

The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past FAQ/Walkthrough

by Vash The Stampede15

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THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
An FAQ/Walkthrough, ver 1.0; Dec 22, 2008
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SEARCH INFORMATION

Don't feel like scrolling through this entire guide searching for one tiny detail? Need to get to a certain chapter quickly? No problem! Simply press Ctrl + F on your keyboard and enter in either a keyword (i.e. "Ice Rod" or "Bombos Medallion"), then press Enter to find what you typed in! Or better yet, type in one of the Roman numerals listed above to find the corresponding chapter (for instance, typing in "IV" will take you to the Walkthrough. It's that easy!

WHAT'S NEW?

This is the first version of the guide! Everything is complete!

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I. ----- INTRODUCTION
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Hello and welcome to another FAQ -- written, directed by, and starring Merca (that's me!). So there's something I never thought I'd say again (err... or write again); I haven't had the time or desire to write one of these things in a long time, and now that I'm busy at college I thought FAQ writing was one hobby that I was done with forever. However, I've just finished writing a monster essay about "A Tale of Two Cities" for my English class, so you might say that I've been "recalled to life" as an FAQ writer. Ha ha ha! (that was lame). Anyway, I haven't done this in a while (a long while), so apologies if I'm a bit rusty (or a lot rusty, which is more likely).

"But wait a minute, Merca!" I hear you protest. "Why the hell would you choose Zelda: A Link to the Past of all games to write an FAQ for when it already has 20 bajillion good ones?" Is it because I'm a narcissistic butthole? Well, yes, I am, but that's not the reason. Now, I don't want to get all sentimental on your butts, but here's the real reason: When I first started writing these FAQ things some five years ago, my ultimate goal was to hone my writing abilities to the point that I'd be able to write a guide that would do justice to one of my favorite games. Zelda: A Link to the Past is one of my favorite games. I mean, clearly that whole "do it justice" thing didn't quite pan out, but hey, I gave it a go, right? Right!

Doesn't that just bring a tear to your eye? Awww. One final note before I shut the bleep up and get on with it: This guide tastes best when listening to the album "Strangeways, Here We Come" by The Smiths. It's their best (yes, even better than "The Queen is Dead" -- don't argue with me on this issue because you'll be wrong). Alternatively, I recommend "Urban Hymns" by The Verve, "Love, Ire, and Song" by Frank Turner, and "Razia's Shadow: A Musical" by Forgive Durden. I know you don't care, but you should. Whatever.

Enjoy the guide! (or not, whatever)

- Merca
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II. ----- STORY

The following snippet of storyline was copied verbatim from pages 3-7 of the (SNES version's) instruction manual. Enjoy.

- THE LEGENDS OF HYRULE -

To set the stage for this adventure of the legendary Hero of Hyrule, it will be informative to delve into the Triforce myth, an ancient epic about the creation of the world that is still believed in the land of Hyrule. Every culture has such myths and theories about the creation of their worlds, and it can be beneficial and entertaining to examine them in detail, for they often affect the present day social structure. The legends say the mythical gods of Hyrule had as their chosen people the Hylia. These ancient people left scrolls that are the primary source of the legends.

- THE CREATION OF HYRULE -

According to the Hylvian scrolls, the mythical gods descended from a distant nebula to the world and created order and life. The God of Power dyed the mountains red with fire and created land. The God of Wisdom created science and wizardry and brought order to nature. And the God of Courage, through justice and vigor, created life -- the animals that crawl the land and the birds that soar in the sky. After the gods had finished their work, they left the world, but not before creating a symbol of their strength, a golden triangle known as the Triforce. A small but powerful portion of the essence of the gods was held in this mighty artifact, which was to guide the intelligent life on the world of Hyrule.

Although it was an inanimate object, the Triforce had the power to bestow three titles which gave the person who received them great powers: "The Forger of Strength", "The Keeper of Knowledge", and "The Juror of Courage." From its hiding place in the so-called Golden Land where the gods placed it, the Triforce beckoned people from the outside world to seek it in the hope that someone worthy of these titles would find it.

With their magic infused blood, the Hylvian people were endowed with psychic powers and skill in wizardry. It was also said that their long, pointed ears enabled them to hear special messages from the gods, so they were held in high esteem by many people in Hyrule. Their descendants settled in various parts of the world and passed on their knowledge and magical lore to all people. But in its passing, the lore was often distorted or lost altogether.

- GATES TO THE GOLDEN LAND -

In Hyrule, there are many Hylvian buildings which are mentioned repeatedly in the legends. These buildings, which now lie in ruin, pale shadows of their former splendor, are closely tied to the Triforce.

Some were even said to house the Triforce...

If it were only a symbol of the gods, the Triforce would be coveted by many. But a verse from the Book of Mudora (a collection of Hylvian legends and lore) made the Triforce even more desirable:

In a realm beyond sight,
The Sky shines gold, not blue.

There, the Triforce's might
Makes mortal dreams come true.

Many aggressively searched for the wish-granting Triforce, but no one, not even the Hylian sages, was sure of its location; the knowledge had been lost over time. Some said the Triforce lay under the desert, others said it was in the cemetery in the shadow of Death Mountain, but no one ever found it. That yearning for the Triforce soon turned to lust for power, which in turn led to the spilling of blood. Soon the only motive left among those searching for the Triforce was pure greed.

One day, quite by accident, a gate to the Golden Land of the Triforce was opened by a gang of thieves skilled in the black arts. This land was like no other. In the gathering twilight, the Triforce shone from its resting place high above the world. In a long running battle, the leader of the thieves fought his way past his followers in a lust for the Golden Power. After vanquishing his own followers, the leader stood triumphant over the Triforce and grasped it with his blood-stained hands. He heard a whispered voice: "If thou has a strong desire or dream, wish for it..." And in reply, the roaring laughter of the brigand leader echoed across time and space and even reached the far-off land of Hyrule. The name of this king of thieves is Ganondorf Dragmire, but he is known by his alias, Mandrag Ganon, which means Ganon of the Enchanted Thieves.

