

ONCE UPON A TIME

"A Tale of Two Fish Wives"

written by

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NOTES: "A Tale of Two Fish Wives" takes place between episodes 18 and 19 of Season 2 of Once Upon a Time.

PREMISE OF THE SHOW:

The Evil Queen/Regina Mills cast a dark curse in the Enchanted Forest to transport all fairy tale creatures to a land without magic: our world. Her purpose is to destroy their "happily ever afters." While living in Storybrooke, Maine under the curse, none of the characters remember their true identity.

After 28 years, Emma Swan, the daughter of Snow White/Mary Margaret and Prince Charming/David Nolan, comes to Storybrooke and breaks the curse when Henry, the son she gave up for adoption, convinces her that magic is real.

Once the curse is no more and memories have been restored, Rumplestiltskin/Mr. Gold brings magic to Storybrooke.

PREVIOUSLY ON ONCE UPON A TIME:

Mary Margaret confides in David that she attempted suicide by allowing Regina to rip her heart out. Instead of killing her, Regina showed Mary Margaret that her heart was turning black as a consequence of killing Regina's mother, Cora.

Mary Margaret is terrified that her black heart will cause her to tear their newly reunited family apart just as Regina predicts.

ONCE UPON A TIME

"A Tale of Two Fish Wives"

ACT ONE

EXT. LAKE - EVENING - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Lily pads float along the calm surface of the water. Fireflies light up the night with a beautiful glow. A small boat slices silently through the lake.

PRINCE ERIC rows. Gives ARIEL a perplexed glance then focuses on the oars.

Uncomfortable, Ariel fiddles with the skirt of her blue dress that fills the boat. It barely leaves room for her and Eric.

PRINCE ERIC

Perhaps the date parchment could've been more explicit.

Ariel looks at him and shrugs.

Silence stretches awkwardly between them.

PRINCE ERIC

I wanted a one on one with you because I feel like we never talk. I thought it might be because you're shy around the other girls. But here we are and--

He shrugs.

PRINCE ERIC

It's wearing a little thin.

She nails him with a glare and a raised eyebrow.

He fidgets under her stare.

PRINCE ERIC

I mean you are choosing not to speak aren't you? To be different.

She shakes her head. Tries to speak. Nothing comes out.

PRINCE ERIC

You really are mute?

She nods.

PRINCE ERIC
Were you born that way or did
something happen?

She bites her lip then holds up two fingers.

PRINCE ERIC
Something happened!

She nods. He lights up now that they're finally communicating.
The wind picks up around them.

PRINCE ERIC
I think you're worth the effort. I'm
willing to make this work if you are.

Ariel nods, but looks around, concerned by the sudden wind.
She fights to keep her hair from whipping all over the place.

He moves her skirts aside to pick up a bean stalk.

PRINCE ERIC
I know it's against the rules a bit,
but I don't want anything hanging
over us today while we figure things
out.

He holds the bean stalk out to her.

PRINCE ERIC
M'lady, will you accept this magic
bean stalk?

Ariel fights tears. She nods. Reaches out to take the bean
stalk.

Their hands touch. They share an electric moment. She gives
him a tender smile. He smiles back.

A wave rocks the boat. Jars them both back to reality. She
points toward the shore.

PRINCE ERIC
You want to go back already? We were
supposed to climb the ogre cliff and
have a romantic dinner under the
troll bridge.

He looks at the sky and gestures toward the full moon.

PRINCE ERIC
Look. Not a cloud to be seen. We'll
be fine.

Ariel stares off behind him. She grips his hand this time. Points.

He turns to see a thick, purple smoke racing toward them. It stretches across the horizon.

He starts to row. Fast.

PRINCE ERIC

You don't have to tell me twice.
Well, maybe you did.

The water slams against the boat. They can't move fast enough.

PRINCE ERIC

Fear not, M'lady. We'll make it.

The wind hits them like a hurricane. The boat capsizes.

Eric reaches for Ariel, but her dress sucks her under.

He hooks the dress with the oar and pulls her back up. He can't reach her.

A swirling vortex opens in the lake.

The thick smoke surrounds them.

A wave smashes the boat to pieces. A piece of wood smacks Eric in the face. Knocks him out.

Ariel tries to get to him. She's caught in the vortex.

Eric's lifeless body sinks underwater.

She clings to the bean stalk. The vortex sucks her in.

All is black.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Suddenly, all is bright and sunny.

Ariel floats on the surface of the water. She forces her eyes open to look around. Miles of calm ocean surround her.

A piece of the boat floats nearby. She tucks the bean stalk in her bodice then doggy paddles over to it. Grabs on for dear life.

A pirate ship - the Jolly Roger - appears out of nowhere.

Ariel loses her grasp on the wood in the wake of the ship. She flounders around and catches hold of a cargo net instead.

Just as suddenly as the ship appears, it disappears with Ariel still clinging to the net. ONCE TITLE CARD

EXT. SAFE HAVEN - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Empty beach near a steep rock cliff that drops off into the ocean. Water crashes against smaller rocks.

CAPTAIN HOOK paces the beach.

Next to him, CORA raises her hands like she's pulling an invisible object toward them.

The Jolly Roger appears in the bay. The atmosphere bounces as it plows through the protection spell. The ship half runs aground.

Cora repairs the gap in the spell then looks at Hook.

CORA
It's in one piece. Just as promised.
Let's go.

Cora walks away. Relieved, Hook touches the ship's bow. Follows Cora right past--

Ariel who silently calls for their help. She continues struggling against the net as they disappear from view.

The net breaks enough for her to slide out into the water.

Exhausted, Ariel crawls ashore then collapses. Pulls the bean stalk from the bodice of her dress.

She plants the stalk then curls up beside it and waters it with her tears.

INT. MARY MARGARET'S LOFT - DAY

DAVID assembles a whole bunch of sandwiches.

MARY MARGARET brings a picnic basket downstairs.

MARY MARGARET
Found it. It was-- Are we inviting
the whole town?

David looks at all the food.

DAVID

Maybe I am going a bit overboard. Can you blame me?

MARY MARGARET

Not really. It's our first outing as a family. The Charming family. It's time we did something together that's pleasant for a change.

DAVID

I agree. We haven't had a moment of peace since the curse lifted. So we're going to steal some. Today. I decree it.

He and Mary Margaret share a smile. Mary Margaret starts packing the basket while David bags up the sandwiches.

MARY MARGARET

Any idea what Henry's big surprise is?

DAVID

Not a clue. You know Henry. He dragged Emma out of here hours ago with a promise to meet us at the park. That's all I know.

Mary Margaret opens a package of napkins and packs them.

MARY MARGARET

Once we get home, we can have family picnics all the time. Can you imagine how wonderful that will be? Henry will love the palace courtyard. And Emma--

DAVID

Let's not get ahead of ourselves. I think Emma still has some reservations about leaving this place behind. We have to remember. This is her home. She grew up here.

MARY MARGARET

I know. But David. You didn't see her face when she saw the nursery. She knows she belongs there. She'll come around.

Off David's concerned look.

INT. GRANNY'S DINER - KITCHEN - DAY

EMMA and GRANNY clean up while HENRY stares impatiently at a pie baking in the oven.

EMMA

Yo, kid. Didn't anyone ever tell you a watched pot never boils?

HENRY

It's my first pie. I just want it to be perfect.

EMMA

I'm sure it will be.

Granny sniffs. She hands him a couple oven mitts.

GRANNY

It's time, child.

Henry carefully takes the pie from the oven. Emma holds open an insulated pie carrier. He places it inside.

EMMA

That smells awesome, kid. Good job.

HENRY

Will you help me convince Mary Margaret and David to eat it first?

EMMA

Who's gonna convince me? I should be setting a good example for you.

