had spread to every part of him now. The only part that hadn't were his hands, which were now puffy, four-fingered, pink paws.

"What.... what's happened to you?" groaned Zelda, still trying to comprehend.

"NUTHIN', SWEETSTUFF!" Link declared, putting a ratty hand on her shoulder and pulling himself in close. *"I'M JUST A BOMBCHU HANGIN' OUT IN HIS HOME, JUST SURPRISED TA SEE A PRETTY DOLL LIKE YOURSELF SHOWING UP, BA-BOOOOOOM!"*

There were rips below. His boots broke open, feet stretching out to reveal three pink, ratty toes much like his hands. He never noticed.

"Bom-Bombchu?" Zelda gulped, her eyes growing wider than ever before. "Oh no! You... you found the treasure, and.... and transformed, Link!"

"WHO FOUND WHAT TREASURE, TOOTS?" Link's hand slipped around to her side, pulling her in close with surprising strength, *"YOUSE DA LUCKY ONE TA FIND THE BEST TREASURE: THE MOST HANDSUM BOMBCHU AROUND! HE'S ALL YOURS, BOOOOM!"*

SMOOOOOOCH! His big, snooty rat muzzle went right in and delivered the biggest, sloppiest, most “love”-filled smooch to Zelda. The princess’ eyes nearly bugged out of her head, no doubt for a second her mind was spinning like a tornado.

She managed to pull away after a moment, her face red as a red rupee. “Ohnononono!” she stammered, covering her face with her hands. “This isn’t how I wanted my first kiss with Link to go!” She flinched. “Ahhhhh... I... forget that, please?”

“FORGET THE KISS, BOOM?” Bombchu Link frowned for the first time, which literally looked like someone just perfectly flipped his smile upside down. *“Awwww, you DON’T LIKE MAH KISSES, DOLL? HMMMMMMMMMM...”*

SPROING! *“OOOH!”* Link wobbled back and forth briefly before going still again. Behind him, a long, pinkish tail had sprouted out above his rear. *“OOOHH, I KNOW WHAT A TOOTS LIKE YOUSE WANTS!”* He leaned in, grinning again. *“YOU WANT MY SPECIAL BOOOOOM, RIGHT?”*

“Wha-what?” Zelda gulped nervously.

BOING! His tail wobbled like his body just did, the very tail of it ballooning into a large ball. No... not a ball. The very end of it had sprouted a dark blue bomb with a fuse at its end.

“YEAH! CHICKS ALWAYS DIG THE BOOM!” He looked over his shoulder, his bomb end waving back. *“WATCH DIS!”* He clenched his paws into fist and closed his eyes. He vibrated gently, his tail going straight. Then, the bomb end began to flash, its fuse sparking.

“Oh no no no no!” Zelda squeaked. She scurried to her feet and started rushing for the exit as fast as she could go.

Linkchu's ears twitched. *“WAIT! WHEZE YAH GONNA, BOOOOOOM BABE?!”* The little critter tried chasing after her, moving as fast as his little feet could carry him.

At least, he tried to. He only made it a few steps before coming to a stop. He clenched his head. *N-NO, BOOM! YOU’RE... YOU’RE NOT IN CONTROL, BOOOM! LEAVE... leave the princess alone!*

“MY... MY HEAD FEELS ALL FUNNY, BOOM?”

Those were the last words he got out. **KABOOOOOOM!** The bomb tail finally exploded, and the entire room burst into a blaze of bright light and a huge cloud of smoke.

Zelda had safely made it into the corridor in time as the explosion went off. She felt the ground shake and a cloud of dirt blow against her back. Thankfully, that was it.

She panted slowly and looked back, the room behind her cloudy from centuries of dust. She took a deep breath and slowly approached it again, peering in when the clouds had settled. “L-Link? Are... are you alright?”

Linkchu was sitting on the ground, head swirling and eyes spinning. He was covered in soot from top to bottom, even coughing out a big cloud of it. Otherwise, he looked completely fine... except for the whole rodent part.

“Link?” The princess cautiously approached, one foot turned and ready to book it in case he tried exploding again. “Are... ar-are you okay?”

“I’m... okay, Zeldie, boom?” Linkchu murmured. He shook his head, a goofy rattle noise coming from it. His voice sounded silly, but not as demented as before. *“I was thinkin’ weird and stuff and wanted to go boom and I went boom and... boooooom!”*

“Well... you seem... better?” Better did a lot of heavy lifting. Link at least seemed to recognize her, even if his speech pattern was all jank. “What happened?”

“Well, I found this mask, Zeldie!” Linkchu shook like a dog, all of the soot blowing off of him. He hurried over, waving his arms as he explained. *“Then I had ta boooooom... put it on. I just couldn’t help it, kaboom!”*

“Then... everything was darks and I’s couldn’t ‘member a thing until I sensed Zeldie was in danger, booom! Then, here I’s am, boooooosh!”

“Well, I’m glad you’re okay then?” *Mask, huh?* Zelda stared at Linkchu, studying his face. It looked very similar to the ones in the glyphs, and a thought crossed her mind. She reached down, grabbed him by the cheeks, and pulled.

Nothing budged, the bombchu hero merely squirming and waving his arms more. She eventually let go. *“ZOWIE, Zeldie! Dat hurts, boom!”*

“Sorry, I thought I could pull it off.” Zelda scratched the back of her head. She thought back on everything she had studied on the walls, but nothing came to mind as a potential solution. *This is bad.* “Let’s get you to Purah as quickly as we can. Perhaps she can help.”

“Okie-dokie, smokie!” Linkchu smiled, not phased one bit. He brushed his tunic off at the bottom and reached behind him, unsheathing the Master Sword. The sword was now very small and very toy-like in appearance, fitting him incredibly well. *“I’ll lead day way, Zeldie!”*

He hurried past her, holding out the sword in front of him like a child waving their toy around to play pretend soldier. The princess watched him run out of the room, and all she could do was sigh.

This is... so strange. She started trudging after him, rubbing her face. *At least he’s back to his heroic self... maybe? It’s better than-*

KABOOOOM! The entire room shook, a big flash coming out from the hallway. Zelda gasped as a new smoke cloud drifted into the chamber. She called out, “Link?! What happened?!”

“I’m okays, boooooom!” His silly voice was heard calling back. *“Just felt super duper excited and felt like goin’ ka-boom then, ya know? It’s okay! Just keep following me, Zeldie!”*

“...perhaps I shall follow at a safe distance...”

THE END?