- THE IMPRISONING WAR -

I do not know what Ganon wished for from the Triforce. However, in time evil power began to flow from the Golden Land and greedy men were drawn there to become members of Ganon's army. Black clouds permanently darkened the sky, and many disasters beset Hyrule. The lord of Hyrule sent for the Seven Wise Men and the Knights of Hyrule, and ordered them to seal the entrance to the Golden Land.

The Triforce, being an inanimate object, cannot judge between good and evil. Therefore, it could not know that Ganon's wishes were evil; it merely granted them. Suspecting that Ganon's power was based on the Triforce's magic, the people of Hyrule forged a sword resistant to magic which could repulse even powers granted by the Triforce. This mighty weapon became known as the blade of evil's bane, or the Master Sword. It was so powerful that only one who was pure of heart and strong of body could wield it. As the Seven Wise Men searched for a valiant person to take up the Master Sword, Ganon's evil army swarmed from the tainted Golden Land into Hyrule and attacked the castle. The wise men and the Knights of Hyrule combined forces to wage war on this evil horde.

The Knights took the full brunt of the fierce attack, and although they fought courageously many a brave soul was lost that day. However, their lives were not lost in vain, for they bought precious time for the Seven Wise Men to magically seal Ganon in the Golden Land. All of Hyrule rejoiced at the victory that upheld peace and order over Ganon's evil and chaos. This war, which had claimed many lives, became known as the Imprisoning War in stories told in later centuries.

- THE COMING OF THE WIZARD -

Many centuries have passed since the Imprisoning War. The land of Hyrule healed its wounds and the people lived in peace for a long time. Memories of the vicious Imprisoning War faded over the generations...

So it is no surprise that no one was prepared for the new disasters that have recently struck Hyrule. Pestilence and drought, uncontrollable even by magic, ravaged the land. The king of Hyrule, after counsel with his sages, ordered an

A Button - Action

A is your action button. Usually, it'll activate whatever weapon or item you currently have selected, but it is also used to open treasure chests and chat with the folks of Hyrule.

B Button - Use Link's Sword

This is your attack button. Link receives his first sword very early on in the game and never looks back. Simply pressing the button is good enough to slash with the blade, but if you hold it down you can charge up energy to release a powerful spin move.

R Button - Grab, Dash

The right shoulder button has two functions -- the first is to grab and lift things (such as pots or bushes). The second function -- a quick dash -- becomes available when Link receives the Pegasus Shoes.

L Button - Open Map

The left shoulder button will open Link's map both on the overworld and in the depths of dungeons (assuming that you've found the map).

Start Button - Pause

As in most games, pressing the Start button will halt the action and open the pause menu, from which you can save your game data.

Select Button - Open Item Menu

Hitting Select will also pause the game, but in this case it will open the Item menu, from which you can choose the desired tool from Link's inventory.

THE BASICS

Zelda: A Link to the Past is a fairly simple game (especially compared to all them newfangled Zelda games with all the complex controls and stuff), but some people are stupid so this section is for them. This is basically the part of the guide in which I explain how to play the game; y'know, exploring Hyrule, fighting baddies, not dying -- all that fun stuff.

LINK'S BASIC ACTIONS

In order to fully explore the world of Hyrule, it's necessary to take advantage of Link's various actions -- some are as simple as pressing one button where as others require that you find an item first. Have a look:

- * Talking: Link himself is a mute (Holden Caulfield must be jealous), but that doesn't mean he hear what others have to say. To speak to the denizens of Hyrule, simply approach whoever it is you want to have a chat with and tap A. Most people don't have anything worthwhile to say, but it's always a good idea to speak to people in case they do have some hints to hand out.
- * Lifting and Throwing: Hyrule is littered with stuff to throw -- pots, bushes, etc. can all be lifted up. There are two reasons why this is useful: first, often times you can score spare Rupees or heart refills by checking the contents of pots; and second, once lifted, a pot of bush serves as a weapon -- chuck it at a nearby enemy to cause some (minor) damage. Press the R button to lift something up, but take note that

certain stones are too heavy for Link to grab until you find the appropriate powerup.

- * Grabbing and Pulling: Occasionally you'll come across levers, which can be grasped with the R button. The game is also full of blocks that sometimes can be pushed in order to clear a path onward. No buttons are necessary for this -- simply walk toward the block you want to push and if it can move, it will!
- * Opening Chests: Dungeons, caves, and other peoples' houses are full of treasure chests just waiting to be opened. Approach one and hit A to peek inside a chest, which can contain anything from Rupees to a new item!
- * Reading: I know it's hard to believe, but Link does actually know how to read. If you need evidence, walk up to a sign or tablet and press A to check out what it says.
- * Dashing: After completing the East Palace, Link will receive the Pegasus Shoes, which enable him to dash along with Speedy Gonzalez. Muy rapido and all that. Hold down the R button to execute this move, which is effective both as a mode of attack and as a way to break open certain cracked walls.
- * Swimming: As was the case with dashing, swimming is a no-go until Link finds the Zora's Flippers (which cost a whopping 500 Rupees -- what a rip-off!). When you scrounge up enough cash to buy them, try pressing A to stroke and B to dive. Whoo!