Henry gets a carton of ice cream from the freezer.

HENRY

You can be a good example tomorrow. You know. When we don't have a piping hot pie to smother with ice cream.

EMMA

We'll see.

(to Granny)

Thanks for letting us use your kitchen. And for teaching Henry how to bake.

GRANNY

My regards to Mary Margaret and David.

EXT. PARK - DAY

CHILDREN play on swings and a merry-go-round while PARENTS chat with one another.

David and Mary Margaret sit on a blanket a bit away from the other folks. Their meal is already spread out around them. Mary Margaret looks around nervously.

MARY MARGARET

Where are they?

David massages her shoulders.

DAVID

It's a small town and I'm the first call when anything happens to anyone. We'd know.

MARY MARGARET

You're right. I'm being silly.

DAVID

You're just stressed. With good reason. Just relax and enjoy today.

Henry rushes over to the blanket carrying the pie. Emma follows with the ice cream.

EMMA

Wow. That's some spread.

HENRY

Yes, but *Emma* said we should start with this first.

Henry gives Emma a mischievous look as he puts the pie down. He plops next to Mary Margaret.

MARY MARGARET

She did? What is it?

EMMA

Henry made his first pie.

MARY MARGARET

All by yourself?

HENRY

Granny may have helped.

Mary Margaret unpacks the pie.

MARY MARGARET

Yum! It's still hot. This will be great with the ice cream. We're totally starting with dessert today.

Henry shoots Emma a triumphant look and cuts the pie. Emma sits on the blanket.

EMMA

Since when did you become a bigger bad influence than me?

Emma dishes up the ice cream so she misses the hurt look Mary Margaret shoots at David.

David takes the bowl Emma hands him. Lifts his spoon for a toast.

DAVID

Here's to the first Charming Family picnic.

They toast spoons. Tastes the pie.

EMMA

Wow, Henry. This is really good.

David mumbles his agreement around a mouthful.

Mary Margaret gags and spits hers out.

Emma and David stare at her in surprise.

Henry looks crestfallen.

HENRY

What's wrong? Don't you like it?

MARY MARGARET

It's apple. You gave me apple. Why would you give me apple?

HENRY

Ruby used all the peaches and these are Yellow Delicious, not Red. Granny said they were in season.

MARY MARGARET

All apples are dangerous! Or were you *intending* to poison us?

HENRY

I'm sorry!

He hops up and runs off, tearful.

EMMA

Mary Margaret! You didn't have to come down on him like that. You need to go after him and apologize.

DAVID

Don't speak to your mother that way.

Emma gives him an "are-you-freaking-kidding-me" look.

EMMA

Don't you think it's a little late for the whole "father knows best" routine?

Disgusted, Emma tosses her plate on the grass and follows Henry.

DAVID

Emma, wait.

MARY MARGARET

Let them go. They need to learn that actions have consequences.

She opens some fruit and pops a strawberry in her mouth. David squeezes her hand forcing her to look at him.

DAVID

Yeah. *They* do?

(beat)

This isn't you, Snow? You know that, don't you?

She takes a breath.

MARY MARGARET

It's happening. I'm turning into an awful, awful person.

DAVID

No you're not. You--

MARY MARGARET

This is what Regina wants. She predicted it. As my heart darkened I would tear our family apart. It's already happening.

DAVID

Snap out of it, Snow. It hasn't happened, yet. All families have their issues. This just happens to be ours. Regina will not win.

Beat.

MARY MARGARET

(determined)

You're absolutely right. Regina is not going to win. I won't let her.

She gives him a quick kiss then leaves him alone in the park.

David watches her go. Wondering if he really got through to her or not, he cleans up the picnic.

INT. REGINA'S GARAGE - DAY

Nostalgic, REGINA goes through some boxes. She holds up a pair of Henry's baby's shoes. Wistful smile as she repacks them.

HENRY (O.S.)

I need your help.

She whirls to see Henry standing in the doorway. She reaches out for him.

REGINA

Henry. Are you okay? What's wrong?

HENRY

It's Mary Margaret. She's not acting like herself.

Regina raises an eyebrow.

REGINA

She's not?

HENRY

No. She's never been mean to anyone before. She's changing and you can stop it.

Regina picks through another box with her back to him. She smiles her evil smile.

REGINA

I appreciate that you think I'm this all-powerful being, but there are limits to what even I can do.

HENRY

But surely you have something that will help Mary Margaret.

Regina faces Henry.

REGINA

And why exactly would I do that? She killed my mother.

HENRY

To be fair, your mother killed her mother, first. And you killed her father. Don't you think you owe her one?

REGINA

I owe her nothing.

Henry stares at Regina for a moment. Goes to inspect a box. He pulls out a gold conch.

HENRY

What are you doing?

She stares at him. Trying to get a handle on the abrupt subject change.

REGINA

I have some things I'd like Mr. Gold to sell for me. I no longer need them.

HENRY

Can I help you?

She smiles.

REGINA

I'd like that.

HENRY

On one condition.

Regina narrows her eyes at him. Of course there's a catch.

REGINA

What is it?

HENRY

You find a way to help Mary Margaret.
Please.

Regina stares at him. Finally nods and lies through her teeth.

REGINA

I can't promise success, but I will
look for something.

HENRY

(grins)
Let's get started.

EXT. HARBOR - DAY

The water is calm and peaceful.

Suddenly, ripples appear for no visible reason.

Ariel, holding the trident, rises in the middle of the ripples. Standing tall and confident, it looks almost like she's walking on water.

She's standing on a dolphin's back. She uses kelp for reins and he swims her toward the town.

She steps ashore to look around.

Sees a sign announcing, "The Port of Storybrooke."

Ariel smiles a creepy smile. She found it.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. SAFE HAVEN - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

After one day, the bean stalk is taller than Ariel and still growing. She stands next to it trying to tear off the excess fabric of her gown.

Something CLICKS behind her. She looks around, startled.

It CLICKS again. Seeing nothing, she rips the last stitch, drops the gown by then stalk, then investigates.

EXT. SEA CLIFF - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Ariel climbs down the rocks. The CLICKS get louder then stop altogether as she approaches the sea.

The water is completely calm.

Disappointed, sad and lonely, Ariel sits on a rock and dips her toes in. Longing all over her face.

A DOLPHIN surfaces beside her.

Startled, she recoils. Over corrects; topples into the water.

EXT. SEA - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Ariel flounders around.

The dolphin brings her back to the surface. Grateful, she hugs him.

He heads out to sea. Ariel struggles to hold on.

She shakes her head to no avail. Gasps for air just as he dives under taking her with him.

EXT. UNDERWATER PALACE - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

The palace is in ruins. Cracked shells, seaweed and dead kelp are everywhere.

The dolphin deposits Ariel on the sea floor. She curls up in a fetal position struggling to hold her breath.

The dolphin rolls his eyes. Pushes a jar of baby mermaid food toward her.

Ariel devours the green, incandescent contents. She collapses on the sea floor.

The back of her neck glows. Small gills grow by her hairline.

Her breathing is labored, but she picks herself up.

Ariel struggles to walk across the sea floor.

The dolphin grabs a strand of kelp and brings it over to her. She takes the end and he swims her along.

INT. UNDERWATER PALACE - THRONE ROOM - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Utter shambles. The throne is upturned and in several pieces. Triton's trident is snapped in two.

The dolphin swims Ariel in. She stands on shaky legs and takes in the mess.

She reverently touches the trident and cries.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. STORYBROOKE STREET - DAY

Ariel wanders along an empty street. Looking around the town.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Henry carries the boxes down the street.

Mary Margaret steps out of the library and sees him. She runs to catch up.

MARY MARGARET

Henry! I've been looking-- Wait a minute.

He pauses and turns a poker face on her.