=====
LINK'S MOVES
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You will acquire your first sword very early on in the game. At that point, Link's attacking options are quite limited, but by the end of the game his arsenal will have expanded somewhat (and as I just used the word "arsenal", I feel it's imperative that I point out how awesome the football/soccer team Arsenal is -- like, totally awesome). Anyway, here's a quick rundown of what Link can do once he's got a shiny sword in his hands:

- * Normal Slash: This is the most basic attack in the game. By simply tapping the B button, Link will swing his sword in the direction he is facing. The faster you press it, the faster he'll go. It's the most efficient way to deal with your average enemy, but some foes are impervious to it.
- * Whirling Blade Technique: This is a more advanced technique that remains useful throughout the game. By holding down B, Link will raise his sword. Hold it for a moment until your sword glitters, then release to unleash a spinning attack. Not only is this move more powerful than the normal slash, but it can also damage multiple foes at once. It works wonders if you're surrounded.
- * Dash Attack: Once you obtain the Pegasus Shoes, Link gains the ability to dash. As he dashes, he'll hold his sword erect (ha ha, I'm immature), meaning that any foe that gets in his way will feel the wrath of Link's blade. Very handy at times. Additionally, this dash move can also be used to bust open certain cracked walls. Very handy indeed.
- * Beam Attack: Until you get the Master Sword, this attack is unavailable. However, with the Master Sword in hand, Link can shoot a weak laser beam

from the tip of his blade. It's not powerful (at all), but it enables you to hit enemies from afar. The only catch is that Link must have full hearts for this to work. Take any damage and it's bye-bye laser beams.

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LINK'S SHIELD
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Defending yourself from enemy attacks is very easy. So easy, in fact, that you don't even have to do anything. As soon as Link gets his first shield, certain projectiles will be automatically deflected (assuming Link is faced the oncoming projectile -- his shield doesn't protect his little elf butt). Depending on which shield you have, some projectiles will be blocked while others will not. The first, basic shield will only guard you from arrows and stones, the Red Shield ups the ante a bit by blocking fireballs, and the Mirror Shield is the ultimate form of defense -- it stops laser beams.

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LINK'S LIFE
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Health in the Zelda world is measured in hearts. Link starts with only three hearts to his name, but by finding Pieces of Heart you can increase that number. Four Pieces of Heart add up to create one full Heart Container (check out the appendices for a full list of locations for these things). Also, you will receive one full Heart Container upon conquering each of the game's dungeons. Restoring lost health is an easy concept to grasp, as well. Heart pickups are ubiquitous across Hyrule -- you can find them in bushes or grass, underneath pots or stones, or in the wake of a defeated enemy. And better yet, once you've found a Magic Bottle, you can purchase Red or Blue Potions at any of the shops across Hyrule to refill your hearts. Fairy Fountains also exist, where you'll find Fairies to replenish yourself.

=====
EXPLORING HYRULE
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As you traverse Hyrule, you will inevitably discover a wealth of random items as you cut through bushes and grass. By examining the world around you, you'll quickly discover things like Rupees (green means 1 Rupee, blue equals 5, and red is equivalent to 20 green ones!), apples (which restore a bit of health), arrow and Bomb refills, hearts, magic refills, Fairies, and even bees (try storing one in a Magic Bottle). But be warned! On rare occasions, you might be ambushed by an enemy hiding underneath a bush, or even a landmine planted in the grassy underbrush.

If you're exploring the rivers and seas of Hyrule, be sure to watch out for two things: Zoras and warps. Zoras a nasty creatures who spit fireballs at you (gah!), where as warps will magically transport you to a different body of water somewhere in Hyrule. These can be very handy, so I recommend checking them out whenever possible.

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CONQUERING DUNGEONS
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The real meat of this game comes in the exploration and conquest of dungeons. There are three real dungeons in the Light World, in which you'll be fighting to win three Pendants. The Dark World adds an additional eight dungeons, in which you'll be finding Crystals as you come every closer to meeting with the

game's ultimate nemesis, Ganon. Each dungeon is completed when you defeat the boss which resides within. Sometimes these guys are tough as balls, but more often they're pretty easy to deal with, so don't get scared of anything.

In every dungeon, there are several items that are certain to show up. Namely, the Map, the Compass, and the Big Key. The Map is a map of the dungeon (umm... duh) and when you find the Compass you'll be able to see where the boss of the dungeon is located. Finally, the Big Key is necessary to open certain doors, and it also unlocks the Big Chest, which always contains a new item or piece of supercool equipment. There are also small keys, which are far more common and open regular doors.

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CHARACTERS
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As we all know, Zelda games are renowned for their in-depth storylines and well-developed characters. Oh wait. They're not. A Link to the Past is full of two-dimensional characters with no backgrounds, motives, or stories, but I'm going to outline the major players anyway (just to annoy you).

- * Link: Our hero! He has pink hair, which seems a little odd, but hey, we don't judge others in this FAQ. Anyway, he is one of many stereotypical RPG heroes who never says a word. Maybe the point is to show that actions speak louder than words... Or something? Link wakes up one night to find his Uncle with sword and shield in hand heading out into the night, and everything goes crazy from there.
- * Zelda: As is the case with every Zelda game to date, Princess Zelda doesn't play much of a role in this game. She makes an appearance at the beginning of the game, plays the damsel in distress a few times, and sits on her royal butt while Link does all the hard work.
- * Uncle: Link's uncle doesn't have a name, but he does bestow Link with his very first sword and shield set after he either dies or becomes too drunk to use them responsibly. The jury's still out on that one. In any event, Link doesn't seem too upset about whatever fate befalls his uncle, so he was probably abusive. He's also quite fat, so do your best not to confuse him with other well-known fatsos like Frank Lampard or Paul Robinson.
- * Sahasrahla: The village elder of Kakariko Village, who has a name that's hard to pronounce (and makes me think of sauce). Apparently he's a good guy, because he constantly gives Link advice via telepathy tablets found in various locations (and when I say "advice", I mean very basic and very obvious hints).
- * Agahnim: For the first third or so of the game, you're supposed to believe that this evil wizard is the game's main enemy. He isn't. Whoops, did I just spoil the totally amazing plot of this game for you? Sorry. His showdown with Link is tons of fun, though, so don't complain too much.
- * Ganon: In a plot twist to rival all plot twists (*hack, cough*), Link's true antagonist turns out not to be the wizard Agahnim, but rather the porcine villain otherwise known as Ganon. The final confrontation with him is all kinds of fun, even more so than the one with Agahnim. So there.

This is the meat and potatoes (yum!) of the FAQ -- y'know, the part where I order you around and tell you what to do like I do with my servants. Before we get into the good stuff (i.e. stuff that people will actually read), let me run through a quick laundry list of pointless notes and tidbits of useless information.

- * As this game is 2D, it's very easy to give directions using the four cardinal directions. If that previous sentence sounded like gibberish to you, let me help: North means up, south means down, east means right, and west means left. Got that?
- * When you die, you're given the option to restart from where you last saved, Link's house, or the Sanctuary. Should you die while in a dungeon, you'll restart at the mouth of the dungeon. In the Dark World, you'll always restart at the top of the Pyramid of Power. Just a heads up.
- * As is the case with any game, it's always a good idea to save often. So, like, save often and stuff. Yeah!
- * When such opportunities become available, I take the time to talk about side questy stuff (Pieces of Heart, new items, etc), so if you like to grab those things as soon as possible you're in luck. If not, such extraneous pieces of information are put into separate sections, making them easy to skip over. You can also find the same information in the appendices, so y'know, whatever.
- * Need additional help that I can't provide (haha, unlikely! [that was sarcasm, by the way])? Check out the FAQs by Dark Vortex, CMoriarty, or DBM11085, all available on <www.gamefaqs.com/>. If it's not in my guide or one of those others, it probably doesn't exist. (Did that sound really haughty? It wasn't meant to).

So without further ado, the walkthrough!

a. PLANNING A PRISON BREAK

[Hyrule Castle]

The game kicks off with a brief prologue detailing strange happenings in the kingdom of Hyrule. Urged by a mysterious voice, our young hero-to-be wakes up to find his Uncle armed for battle and heading out for the night.

== BREAKING IN =====

Hop out of bed and get a feel for moving Link around. There are some hearts underneath the jars by Link's bed (lift them with R), but you won't be needing those yet. Pop open the treasure chest next to the table to score the Lamp -- our trusty first item!! -- then exit south and venture out into the dark, rainy outside world.

- * NEW ITEM! Lamp. It's not much use as a stand-alone item, but whenever there are torches around the Lamp can be used to great effect to illuminate your surroundings. This really comes in handy when you need to shed some light on dark caves or chambers, as we'll see seen enough. Be careful with it, though -- using the Lamp consumes magic power, so you'll want to keep an eye on that green meter in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.

It's an ominous night outside Link's house. Unearth a few bushes if you want and maybe you can scrounge up a few Rupees. Be sure to take this time to familiarize yourself with the controls -- using your selected item (up to this point, the Lamp is all you've got), picking up and tossing bushes, leading down from ledges, et cetera. For now, all paths save the one leading northward toward Hyrule Castle are blocked by soldiers (who, by the way, are more than willing to dispense some useful if fairly obvious tips about playing the game to any kid who wanders their way in the dead of the night -- how convenient!), so when you're ready start moving in that direction.

One screen north of Link's house is a stone bridge that leads toward the castle's front gate. A soldier is blocking the entrance, but as Zelda has probably made clear to you via her telepathic messages, there's a secret entrance. Make the detour to the right of the gate. Following the stone path around the side of the castle, plucking and chucking the bushes along the way to nab some Rupees. Rip up the bush at the end of the path to find a pit -- this is the secret entrance to Hyrule Castle. In we go!

Squish! We land in a pool of shallow water. Trot westward and you'll stumble across your Uncle, who is either dying or totally hammered. Either way, he's kind enough to fork over his sword and shield, not to mention imparting the knowledge of a secret attack used by the knights of Hyrule -- the ever-so powerful whirling blade technique. Execute it by holding then releasing the B button. Fun!

* NEW ITEMS! Sword and Shield. What's a Zelda game with the good ol' sword and shield combo, right? As this is your first set, they're not the most effective pieces of equipment, but they're adequate for the time being. Hack foes apart with your sword by tapping the B button. The shield, meanwhile, will automatically deflect arrows and stones, but not much else.

Continue onward past your Uncle and walk south through the doorway. To the right are your first enemies: two basic soldiers. This is your first chance to look like a BA with all your new weaponry, so don't mess it up. Defeat both soldiers (two slashes each will do it, then head east and raid the treasure chest for a blue Rupee (which is equivalent to five green ones -- nice!). The two pots nearby contain magic refills, which will prove useful if you went a little bit pyromaniac with your Lamp. Speaking of that, by the by, you can try the Lamp out by lighting up the torch just across from the pots. Nice, eh? Now head back to the left and exit south.

Outside again. This time, however, we're inside the castle walls. Cut a path through the bushes and grass as you head west. There are a couple of soldiers plus a knight (who is only marginally tougher) guarding the entrance to the castle, so slash your way through them, or better yet toss bushes at them from a distance. It's just more fun that way, isn't it? Yeah, it is. Two of either will kill them. When you're done having fun, move north into the castle.

== INTO HYRULE CASTLE =====

Now that we've infiltrated the castle, we are presented with several options concerning where to go. Not many of them lead anywhere profitable just yet, however, so simply head left through the door. Jog northward and you'll enter a narrow corridor filled with a trio of baddies. Fight or dodge past them, then go east at the end of the hall. Continue eastward until you reach a staircase leading down -- descend it to reach a small chamber in which there resides a blue knight guarding a treasure chest. Kill the knight (beware -- he's slightly tougher than the green meanies you're used to dealing with) and

snag the key he drops. Peek inside the chest to acquire a map of Hyrule Castle.

* NEW ITEM! Map. There is one of these in each of the game's numerous dungeons. Once you've found it, you can open it up by pressing L. If you find the Compass as well, you can pinpoint the room in which the dungeon's boss is located (although there is no Compass in this particular dungeon, so that bit of information will be totally useless -- sorry, my bad).

Use your recently-acquired key to unlock the southern door and go through. The next chamber is a tad larger than the previous one -- be wary of the Gargantuan Pit Of Black Death to the right. Falling in won't kill you, but it will cause damage and return you to the room's entrance. Do try to knock your foes into it, though, because that's just a whole lot of fun. Anyway, slay the blue knight at the bottom of the steps and press on southward. In the next area, there are a pair of blue knights, but also two handy pots laying around. If you're quicky enough, you can chuck a pot at each of the two knights, knocking them into the pit before they even realize you're there. If not, just fight them as per usual and move on.