MARY MARGARET

I'm so sorry for how I acted this morning. Can you forgive me?

He grins.

HENRY

Of course. I know you're not yourself. But I have a plan.

MARY MARGARET

You have a plan?

She eyes the boxes.

MARY MARGARET

What is all of that?

HENRY

Just some stuff for Mr. Gold.

Mary Margaret narrows her eyes at Henry and takes a box.

MARY MARGARET

And you got it from where?

HENRY

From Regina.

MARY MARGARET

Henry--

HENRY

Don't worry. It's all part of the plan.

MARY MARGARET

Of course I'm going to worry. It's my job to worry.

They round the corner and Mary Margaret stops short.

Ariel walks toward them with an uncertain gait. She stops, too, noticing Mary Margaret.

MARY MARGARET

Ariel? My goodness. Is that really you?

The women share a brief, happy hug.

MARY MARGARET

What happened to you? Have you been in Storybrooke all this time?

Ariel shakes her head.

MARY MARGARET

Then where have you been?

Ariel shrugs and touches her throat.

MARY MARGARET
You can't speak?

Ariel shakes her head again.

MARY MARGARET
But you had such a beautiful voice.
Charming and I hoped you'd sing at
our wedding, but no one seemed to
know where you'd gone.

Ariel looks away.

HENRY
(thinking)
Ariel? No voice. Legs-- You were a
mermaid.

MARY MARGARET
Henry! She's still a mermaid. Legs
were a side effect of Regina's curse.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. UNDERWATER PALACE - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Regina's curse sweeps through. The massive waves destroy the
palace. TRITON and his six DAUGHTERS swim for their lives.

The waves roll throughout the kingdom sweeping all the
MERPEOPLE from their homes.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The surf deposit the merpeople on land. As they hit the sand,
their tails split into legs leaving them writhing in agony.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Ariel grabs Mary Margaret's arm in alarm.

MARY MARGARET
Oh dear. You didn't know?

Ariel shakes her head.

HENRY

Of course she didn't know. She made a deal with the Sea Witch. You traded your voice for legs didn't you?

Ariel nods cautiously.

MARY MARGARET

How do you know all this, Henry?

HENRY

The same way I knew that you are Snow White. It's in my book.

(to Ariel)

You don't have your voice. I'm sorry he didn't kiss you. You just have to find him and try again.

Ariel blinks back tears. Shakes her head.

MARY MARGARET

No. Henry's right. You have to try again. Don't give up on true love's kiss.

Ariel gives her head a more vehement shake. Gestures to her throat.

HENRY

You're here for your voice.

She nods.

MARY MARGARET

We might know someone who can help you with that.

INT. MR. GOLD'S SHOP - DAY

Mary Margaret, Henry and Ariel enter the shop. Ariel checks out all the trinkets and doodads with a jaded eye.

MARY MARGARET

Mr. Gold? Are you here?

MR. GOLD enters from the back room leaning on his cane.

MR. GOLD

Where else would I be, dearie?

He sees Ariel. A creepy smile crawls across his face.

MR. GOLD

Well, well. If it isn't Triton's prodigal daughter.

Henry plops his box on the counter.

HENRY

You have to help her. She needs her voice back.

MR. GOLD

What makes you think I have it?
(to Ariel)

Your deal was not with me now was it?

Ariel strides over to the counter and shakes her head.

Mr. Gold opens Henry's box. Examines the contents.

MR. GOLD

Regina told me to expect you. Is this everything?

MARY MARGARET

Could you just do one decent thing in your miserable life and help Ariel? She's done nothing to you.

MR. GOLD

Feeling a bit feisty today, are we Miss Blanchard?

Mary Margaret drops her box on the counter and glares at him.

MARY MARGARET

As a matter of fact. My patience is wearing a bit thin with people who have it in their power to help, but refuse to do so out of spite.

MR. GOLD

Spite has very little to do with the contracts I choose to make or not make. I simply like to know what's in it for me.

He checks the contents of the second box. He picks up the gold conch, tries to tuck it back in the box before it's seen.

Too late. Ariel points it out.

Mary Margaret grabs the conch and holds it up to the light.

The voice in the conch is gold, shiny and bright.

MARY MARGARET
Is this it? Is this your voice?

Ariel smiles and nods.

Mary Margaret struggles to open the conch while shaking her head in disgust at Mr. Gold.

MARY MARGARET
Regina had it all this time.
(to Mr. Gold)
And you. You tried to hide if from
us. How can you live with yourself?

MR. GOLD
Practice.

Mary Margaret narrows her eyes at Mr. Gold.

Ariel takes the conch from Mary Margaret and puts it on the counter. She raises a heavy statue.

MR. GOLD
You don't want to do that.

Ariel smashes the conch with the statue.

The voice bursts forth and swirls through the air. Sweet a *cappella* notes accompany it.

They all stare at the pleasant light as it rises.

Suddenly, the voice ZOOMS around the shop. Knocks items from their shelves.

The voice zooms toward Henry.

Mary Margaret pulls him out of the way. It smashes a cuckoo clock behind where he stood.

Mr. Gold hits the deck when the voice rockets his way.

The voice ricochets off the wall behind Mr. Gold and tears toward Ariel.

She stands firm.

The voice picks up speed. The gold darkens as it closes in on its target.

Jams itself down Ariel's throat. She falls over from the impact.

The shop is eerily silent.

Mary Margaret checks Henry.

MARY MARGARET
Are you okay?

He nods.

She checks Mr. Gold.

MARY MARGARET
How about you?

MR. GOLD
Someone has to pay for all this
damage.

He struggles to pick himself off the floor. Henry helps.

Mary Margaret rolls her eyes and kneels by Ariel.

MARY MARGARET
Ariel? Ariel!? Are you okay?

Ariel's eyes slowly open. Mary Margaret helps her sit up.

Ariel swallows a couple times. Massages her throat.

She takes a deep breath.

ARIEL
Regina must die.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. MR. GOLD'S SHOP - DAY

Henry, Mary Margaret and Mr. Gold all stare at Ariel in surprise.

Mr. Gold rubs his hands together. Smiles.

MR. GOLD

Well, well, dearie. Someone's holding a grudge.

ARIEL

A grudge? That sea witch took everything from me. My voice. My family. My-- Everything!

HENRY

But my mother isn't the sea witch. She can't even swim.

Henry looks to Mary Margaret and Mr. Gold to back him up.

HENRY

Tell her.

Mr. Gold makes his way over to inspect the damaged cuckoo clock and avoids Henry's gaze.

Mary Margaret kneels next to Henry. Looks him in the eye.

MARY MARGARET

Regina has been known to adopt some fairly clever disguises. She's even fooled me on occasion.

ARIEL

And you let her live? You always were such a softy.

MR. GOLD

People do change.

Mary Margaret gives him a withering look. Returns her attention to Ariel.

MARY MARGARET

So if the curse didn't bring you to Storybrooke how did you get here?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. SAFE HAVEN - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

The dolphin surfaces near the rock cliff. Ariel clumsily rides on his back and clutches the trident.

She slithers onto the rocks and cautiously stands. Pats his nose and secures the trident in the back of her dress.

A nearby THWACKING sound catches her attention.

She looks to see Hook chopping at her bean stalk. It's so tall, it's almost to the sky.

Cora, holding the torn dress fabric, watches his progress.

Ariel waves futilely. Runs toward them.

The dolphin shakes his head.

Ariel grabs Hook mid swing.

HOOK

What the--?

He shakes her off. Ariel tries to push him away from the stalk. Hook restrains her.

Cora approaches them. Matches the fabric to Ariel's gown.

CORA

So you're responsible for this monstrosity that's going to punch a hole in my protection spell.

Ariel struggles against Hook to no avail. Opens her mouth. Nothing comes out.