Another enemy, another pot just ahead -- deal with the baddie accordingly and proceed along the path. Walk westward underneath an overpass. There are two green knights ahead -- you can either move on and attack them, or take the stairs to the north and sneak over them. Whichever you want (but all the cool kids sneak past them). Exit on the north side of the room to emerge in a small chamber in which all exits immediately lock down. We'll have to defeat the baddie within to open the doors. Easy enough, right? So do it. Since the door at the top of the stairs requires a key to open (and we have no such item), let's explore the room to the right, shall we?

Keeping vigil over the treasure chest in this small room is yet another blue knight. Whip him and snatch the key he drops, then check inside the chest to obtain the all-powerful Boomerang.

* NEW ITEM! Boomerang. Hell to the yes! We have just obtained one of the best weapons early on in the game -- not only can it be utilized to stun most enemies (or better yet, it damages weaker foes), but it can also retrieve far off items. What's that? There's a far-off Rupee that you can't physically reach with Link? No problem, use your Boomerang to grab it! Go ahead and equip it now -- it'll do you a lot more good than the Lamp at this point.

Regress to the previous room, dash upstairs, and use that shiny new key in your hot little hands to open the locked door. Descend several sets of stairs to finally reach the castle's dungeons. Quickly dispose of the green knight patrolling the area, then progress eastward to encounter the game's first "boss."

- Boss: BALL AND CHAIN TROOPER -

There's a reason why I put the word "boss" in quotes, and that's because this homie is a piece of cake. A word of warning though: take note that your new found Boomerang will *not* damage Mr. Balls, though it will momentarily stun him. Approach him from a safe distance and wait until he swings his ball and chain. As soon as he withdraws his weapon, dash in, throw your Boomerang at him and slash like crazy. Repeat these steps several times until he bites the dust. There are some hearts hidden inside the pots in the adjacent jail cell should you sustain any damage and, incidentally, you can also toss those pots at the Ball and Chain Trooper if you'd rather attack from a distance.

When he dies, he'll leave behind the Big Key, which unlocks Zelda's cell. Open the cell, as well as the chest inside (+5 Rupees, holla!). Chat with Zelda to learn a bit about the evil wizard who has taken over the castle. Select "Yes" when she asks if you understand, otherwise you'll have to listen to her spiel again. According to Zelda, there's a secret path somewhere in the castle that we can use to escape. Thankfully, she was pretty specific with her information (or not). Anyway, we should start by backtracking to the foyer (y'know, that main hall with the staircase and all? Where we first entered the castle? Yep, that's it).

As you regain control, note that Zelda will now follow closely behind you. Don't worry, she can't be hurt (but you still can, what a cheap deal). The rooms we cleared out on the way down here have been re-occupied by enemy soldiers (annoying), regrettably, but don't fret -- they're no more difficult than before.

== BREAKING OUT =====

Once you've arrived at the foyer, Zelda will explain that the secret passage is located in the throne room. Avoiding or killing the enemy sentries as you please, go upstairs and take the northernmost and centermost doorway. This leads right into the throne room. Smash the two guards in here or sprint upstairs before they notice you, then proceed forward to the thrones. The secret passage is, as Zelda will inform you, hidden behind the ornamental shelf, so position yourself on the shelf's left side and push it to the right. Voila -- the secret passageway!

It's pretty dark inside, but Link apparently (unfathomably) has a flashlight stashed away in his pockets. Ignore the rats unless they get too close to you and scour the eastern wall for a passage. Follow it to find a staircase, which you should descend. The subsequent corridor is filled with snakes -- I would suggest proceeding with your sword at the ready (the whirling blade attack works wonders here). Use the staircase on the far side of the room to progress. You'll again be assaulted by snakes (as well as bats) in the next chamber. Defeat them all, then check the eastern side of the room for a treasure chest. Inside it is the key that will allow us to exit this room.

Okay, we've now found our way into the sewers. You know what that means (hint: it has **nothing** to do with poo, you sick sick sicko). It means we're almost to safety! Light the torch to the right with your Lamp if you're having trouble seeing, then trek westward. Note that if you remain in the water, the enemies will be unable to attack you. Can't swim, I guess. Anyhoo, this room's exit is on the west wall. In the subsequent chamber, you'll again want to stick to the water as you check the northern wall for an exit. The following room is filled with annoying rats and bats. This time, you have to kill them all, as one of them is carrying that a key that you'll need to move on.

Ahhh! Too bright! My eyes! Thankfully we're back to properly-lit rooms now. Cut the baddies and head north toward a series of blocks which are, as their name suggests, blocking the path ahead. They are set up as follows:

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[2][3]
[1]  [4]
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In order to allow yourself passage, simply slide block number two forward. Easy!

* NOTE: Did you notice the giant cracks on the western wall of that last room? If only we had some Bombs we'd have been able to blow those cracks

open and score whatever goodies lay inside. Make a mental note (or remember this one) to return once you get ahold of the explosive goodness otherwise known as Bombs.

As the next room is chock full of rats, go ahead and defeat them all (they seem to like to drop Rupees). Proceed. The room after that contains a couple of rats (kill them) and a couple of levers. Zelda, helpful young lady that she is, says to pull "that one." Uh, thanks for being so descriptive. Pull the right switch the open the door to the Sanctuary (hold R and push down on the D-Pad to grab the lever), or tug on the left one to invite some enemies to the party. It's your call, but the former seems like the better option. Head through the door to reach the sanctuary of the Sanctuary (see what I did there?).

The sage here talks about... something, then thankfully he shuts up. Raid the chest for a full heart powerup (oh yes!), then exit through the door at the south of the Sanctuary. Our objective now is to seek the elder at Kakariko Village, but a good portion of Hyrule is now open to exploration, which means there's stuff aplenty to find and do. If you want a piece of that action right now, go ahead and skip the section directly below ("A Visit to Kakariko Village") and proceed to the one called "Lost Woods, the Ice Rod, and Other Fun" further down. Otherwise, continue reading the guide as normal.

== A VISIT TO KAKARIKO VILLAGE =====

From the entrance to the Sanctuary, walk south past the rows of bushes toward a green knight (defeat him). Then trek westward for two screens -- along the way you'll run across a couple of signs pointing toward Kakariko. Head south at the second sign to enter the village. Now, there's a number of things to do while we're here, but since our most important task is to meet with the village elder, we'll get that over with first.

As you walk south from the village entrance, the first house you'll see is the elder's. Pop inside and speak to the woman to learn that... *gasp*... the village elder has gone missing. That's a bit annoying. Luckily, someone in the village *does* know where the elder is hanging out, so let's go find that person. Check the lower-left side of the village and you should see a pair of chickens flapping around inside a fenced area. Go in and speak to the boy standing adjacent to the water trough -- he's kind enough to mark the elder's location on our map. Thanks dude! It seems the elder is chilling somewhere to the far east -- we'll find him soon enough, but first there's plenty of stuff to do here in Kakariko yet.

Start by entering the pub, which is due east from that kid who showed us the elder's location. There's not a whole lot to do if you enter via the front door, but if you use the "hidden" entrance in the back (just enter from the north -- you can't see a door, but there is one, trust me) you'll be able to open a treasure chest which holds your first Magic Bottle.

* NEW ITEM! Magic Bottle. The first in a set of four, the Magic Bottles are absolute godsend. Finding and using these Bottles will make your life exponentially easier. Fill it up with healing potions, or once you get the Net, you can catch Fairies or bees to keep in it. Very cool.

As if that wasn't awesome enough, there's a second Magic Bottle available for purchase if you speak to the vendor sitting on the carpet in the northwest quadrant of the village. If you've mustered 100 Rupees, go ahead and buy it. If not, head up the nearby stairs and enter the green-roofed building next to the elder's house. Speak with the man inside, then check out the basement -- there are four chests down here, each one containing a precious red Rupee!

Nice! The position of the blocks will reset if you go upstairs, so just fiddle with them until you've opened all four chests. Now, you may also notice that the north wall of this chamber is cracked. We can blow it up, but we'll need to find some Bombs first.

The shop near the kid who told us the elder's location has 10 Bombs for sale at the low, low (*cough* exorbitantly high *cough*) price of 50 Rupees. If purchasing that Magic Bottle emptied your wallet, you'll have to cut through some bushes or return to the overworld and kill some baddies to scrounge up the necessary cash.

* NEW ITEM! Bombs. Mindlessly blowing stuff up is the pinnacle of video gaming fun, and that's precisely the kind of fun afforded by the Bombs. Set one down next to a cracked wall, step back, and watch with glee as the explosion creates a Link-sized hole in the wall. For now, your capacity is a paltry 10 Bombs, but there will be opportunities later on to increase that number.

* NOTE ABOUT CRACKED WALLS: There are two kinds of cracked walls in Zelda: real ones and fakes ones. Fortunately, there is a way to differentiate between the two without wasting Bombs. Press B to raise Link's sword, then walk into a cracked wall -- this will prompt Link to tap his sword against the wall, making a sound. If it makes a nice, clinky "tink tink" kind of sound, then the wall can be blown open. If the sound is kind of dull -- more of a "tok tok" sound -- then the wall can't be blown open. Long story short: "tink tink" good, "tok tok" bad.

So. With your newly-purchased Bombs in tow, return to the cracked wall in the building with the green roof and set a Bomb against it. KA-BOOM! We're in! Not only are there blue Rupees beneath all six jars in here (score!), but there is also a treasure chest containing our very first Piece of Heart. We'll be collecting more of these very soon, so I hope the excitement doesn't overtake you.

Before anything else, though, let's go grab the Bug-Catching Net. To do this, stop inside the house just north of the pub. The boy inside is very sick. Talk to him and he'll tell you some sob story about his ailment -- boo hoo, blah blah blah, no one cares, kid -- then he'll cough over his oh-so precious Bug-Catching Net. Thank you, sir!

* NEW ITEM! Bug-Catching Net. It isn't the manliest weapon (in fact, it isn't really a weapon at all), but it has its uses. Namely, you can use the the Bug-Catching Net to catch Fairies and bees, which can then be stashed in Bottles until you want to use them. If you have a Bottled Fairy and you die, never fear -- the Fairy will automatically revive Link. As for bees, trying catching one, then release it near an enemy. Fun!

Now, how's about we find some more Pieces of Heart? There are two more in Kakariko Village. For the first, head to the northwest corner of the village. Notice the black pit? It may look dangerous, but it really isn't (trust me). Position yourself on the precipice above it, then hop off the ledge into the pit. Raid the chest to score some Bombs, then check the northeast ledge for some Rupees. But don't hop off the ledge yet! First, we'll need to blow open the cracked wall. Use those Bombs you just found to do it. Inside is... another Piece of Heart! Leap off the ledge in the previous room and exit via the stairs to the southeast.

The second Piece of Heart is in the southern part of the village. Exit the main village at the southeast corner. there's a long house to the southwest of where you are now standing. Head for it. The man inside is quarreling with

his brother, so we've really only got one option -- to blow open their wall (makes perfect sense, right?). Bomb the cracked wall and say "Whatup" to the other brother, then step outside. After all, who are we to interfere in their feud?

The girl outside is willing to give us "something good" if we can reach the "goal" (i.e. the end of the fence maze) in 15 seconds. For that kind of prize, anything is possible, right? Slash your way through the bushes and make your way west. If you manage to do it quick enough, you'll win the Piece of Heart. If not, go back and try again -- there's no participation cost, so you can keep retrying until you win.

Finally, there are a few other tidbits to check out in the village, but none of it is particularly practical. If you're up for it, however, here's a quick rundown of the remaining points of interest in Kakariko.