HOOK

We have ways of making you talk.

CORA

Yes. Off with her head.

HOOK

You do know that we're not in Wonderland anymore. I'm pretty sure that will kill her.

CORA

Details.

Cora runs a glowing hand in front of Ariel.

CORA

Something is missing. And something
is extra.

Cora chuckles as realization dawns.

CORA

The mermaid. I'm surprised my darling
daughter didn't sweep you off to
Storybrooke with the rest of her
enemies.

Hook shoots an annoyed look at Cora.

HOOK

Are you finished waxing poetic?
Technically, Regina had us lumped
into said enemies. And may I remind
you, Lancelot is not going to kill
himself.

CORA

Quite right. Take her to the pit.
She'll stay there until we figure out
how she's working these magics.

Cora gestures toward the bean stalk.

Ariel vigorously shakes her head. Fights against Hook for all
she's worth.

It's a losing battle until the dolphin spits a stream of water
that hits Hook right in the eye.

Ariel takes advantage of the distraction and pushes away from
him. She dives toward the water.

CORA

Enough!

Cora shoots a beam of magic at Ariel.

The trident glows from the back of Ariel's dress. It absorbs
the magic and deflects it back at Cora.

To Cora's surprise, it knocks her down.

Ariel escapes into the water. The dolphin swims her out of
reach.

Hook helps a furious Cora to her feet.

CORA

She's got her father's trident.

HOOK

I take it that's a problem.

CORA

Have you never wondered why merpeople are so hard to find?

HOOK

(shrugging)

Not really. No.

CORA

Triton used to move his kingdom from land to land with that thing. Set up a guard. If she ever surfaces here again, kill her.

END FLASHBACK

INT. MR. GOLD'S SHOP - DAY

Mary Margaret gives Ariel a sympathetic hug.

ARIEL

My father always hated when I poked around on the surface. He said nothing good would ever come of it. He was right.

Henry grabs her arm.

HENRY

But don't you see? You haven't lost everything. Your family is right here. In Storybrooke. You have your voice. It's like it never happened. You don't have to hurt my mother.

Ariel smiles down at Henry. Ruffles his hair. She bends so she's eye level with him.

He recoils. There's something scary about that smile of hers.

ARIEL

Eric is dead. Soon, Regina will be, too. Let me be the first to offer my condolences for your loss.

Frightened, Henry pulls away from her. Seeks reassurance from Mary Margaret.

HENRY

You can't let her do this.

MARY MARGARET

Regina has hurt a lot of people. So much tragedy and loss would've been avoided if we hadn't protected her when Emma broke the curse.

Henry backs away from Mary Margaret.

HENRY

You can't mean that.

MARY MARGARET

I mean every word, Henry.

She reaches out to Ariel.

MARY MARGARET

I'm going to do whatever I can to help you.

Mr. Gold snickers.

MR. GOLD

I do love a good twist.

Henry, horrified, runs out of the shop.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

Emma makes her way through a stack of paperwork. Files things with a little more force than necessary.

She slams a cabinet, causing the files stacked on top to slide to the floor. She pauses to look at them.

EMMA

Am I really behaving like a teenager pissed at her parents? Get a grip.

She kneels to pick up the files.

Henry races into the office.

HENRY

Emma!

EMMA

Kid? What is it? What's wrong.

She drops the files again to catch him.

HENRY

You have to stop her. She's going to kill my mother.

EMMA

What? Who?

HENRY

Ma- Mary-

He gasps for breath.

EMMA

Mary Margaret? She'd never harm Regina so calm down. Whatever gave you that idea anyway?

HENRY

No. She's just going to help. Ariel is going to kill Regina. You have to stop her.

EMMA

Ariel? As in "the little mermaid" Ariel who lives in the sea and has a tail? Is she even in Storybrooke?

He nods.

HENRY

She has legs now. And she's really mad. At my mother. The deal they made didn't quite work out.

Emma stands.

EMMA

Can I trust you to stay put or do I have to lock you in a cell?

HENRY

You can trust me. Just go. You have to stop her.

EMMA

Call David. Tell him to meet me at Regina's house.

Henry nods and grabs for the phone.

Emma rushes out.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Huge office with minimal decor.

Regina signs papers at her desk.

Mr. Gold saunters in without knocking.

REGINA

What is it, Rumpel? I'm very busy.

MR. GOLD

About those items you sent over this morning. I'm afraid there's a problem.

She finally looks up at him.

REGINA

Didn't Henry drop them off?

MR. GOLD

Oh yes. He did. It's just-- An item was damaged. The value we agreed upon will have to be reduced.

REGINA

Fine. He's a child and things break. You didn't have to come all the way over here to tell me this.

MR. GOLD

I didn't.

She tosses her pen down and stands.

REGINA

Oh for God's sake. What is it then?

He holds up pieces of the conch.

She stares at them, startled.

REGINA

Henry couldn't have smashed it.

MR. GOLD

He didn't.

REGINA

Only one person can open--

MR. GOLD

Now you're getting it, dearie.

REGINA

She's here?

MR. GOLD

And looking to drop in on old friends.

Regina shrugs off his concern.

REGINA

The mermaid and I had a binding agreement. It's not my fault she was unable to hold up her end of the deal.

MR. GOLD

Against a stacked deck?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. REGINA'S CASTLE - BED CHAMBER - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Luxurious room with a platform bed dominating one wall. The sheets have been turned down. A small wooden box awaits next to the pillows.

Regina sweeps in wearing a long, black satin night gown.

She picks up a hand-held mirror then climbs in the bed.

REGINA

Sidney. I think it's time for a little guilty pleasure viewing.

SIDNEY's face appears in the mirror.

SIDNEY

Yes, Majesty.

His face shimmers then fades to:

EXT. ERIC'S CASTLE - COURTYARD - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Flowers hang all around the courtyard, brightly lit by a ton of lanterns.

Prince Eric stands alone in the courtyard. He tugs nervously at the collar of his ceremonial uniform.

A white and gold carriage drawn by a stately white horse eases to a stop near Eric.

Ariel alights from the carriage wearing a beautiful green gown. She gives him a surprised look when she sees him there waiting for her.

Eric bows as she approaches. Takes her hand and kisses it.

If she wasn't in love before, she's head over heels now.

PRINCE ERIC

I'm Prince Eric. It's so wonderful of you to come all this way to meet me.

Ariel opens her mouth, but she can't even manage to squeak. She self-consciously touches her throat.

PRINCE ERIC

Shy? That's okay. We'll have plenty of time to talk later. Just head on in. I'll be along in a moment.

He points her in the direction of a large, open door.

INT. ERIC'S CASTLE - PARTY ROOM - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Ariel walks through the door by herself. She's all smiles.

Until she rounds a corner and sees twenty other COURTESANS. Each one is more beautiful than the last. They all wear fabulous gowns and chat with one another.

Numb, Ariel makes her way inside.

COURTESAN 1

Eric is so much more handsome in person.

COURTESAN 2

I thought I was going to die on the spot when he said, "hello."

COURTESAN 3

Can you believe it? One of us is going to marry him. I'm so excited.

Ariel covers her ears. She presses through the crowd to find a quiet corner.

INT. REGINA'S CASTLE - BED CHAMBER - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Regina enjoys the stricken look on Ariel's face.

She puts the mirror down and reaches for the wooden box.

REGINA

Let's make things a little more interesting.

She lifts a red, pulsating heart from the box. She whispers to the heart.

REGINA

Time for you to make an entrance.

INT. ERIC'S CASTLE - PARTY ROOM - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

The door slams open silencing everyone at the party.

VANESSA, striking and charismatic, but just the tiniest bit wooden, stops in the doorway for a moment so everyone can admire her. She holds up a bean stalk.