- You may have already noticed a weird person of indeterminable gender in a red coat. Whenever you approach this person, s/he runs away. At the moment, it's impossible to catch him/her/it, but soon enough we'll be able to (and the mysterious gender question will finally be answered! Except it won't be). Make a mental note of it.
- Certain women around town have the strange idea that Link is a dangerous criminal implanted in their minds for some reason. Maybe it's something to do with all those signs stating that Link is a dangerous criminal. If you talk to such a lady, she'll summon soldiers to come kill you. There's no prize for fighting off the summoned soldiers, but it's kind of fun nonetheless.
- This is one of the greatest moments in any Zelda game. Ever. Head to the area where the chickens are fenced in and go crazy on them with your sword. After they've taken enough abuse, chickens will begin swarming the screen, exacting their revenge upon Link for his heartlessness. Duck inside and they'll settle down. Yeah, you lost some hearts, but admit it -- that was a blasty blast and totally worth it.
- In the lower left-hand corner of Kakariko, there is a small shack with no discernible entrance. Set a Bomb against the southern wall and watch it blow open. Inside you'll find a few rats (gah!), some Bombs, and a couple Rupees.
- In the area south of the village, there is a chest-opening mini-game. It costs 20 Rupees to play, and decent prizes are few and far between, so it isn't the best investment you could make. Still, it's a great way to get addicted to gambling, so there's that.
- One screen north of Kakariko is a fortune-teller. Like the chest-opening game, it'll run you 20 Rupees and the teller's divination skills are slightly less than good (let's just say her predictions are more vapid than the voiceovers on Grey's Anatomy -- oh snap!). Still, you might want to check it out just for kicks.

So that's about that. If you're ready to proceed with the game proper, skip the next section proceed to the next chapter ("Knights"). But if you haven't had enough exploring and discovering, there's plenty more goodies to collect and powering up to do, so, by all means, read on.

== LOST WOODS, THE ICE ROD, AND OTHER FUN =====

Due north of Kakariko Village is a forest known as the Lost Woods. In visiting

this forest there are two main objectives (for now): first, to find another Piece of Heart (which will make four and grant Link another full heart container) and second, to discover the Magic Mushroom (no, it doesn't do what you think it does). Assuming that you entered from the south (Kakariko Village entrance), follow the path northward -- defeat the bird that dives at you -- and you'll find a small hut and nine bushes. Ignore the hut and cut through the bushes to reveal a pit. Fall in, please, and you'll land right next to the Piece of Heart. That was easy.

Exit this cavern and you'll emerge at the mouth of the hut. Convenient! Head north and enter the log tunnel on the left. On the other side, you'll notice a mushroom to the west. Slash through the bushes and snag it. That's it for the Lost Woods. There's nothing else that we can do as of now, so find an exit and make for Link's house. Our new itinerary is Lake Hylia.

From Link's house, trek one screen southward to enter into a large grassland. Hug the eastern wall and you'll find a Bombable area. Blow it open to find a Fairy Fountain -- the Fairy here will heal all your wounds. Good deal. Head south one screen further, then west once and you'll run across a small building nestled between two pools of water. Go in. Three blocks preclude the path onward -- path the two on the side up and the central one left to clear a path to the chest, which contains some Bombs. Step outside to reset the blocks, then re-enter and push the middle block forward and one of the outer ones aside. Enter the room ahead.

In here, watch out for the spinning flame and pull the switch on the right to open the floodgate. Ignore the left switch (pulling it means explosives will rain from the sky -- no joke) and leave. Back outside, the pools have now been drained, leaving a fish and a Piece of Heart. Laugh at the former, grab the latter, and head east. Continue eastward when you arrive at the beach (there's a Bombable wall to the north, but we can't do anything inside just yet). Stay on the path as it curves northward and you'll soon reach a grassy area inhabited by crabs. Kill them, then detonate the Bombable wall to the left of the doorway. Proceed northward and you'll come across a treasure chest. Check it out to find... the Ice Rod! Cool! (get it?)

* NEW ITEM! Ice Rod. Much like the Lamp, this piece of weaponry requires magic power to use. It can be used to attack and freeze enemies from a distance with icy magic. I won't lie -- you probably won't use this very often (I don't), but it's always nice to have options. We'll find its complement, the aptly named Fire Rod, much later on.

Return outside and enter the nearby doorway. Blow open the wall inside to find another Fairy Fountain. For this one, get your Bug-Catching Net ready and stash some Fairies in those Magic Bottles you got back in Kakariko. Once you're done, regress to the grassy area south of Link's house. This time, we shall be travelling west toward the Desert of Mystery (it really isn't very mysterious, but whatevs). Continue west into the desert itself (vultures and all), then press northward. You should find an entrance to the caves here -- go inside to meet some dude named Aginah (weird name), but he's not why we're here. Bomb the wall south of him to find another Piece of Heart.

Our final excursion before heading to the game's first dungeon will be to the Witch's Magic Shop. From Link's house, head one screen east. You'll stumble across a (heavily-guarded) bridge -- take it north across the river. Go northeast through the brownish stone area and continue going north past a pair of archers and some bushes. Move east when you reach the trees and you'll find the Magic Shop. Equip the Mushroom we found in the Lost Woods and speak to the Witch outside. She'll take it for now -- we'll be back later (after completing the East Palace) to pick it up. Talk to the Witch inside the shop to refill

your hearts. You might also want to purchase some Red Potion, which restores your health, as the dungeon ahead can prove tricky at times.

b. KNIGHTS

[East Palace]

Shall we finally head for the game's first real dungeon? It's time for us to head eastward to conquer the East Palace, where we'll gain the first of three Pendants. Get yourself to Link's house and we'll move on from there.