VANESSA

Can you believe it? I got the first impression bean stalk. You know what that means.

The other courtesans give her wide berth as she makes her way toward a table of wine-filled chalices.

She holds one up for a toast. The other courtesans follow suit. They're too scared not to.

VANESSA

Eric is going to marry me!

Off Ariel's miserable face.

END FLASHBACK

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Regina reaches for the broken conch. Mr. Gold holds it out of reach.

REGINA

You've been known to stack a deck or two in your time.

MR. GOLD

But I don't get caught.

He puts the remains of the conch on her desk and strides for the door.

MR. GOLD

If you thought you had a problem with a mermaid before, it pales in comparison to what you have now.

EXT. STORYBROOKE STREET - DAY

Mary Margaret and Ariel stroll down the street arm in arm. Mary Margaret cheerily points out the sites. Ariel frowns and stops walking.

ARIEL

The town is lovely, Snow. Thanks for catching me up on the curse and everything, but are we almost to Regina's? We've been walking forever and you said you'd help me kill her.

MARY MARGARET

Well, yes. And no. I said I'd help you. Not necessarily to kill her.

Ariel pulls away from Mary Margaret.

ARIEL

What kind of game are you playing with me? I'm here for one reason. And one reason only.

MARY MARGARET

It's not a very good reason, Ariel. Trust me. Murder is not a road you want to go down. It's far too hard to come back if not impossible.

ARIEL

What could you possibly know about--

MARY MARGARET

Cora.

ARIEL

What?

Mary Margaret hangs her head and takes a few steps away. This isn't easy for her to talk about.

ARIEL

You mean Regina's mother who died recently? What does she have to do with anything?

MARY MARGARET

She didn't just die. I killed her.

Ariel smiles.

ARIEL

You kinda glossed over that little detail. Did it feel great? You had barely reunited with Charming and the woman tried to destroy your family. She got what she--

MARY MARGARET

No! She didn't deserve what I did to her. Tricking Regina into becoming my weapon for such evil-- My heart will never be the same.

Mary Margaret fights tears. Ariel puts a comforting hand on Mary Margaret's shoulder.

ARIEL

You were protecting your family.

MARY MARGARET

No. There's no excuse!
(calming breath)
It's too late for me. Not for you. Believe it or not, you still have so much to lose. You don't want that.

Mary Margaret points to a window across the street.

INT. FISHERY - KITCHEN - DAY

Triton pours himself a cup of coffee.

EXT. STORYBROOKE STREET - DAY

Ariel steps forward at Mary Margaret's urging.

ARIEL

Daddy?

INT. FISHERY - KITCHEN - DAY

Triton sits at the table with his coffee and prepares to dig in to a hearty lunch. The fork is almost to his mouth when there's a KNOCK on the door.

He sighs and puts the utensil down. Heads for the door.

TRITON

It's lunch time, Arista. That means we all take a break. Including you.

He pulls the door open. He blinks, not quite believing his eyes.

TRITON

Ariel?

INT./EXT. FISHERY - DAY

Ariel fights tears while staring at her father.

ARIEL

Hi Daddy.

Confusion and shock give way to utter joy.

TRITON

Ariel! My baby! My baby!

He pulls her into his massive embrace.

Ariel holds tightly to him while tears stream unchecked down her face.

Mary Margaret smiles at the joyous reunion.

TRITON

Come on in here.

INT. FISHERY - KITCHEN - DAY

Triton ushers Ariel and Mary Margaret inside. He studies his daughter. Fights tears himself.

TRITON

Let me get a look at you. So gorgeous. And all grown up.

Stunned, he sits down at the table only to pop right back up. He pulls out chairs for both Ariel and Mary Margaret.

TRITON

Where are my manners? Sit, sit, sit.

He sits, holding Ariel's hand, scared to let go.

TRITON

Ariel, my darling child. We were so afraid you were gone forever.

ARIEL

I know. I'm sorry, Daddy.

TRITON

Water under the bridge. Your sisters are going to be so glad to see you. Your sisters! We have to get them over here right away.

He pops up. Can barely bring himself to let go of her hand. Stretches to reach his cell phone.

TRITON

Don't go anywhere.

He fires off a quick text.

TRITON

Boy will they be surprised when they get here!

Mary Margaret smiles and squeezes Ariel's hand.

Ariel's smile is genuine when she looks at Mary Margaret.

ARIEL

(sotto)
Thank you.

Goofy grin on his face, Triton returns to the table.

TRITON

Please sing something for me.

Ariel gives Mary Margaret a worried look.

Mary Margaret gives her an encouraging nod.

Ariel takes a deep breath.

ARIEL
(singing)
Ah ah ahhh, ah ah ah ah ahhhh.

After a bit of a rough start, she sounds amazing.

Mary Margaret presses a hand to her heart and stares at Ariel.

MARY MARGARET
So lovely.

Triton gives her a standing ovation when she stops singing.

TRITON
My Ariel is safe and finally home.

MARY MARGARET
That was the most amazing thing I've
ever heard. Even better than I
remember. I wish you never had to
stop.

ARIEL
I'm a bit out of practice.

TRITON
My baby can sing a phone book. Thank
you for bringing her home.

MARY MARGARET
It's my pleasure.

Mary Margaret stands.

MARY MARGARET
You two have so much catching up to
do. I'm going to get out of your
hair.

She heads for the door. Ariel hops up to give her big hug.

ARIEL
(whispers)
I think you were right. Thank you.

MARY MARGARET
Of course. Your voice sounds so
wonderful. I'm glad it and you are
back where you both belong.

EXT. STORYBROOKE STREET - DAY

Mary Margaret walks along the sidewalk.

Emma's VW Bug screeches to a halt beside her startling Mary Margaret.

Emma and David hop out the car. Surround Mary Margaret.

EMMA

Where is she?

MARY MARGARET

Emma? What's wrong? You scared me.

DAVID

Where's Ariel? Henry's worried that you're going to help her kill Regina.

MARY MARGARET

I did help Ariel. Just not-- Wait. You really think I'd do that?

Emma and David share a look.

MARY MARGARET

You do. That's just great. If you're so worried about what I've been up to this afternoon, why don't you check in on Regina? She's fine.

EMMA

We know. We just came from there.

Mary Margaret gives Emma a hurt look. Pushes by them in a huff.

David and Emma fall in step alongside her.

DAVID

Come on, Snow. We're just concerned about you. Ever since-- the incident--

MARY MARGARET

The *incident*? You mean, since I killed Cora? Don't you think I've learned my lesson? I made a mistake. Are you going to hold it over my head for the rest of my life?

DAVID

I'm not holding--

EMMA

It was more than a mistake.

MARY MARGARET

You, too? Well fine. I took Ariel home. To her family. Because family is who helps you through difficult times. I just hope it works out better for her than it is for me.

Mary Margaret speeds up to get away from them.

David tries to keep up, but Emma catches his arm. Shakes her head.

EMMA

Just give her a minute.

He paces the sidewalk.

DAVID

I'm at such a loss. How do I help her? Everything backfires. I just-- I want my wife back.

EMMA

And you'll have her. We'll figure out something. We just have to be patient in the meantime.

David gives her a bittersweet, fatherly smile.

DAVID

You sound so much like her sometimes.

EMMA

I'll go ahead and take that as a compliment. Now come on. We have to get Henry and tell him the crisis has been averted.

DAVID

You go ahead. I'll meet you guys at home later.

EMMA

Where are you going?

DAVID

There's one more thing we can try.

EXT. FISHERY - DAY

A large trawler docks at the fishery. ATTINA 30s, wearing bright orange coat and boots, jumps to the deck and expertly ties a cleat hitch.

She pulls an almost empty net toward the waiting containers on the dock.

Triton joins her on the dock.

TRITON

You're back early. Load's light, too.

Paying attention to what she's doing, she dumps the net into the container.

ATTINA

Some stupid dolphin kept attacking the nets. Ripped every last one. This is all I managed to salvage.

TRITON

A dolphin? Are you sure? In these waters?

ATTINA

I know, right? I have no idea where he came from. Now I've gotta spend the rest of the day doing repairs if I expect to go out tomorrow.

TRITON

Forget about the nets. I have a surprise for you.

INT. FISHERY - OFFICE - DAY

Surrounded by her exciting, chattering SISTERS, Ariel explores Triton's office. She studies the framed photos on the walls.

INSERT PHOTOS

Triton holds a string of trout.

Attina poses on the trawler deck with overflowing fishing nets.

ANDRINA and AQUATA make funny faces and dump fish guts.

BACK TO SCENE

Sickened, Ariel tears her eyes from the photo. Turns around to see Aquata's smiling face an inch from hers.

AQUATA

I have your room all ready. But be warned. Arista still likes to borrow things without asking.

ARISTA (30s), messy blonde ponytail and red outfit, frowns at Aquata.

ARISTA
Hey! If you'd just learn to share--

ATTINA (O.S.)
Ariel?

Attina races in and sweeps Ariel into a big hug.

ATTINA
Welcome home! Where've you been all this time? You have to tell us everything.

Ariel shoots a shy look at Triton who's just squeezed into the small office with his seven daughters.

ARIEL
I went to the surface.

TRITON
Ariel! How many times do I--

ANDRINA
Daddy! It's done. Get over it.

ARIEL
There was this prince--

ADELLA (30s), flips her brown hair over her shoulder and pulls Ariel out of Attina's embrace. Adella pushes them through the sisters so they can sit on the small couch.

ADELLA
Ooooh! A boy! I knew it! Is he cute?

ANDRINA
Did he come with you?

ATTINA
When can we meet him?

TRITON
What are his intentions?

Ariel holds up her hands to stop all the questions.

ARIEL
I'll tell you everything.

INT. ERIC'S CASTLE - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

An elaborately set dinner table dominates the room. The feast is large enough to feed the entire kingdom.

Several COURTESANS including Ariel and Vanessa surround Eric as they all walk into the room together.

COURTESAN 1

It's so delightful.

COURTESAN 3

I've never seen anything this wonderful. Thank you, Eric.

ERIC

Eat up, ladies. You deserve it after those intense cart races today.

COURTESAN 3

I've never worn a harness before. It was hard work. I don't know how the horses do it.

While the women chat up Eric, Ariel scopes out the table. She inches toward the seat to the right of the head.

Eric seats her with a smile then takes his place at the head. The other ladies scramble into their seats.

COURTESAN 2

Yes. After today, I think I'll ask Daddy to outlaw harnesses in our kingdom. They're such cruel devices.

The courtesan starts to sit to Eric's left, but Vanessa stops her with a glare. While the girl slinks off to another seat, Vanessa pretends to have problems seating herself.

Eric seats her, too.

VANESSA

Ever the gentleman. Thank you.

She sits and stares across the table at Ariel.

Ariel refuses to look away.

PALACE MUSICIANS strike up a melody in a corner.

Ariel hops up from her seat and holds out a hand to Eric.

ERIC

You're not too tired to dance?

She shakes her head. He takes her hand and leads her a bit away from the table.

He folds her into his embrace.

ERIC

You're sure?

She presses a finger to his lips and nods.

He stops talking and starts dancing. They move together in perfect sync.

Everything fades away. Eric and Ariel lose themselves in one another's eyes. It's the perfect dance.

Vanessa stares at them jealously. She tosses her napkin down and marches over to them.

VANESSA

May I steal him away for a moment?

Both Eric and Ariel look startled to see her. Eric regains his wits first and nods. He takes Vanessa in his arms for a turn around the dance floor.

He's still looking at Ariel, though.

Vanessa tangles her fingers in his hair.

VANESSA

I'm glad we have this time to talk.

ERIC

What would you like to talk about?

VANESSA

Well-- I don't know how to say it-- I just-- I'm concerned.

ERIC

Concerned about what?

VANESSA

I'm really starting to fall in love with you. It pains me to see you spend so much time with ladies who aren't here for the right reasons.

ERIC

Is there someone in particular you're concerned about?

VANESSA

I do hate to speak out of turn--

She wrestles the lead from him and turns them so he's looking right at Ariel.

VANESSA

Just promise me that you'll be cautious. I couldn't bear it if she broke your heart.

END FLASHBACK

INT. FISHERY - OFFICE - NIGHT

Adella strokes Ariel's hair and hugs her.

ADELLA

Oh you poor dear.

The rest of her sisters murmur their agreement.

Triton smacks his palm with his fist.

TRITON

Who does that boy think he is?
Courting all those women at once.
It's not proper.

ANDRINA

Dad!

TRITON

What? Sounds to me like he was
getting a whole lot of free ink
without buying the octopus.

ANDRINA

Never mind, Dad.

ATTINA

I know what will cheer you right up.
Most of my catch got away today, but
I still got a pretty good haul of
lobster and crab. We'll cook us up a
feast to celebrate your safe return.

Ariel looks positively green at the thought. She studies her sisters and father. None of them appear as appalled at the idea as she is.

TRITON

That's a wonderful idea. Girls, let
get cooking!

INT. FISHERY - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The Mer Family settles around a large table overflowing with every seafood delicacy imaginable.

Triton puts a heaping helping of crab legs on Ariel's plate. She barely keeps herself from dry heaving.

Everyone else loads up their plates and digs in.

ARIEL

So, Arista, you were saying something
about taking some invoices to the
mayor. Regina, was it?

ARISTA

Yeah. She can be a real piece of
work. I hate going over there.

ARIEL

Why don't I do it? Where did you say
she lives again?

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Regina makes apple turnovers. She's a little more clumsy than usual. She shoves the pan into the oven and closes the door with more force than necessary.

ARIEL (O.S.)

Hello Regina.

Startled, Regina spins around to face Ariel.

Ariel's expression is scary calm.

ARIEL

It's been a long time.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Peaceful green meadow surrounded by trees. Archery targets line the edge of the clearing.

COURTESANS shoot arrows at the targets with varying degrees of skill.

Vanessa fires off shot after shot.

Hits the bulls eye each time.

Eric stands next to her. Admires her accuracy.

ERIC

Tell the truth. You've been doing this since you were a wee lass, haven't you?

VANESSA

No. I swear. I've never picked up a bow before today.

She gives him a flirty smile.

VANESSA

I must be a natural.

Nearby, Ariel struggles to nock an arrow. She fires clumsily.

The arrow nicks a target two rows over from the one she was aiming at.

Vanessa gives her a smirk when Eric's back is turned.

VANESSA

It's kinda like shooting fish in a barrel.

Off Ariel's stricken look.

INT. REGINA'S CASTLE - NIGHT - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

Regina watches the exchange in her magic mirror.

REGINA

It's just too easy.

She waves her hand.

REGINA

Let's go forward a little bit.

SERIES OF SHOTS

VANESSA'S CONFSSIONAL

Vanessa primps for the audience.

VANESSA

That girl who never talks really creeps me out. How can she possibly think that Eric will choose her? I mean, who ever heard of a mute queen?

Vanessa innocently twists at a lock of her hair.

VANESSA

She causes so much drama in the tower. None of the ladies like her. She just stays to herself. Plotting. Well, let me tell you. It's not going to work.

ERIC'S CONFSSIONAL

Eric sits looking pensive.

ERIC

I have to admit-- It worries me that I never know what she's thinking. I mean, is she even here for the right reasons? I'm not looking for a wife. I need someone who can rule with me. But if this is just some twisted game for her--

Eric shakes his head.

ERIC

No. That doesn't sound right. When we danced-- We had a connection. I mean, there's just something about her. I'm going to give her another chance. But if she can't be open and honest with me, I'll have to send her home.

ARIEL'S CONFSSIONAL

Ariel stares straight ahead. Nothing but silence. She blows her bangs out of her face. Sits a little longer. Gets up and leaves the confessional.

INT. ERIC'S CASTLE - TOWER - DAY - **FAIRY TALE LAND**

The courtesans all sit around chatting.

Ariel keeps to herself in a corner.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

The ladies squeal. One hops up to answer.

COURTESAN 1

It's the one on one date parchment! I wonder who he chose.

She returns with the parchment. Opens it to read. She frowns. Looks at Ariel.

Ariel catches the look and perks up.

COURTESAN 1

Come float with me in a blue lagoon. Looks like you guys are off to the sea.

COURTESAN 2

Better her than me. The humidity simply ruins my hair.

The courtesan hands the parchment to Ariel. She takes it like it's a precious treasure. Races off to get ready for the date.

COURTESAN 3

No way is she coming back.

Nods of agreement all around.

END FLASHBACK

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Regina waves off Ariel's sudden appearance. Starts cleaning up her baking utensils.

REGINA

I'd heard you were in town.

ARIEL

Did you now?

REGINA

More or less. I was told, "old friend." We both know that's not quite accurate, don't we?

ARIEL

But that's what you led me to believe. I trusted you to help me.

REGINA

But, my dear. I did help you. I taught you a very valuable lesson.

ARIEL

Yeah. And what was that?

Regina smiles her evil queen smile.

REGINA

Be careful who you trust.

Ariel glares at Regina. Inches closer to the queen and the set of knives on the kitchen island.

ARIEL

What I don't understand is why you would do that to me. I was just a girl. I had everything.

REGINA

Yes. But that wasn't enough was it? You wanted your prince, too. Tell me. How did that work out?

Ariel springs at Regina trapping her against the oven. Ariel grabs the carving knife. Presses the blade to Regina's throat.

ARIEL

Eric is dead, you evil, conniving witch.

Regina is startled by the news.

REGINA

Dead?

ARIEL

Don't pretend you didn't know.

REGINA

Really. I didn't. What happened?

Ariel eases back a bit seeing the truth in Regina's eyes.

ARIEL

That curse of yours. He was killed
when it spread across the land.

REGINA

Huh. I thought sure you were out of
range. A happy accident.

ARIEL

Happy? You took everything from me.
Eric is dead. My family has turned
into a bunch of murderers and you
call that happy?

REGINA

Did you get a happy ending?

ARIEL

Of course not.

Despite the knife at her throat, Regina smiles.

REGINA

And that, my dear, is *my* happy
ending. Welcome to Storybrooke.

ARIEL

Enough! I'm going to gut you better
than Attina did to our dinner.

Regina laughs.

Ariel looks at her confused.

Regina shoves her hand inside Ariel's chest.

Ariel gasps in pain. Drops the knife.

Regina digs around in her chest for a bit.

REGINA

Ah. There it is.

Regina rips out Ariel's heart. It's completely black and quite
small. The lamps dim as Ariel's heart sucks up the light.

Ariel clutches her chest. Staggeres away from Regina.

REGINA

It's quite a bit smaller than I
remember. And a whole lot blacker.

Regina holds it up for Ariel to see.

REGINA
You really did have it in you to kill
me, didn't you?

ARIEL
What did you do to me?

REGINA
More than I'd intended apparently.

Regina inspects the heart with wonder.

REGINA
Looks like I should've just killed
Eric from the start. But it was an
amusing charade.

Ariel's heart heaves in Regina's hand.

Regina gets in Ariel's face.

REGINA
You know you never had a chance. He
wasn't ever going to choose you.

Ariel collapses against the island. Cries bitterly.

REGINA
There, there, my dear. It's kinda
silly to cry over your heartbreak
when you don't even have a heart.

Regina shoves the heart back inside Ariel's chest.

REGINA
Almost perfect. It's only five sizes
too small. You'll live. Now get out
of my house before I decide that you
won't.

Still crying, Ariel makes her way out the door.

The oven timer DINGS.

Regina pulls out the pan of turnovers.

REGINA
Perfect.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. MARY MARGARET'S LOFT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Balloons and streamers fill the loft. A cakes sits in the middle of the table.

Mary Margaret sets a stack of board games and a deck of cards on the table. She stands back to admire her handiwork.

Emma and Henry come in. Stop short when they see Mary Margaret and all the decor.

HENRY

Awesome!

EMMA

Did a unicorn throw up in here?

Emma pushes a streamer out of the way to approach Mary Margaret.

EMMA

I take it you're not mad at us anymore?

MARY MARGARET

I was never mad. Hurt beyond belief, maybe. But I know you had your reasons for thinking what you did so this is a peace offering.

Emma looks through the board games.

EMMA

Family game night?

MARY MARGARET

If you have a better idea, I'm all ears.

EMMA

(so lame)
No. It's cool.

Emma watches Mary Margaret deflate. Emma squeezes her hand.

EMMA

No really. It's great. Right, kid?

HENRY

Absolutely! What do we play first?

Mary Margaret smiles. Sits next to Henry.

MARY MARGARET

I'm sorry I gave you the wrong impression about helping Ariel.

HENRY

It's okay. I should've remembered. You're Snow White. You'd never do anything that horrible.

MARY MARGARET

People can change, Henry.

HENRY

Yes, but good never becomes all the way evil. There's always a sliver left.

Mary Margaret hugs him.

MARY MARGARET

Where's David? I thought he was still with you.

EMMA

He had an errand to run. He should be home soon.

MARY MARGARET

He'll just have to miss out on some of the fun. Pick the game, Henry. Time for me to school you both!

Emma chuckles and sits at the table. Henry picks up the cards.

EMMA

Oh. She trash talks, too.

MARY MARGARET

What? Surely you don't think you got your smart mouth from your father.

INT. BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

David walks ARCHIE toward Mary Margaret's door. Pauses with his hand on the knob.

DAVID

I appreciate you for making a house call, Archie. Mary Margaret is having a rough go of things lately.

ARCHIE

I'll help however I can. But if she doesn't want to schedule any sessions with me, we can't force her. Therapy just won't work with an uncooperative patient.

DAVID

I understand.

David reaches for the doorknob. Pauses.

DAVID

Just let me apologize in advance. She can be quite mean at times.

ARCHIE

Which is why I'm here.

DAVID

You're right. Sorry.

ARCHIE

It's okay, David. I know you're worried. We'll work this out.

INT. MARY MARGARET'S LOFT - NIGHT

David opens the door. Ushers Archie in. They both freeze in the doorway. Look around the place in shock.

INT. MARY MARGARET'S LOFT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Mary Margaret laughs uncontrollably on the floor while Emma and Henry tickle her. She clutches some cards to her chest.

MARY MARGARET

Go Fish! I swear Go Fish!

EMMA

You are a sucky liar, lady. Give the kid your sixes.

Mary Margaret tries to crawl away. She sees David and Archie in the doorway. Reaches out a hand to them.

MARY MARGARET

A little assistance, please.

David scoops Henry off her. Emma backs off and Mary Margaret sits up to catch her breath.

DAVID
What's going on here?

EMMA
Family game night.
(sotto to David)
Just go with it.

HENRY
Mary Margaret's trying to cheat, but
she's really bad at it.

MARY MARGARET
I am not-- Okay. Maybe I'm a little
bad at it. But since when is being a
good liar a virtue?

DAVID
That's my Snow.

David sets Henry down and helps Mary Margaret up. She smiles
at Archie.

MARY MARGARET
Come on in, Archie. Have some cake
with us.
(to David)
We were waiting for you to cut it.

DAVID
What's the occasion?

MARY MARGARET
Just bidding farewell to a tough day.

ARCHIE
I don't want to impose.

Henry leads Archie to the table so he can sit.

MARY MARGARET
Please join us. The more the merrier.

ARCHIE
If you insist.

MARY MARGARET
I do. I'll get the plates.

INT. MARY MARGARET'S LOFT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary Margaret gets a stack of plates from a cupboard.

David follows her over.

MARY MARGARET
Could you grab the ice cream?

David grabs her instead.

DAVID
I'm sorry for earlier.

MARY MARGARET
No, David. It's okay. I've been tough
to live with of late. And--

She glances in Archie's direction where he watches Emma shuffle the cards like a Vegas pro.

MARY MARGARET
I'll start seeing Archie if you
really think it'll help.

DAVID
I just want you to feel better.
That's all.

MARY MARGARET
I know. Speaking of-- The most
amazing thing happened. Ariel sang.

David stares at Mary Margaret in confusion.

DAVID
Okay. She's always sung.

MARY MARGARET
No. I mean-- Not like this. She sang
and I just felt this wonderful-- I
don't know - light, maybe - come into
my heart. That's when I thought of
all this.

She gestures with the plates.

DAVID
Are you thinking she cured you?

MARY MARGARET
I don't know. Maybe. Now that she's
in Storybrooke, I'm going to find
out.

DAVID
(chuckles)
What?

You planning to keep her chained up
somewhere? Make her sing for her
supper?

MARY MARGARET

Silly. No. But if I'm around her
enough while she sings, my heart will
heal. I just know it.

She gives him a quick kiss.

MARY MARGARET

We've only just found each other. I
won't let anything tear our family
apart again. Not even if that
"anything" is me.

EMMA (O.S.)

That cake ain't getting any fresher.

David and Mary Margaret turn to see Emma approaching.

She eyes her parents.

EMMA

Everything okay?

Mary Margaret hands Emma the plates with a big smile.

MARY MARGARET

They couldn't be better.

DAVID

I'll get that ice cream.

He goes to the freezer while Mary Margaret gets the eating
utensils.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

INT. MARY MARGARET'S LOFT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Archie gets up from the table.

ARCHIE

I'm closest. I'll get it.

He opens the door to see a distraught Ariel in the hall.

She gives him a confused look.

ARIEL

I'm sorry. I was told that Snow, uh,
Mary Margaret lived here.

ARCHIE

Ariel? She does. Come in.

He steps aside to let her enter. She does hesitantly.

ARIEL

I'm sorry. Do I know you?

ARCHIE

I was a lot shorter the last time you
wished upon a star. How'd that go for
you, by the way?

She stares at him a moment. Realization dawns.

ARIEL

Not great, Jiminy. Not great at all.

Mary Margaret, David and Emma all approach the door. Henry, a
little nervous, hangs back.

ARCHIE

I'm sorry to hear that. Maybe next
time--

ARIEL

Not interested.

MARY MARGARET

Ariel? Is everything okay?

ARIEL

Can I speak to you?

Ariel looks at all the people surrounding them.

ARIEL

In private?

MARY MARGARET

Of course.

Mary Margaret hands the utensils to David; grabs a sweater.

ARIEL

Good to see you again, David.

DAVID

(cautious)
Likewise.

Mary Margaret follows Ariel outside.

EXT. STORYBROOKE STREET - NIGHT

Ariel bursts out of the building. Paces the sidewalk.

Mary Margaret joins her.

MARY MARGARET

What's wrong, Ariel?

ARIEL

Was all that stuff you told me about the curse true? You know. That we'll forget who we are if we cross the town line.

MARY MARGARET

Wait. You're leaving? You just got here.

ARIEL

I never should've come.

Mary Margaret puts an arm around Ariel.

MARY MARGARET

Look at all you've gained. Your voice. Your family. What could be better?

ARIEL

(rolls eyes)

My family. Just one more thing Regina has taken from me. They've all changed. They make a living ripping the creatures we swore to protect from their homes. They eat --

Ariel chokes back tears.

MARY MARGARET

It'll take time to adjust, but they love you. Doesn't that count for something?

ARIEL

It makes it that much more awful. Regina's won. There's no way I can be happy here. You've been a real friend. I just wanted to say goodbye.

MARY MARGARET

You can't do this, Ariel! I mean -- I wandered around this town with no memory for twenty-eight years. I didn't know Charming; my child. I didn't know me. You may not remember, but you'll feel empty. I would wish that on no one.

ARIEL

I understand the consequences, Snow. These memories. They're too painful--

Ariel hugs Mary Margaret.

ARIEL

Thanks for everything.

Ariel sets off down the street. Mary Margaret thinks fast.

MARY MARGARET

Wait! At least let me drive you.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Mary Margaret's car drives along the empty stretch of road.

INT. MARY MARGARET'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

Ariel stares out the window. Wipes an occasional tear away.

Mary Margaret bites her lip and splits her attention between the road and her passenger.

MARY MARGARET

Once you forget, it can't be undone.

ARIEL

Perfect.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Mary Margaret's car pulls onto the shoulder. Eases to a stop near the "You Are Now Leaving Storybrooke" sign.

Ariel hops out of the car. Charges for the border. Stops just short of the town line.

Mary Margaret goes after her. She's careful not to get too close to the line.

MARY MARGARET

Ariel! Are you sure there's nothing I can say to change your mind?

ARIEL

What's there to say, Snow? My life is over. The best I can do now is get a new one.

Ariel races across the town line. The atmosphere around her ripples. Her throat glows for a moment.

Ariel stops on the other side. Turns and looks at Mary Margaret with a frown.

ARIEL

You lied to me, Snow.

MARY MARGARET

I didn't lie-- Wait. You remember?

Ariel marches back across the line to confront Mary Margaret.

ARIEL

Every blasted thing. Why would you do this?

MARY MARGARET

But I didn't. I-- A talisman. You must have one.

ARIEL

What?

MARY MARGARET

Mr. Gold, er, Rumplestiltskin is the only other person from our world who has successfully crossed the line.

ARIEL

What does that have to do with me?

MARY MARGARET

He enchanted something dear to him. It protected his memory as long as he had it with him. He made a talisman.

Ariel backs away from Mary Margaret. Presses her hands to her throat.

ARIEL

My voice. That's why my throat felt so strange just now.

Dejected, Ariel rests against the hood of the car.

Mary Margaret tries to hide her relief. Puts an arm around Ariel.

MARY MARGARET

Don't worry. We'll figure something out. In the meantime, let me take you home and--

Ariel pulls away from Mary Margaret.

ARIEL

No. It doesn't matter if I remember or not. I can't stay here.

Ariel marches for the border again.

Mary Margaret watches. She's at her wits end.

MARY MARGARET

Ariel, wait!

ARIEL

You can't stop me, Snow. My mind's made up.

MARY MARGARET

I'm not going to stop you. I--It's cold out here. I keep an extra blanket in the trunk. Here. Let me give it to you.

Ariel follows Mary Margaret to the trunk of the car.

ARIEL

You're such a good friend. I'll never forget your kindness. Even if I wanted to, apparently.

When she gets close enough, Mary Margaret tosses the blanket over Ariel's head. Ties it around her like a straight jacket.

ARIEL

(muffled)

What are you doing? Snow?!

MARY MARGARET

I'm sorry, Ariel. I can't let you leave Storybrooke. Not just yet.

Ariel's struggles are useless. Mary Margaret shoves her in the trunk of the car and slams the lid.

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Mary Margaret hops back behind the wheel.

The car turns around. Races back toward Storybrooke.

END OF SHOW