== EN ROUTE TO THE EAST PALACE =====

From Link's house, head east to the stone bridge, which you should take north. After crossing the bridge, go east one screen, then north when you reach a line of trees. Run underneath the arches and up the stairs. Try to avoid the rock-spitting baddies (it can be hard to do so, I know) as you head northeast. By now, you should see a building directly in front of you. Drop off the ledge and duck inside. The man in here is Sahasrahla (say that five times fast -- Sahasrahla, Sahsrالا, Sauceral... nope, can't do it), the village elder.

Sahasrahla tells us that we need to retrieve three Pendants in order to acquire the Master Sword. The first of these Pendants is the Pendant of Courage, which is conveniently hidden next door in the East Palace. When he's done talking, blow open the back wall to score some Bombs and 100 Rupees. Now leave the building and use the stair behind, minding the bouncy statue enemy as you go. Take a right at the top of the steps, then turn south as soon as possible (defeat the statue in the way). Continue south until you meet another statue -- kill it, then head east.

You'll come across another statue guarding some stairs. Either kill it or just jump off the adjacent ledge. Either way, climb up the next staircase, then go east and up a second staircase. Cut up the blue knight standing guard at the top, go up some more stairs and bam! Here we are -- the East Palace! Breathe in, breathe out, let's go!

== THE EAST PALACE =====

Let's do this.

Welcome to the game's first dungeon -- don't get scared now. We start off in a room with three doors, all locked. Lift the pot due north from the entrance to unearth a switch -- stomp on it to open all three doors. They two outer doors both lead to dead ends, so ignore them and go through the center doorway instead. Slice through the Gummi Worm enemies, then step on the weird-looking portion of the floor. This is, surprisingly enough, a switch, and stepping on it will, indeed, open the door leading onward.

The subsequent room is absolutely huge, but luckily its fairly straightforward. There's only one path onward, but balls of varying sizes are being continuously fired in your direction (yeah, you read that right). The small balls are easy to dodge (as is the case in real life), but every so often a giant ball comes along that you just can't stay away from (again, the same holds true in real life). So, what to do? Wait until a large ball flies past, then dash forward, eluding the little ones. Duck into one of the niches along the wall and wait for another big one to go past, then sprint to the end and duck out of harm's way. (And yes, I'm well aware that I have now filled my innuendo quota for this chapter).

Forget about the stairs for now and trot westward along the corridor. Ascend

the staircase here and you'll find some pots and a treasure chest, all containing precious Rupees. Now you can return to the stairs at the end of the hallway and proceed through the door at the top. The hall splits in two directions here; let's start by taking the right oath. The door here is locked initially, but there's another floor switch behind the jars. Proceed.

Baddies of both the Gummi Worm and skeleton types reside within the next room. Dispose of them (and note that your Boomerang actually damages the skellies!). There are two additional doors in here -- take the northern one. Avoid the spinning flame baddie and lift up the centermost pot to find a switch. Hitting this switch will open the door at the bottom of your screen. Go through it to find a chest, inside of which is the always-helpful Map. Now hop off the ledge, head upstairs, and exit to the left.

You'll emerge in the chamber where we previously defeated skeletons and Gummi Worms. Take the western door and follow the hall around to the west. Just like you did before, lift the pots and stomp the floor switch to open the door. More skeletons inside. Kill them all, then head for the door in the lower left-hand corner. As you enter the next room, both doors slam shut and skeletons appear all over the place. Use your sword or chuck pots at their undead butts. The doors will slide open once they've all been defeated.

In the following chamber, you'll find the Compass. Head downstairs once you've grabbed it and go through the door. Inspect the weird tablet on the wall to speak to your old friend Sahasrahla. His advice is crap, but hey, at least he's trying, right? Right! The hallway south is a deadend, so take the eastern doorway. We'll be spit out on the floor below the crossroads. A huge chest containing the, er... "item" hidden in this palace is right in front of our eyes! But... we can't open it yet. Crap. So avoid the one-eyed cyclops type dudes and go due east through a door.

Here's another room we've been in before. Head south, up the stairs, and into the darkness. Thankfully, Link whips out that trusty flashlight of his again, so there's no need to equip the Lamp. Immediately hurry to the right, because two spinning flames are out to get you. Quickly cut through the Gummi Worms and hit the floor switch, then duck into the door on the east wall. Though you may not see them at first, skeletons litter this next room. Be mindful of them and their evil skeleton ways as you search underneath the pots for a key, then regress to the previous room. Continue around the circular path, using your key to open the western door. Cross the balcony and head west.

Hmm... that center pedestal looks unique, doesn't it? And *what* is the deal with that door on the north wall? Slaying the Gummi Worms, skeletons, and cyclops dudes in this room will release the spinning flame baddies in the center of the room, but sadly, that's our only option. Once you've finished off all the nasties, grab the pot that the flames were previously fixed upon and hit the switch underneath, revealing a treasure chest on the center pedestal. Inside is the Big Key, which can open the north door as well as the big treasure chest we passed earlier. Yes indeed!

Exit north and push the rightmost block out of the way. Take a right at the end of the corridor (this place looks familiar). Okay, we're back in the main hall. Pop open the big, shiny chest to obtain... the Bow and Arrow!

* NEW ITEM! Bow and Arrow. Along with the Boomerang, this is one of the most useful and practical items at this early stage of the game. It's a great way to attack enemies from a distance. In this particular dungeon, it works wonders against the cyclops foes (and it will work great against the boss, as well). Your arrow capacity is 30 for now, but you'll have the chance later on to increase that number.

But just when you think everything is great, four skeletons drop down and throw their heads after Link, forcing us to flee in terror from their disembodied faces of fear. Take the stairs at the north of the room and go through the door.

* NOTE: Notice those weird basin-looking things on either side of the staircase? Hop into one to find some Fairies -- if your Magic Bottles aren't already filled with Red Potion from the Witch's shop, I *highly* suggest catching some of these little ladies with your Net. Link doesn't have too many hearts at this point in the game, and some extra health can never hurt, right? Right.

The other side of the doorway finds us submerged in darkness. Don't bother lighting the torches on either side of the door -- just slash through the Gummi Worms ahead and use your pretty new Bow to take down the cyclopes. One of them is carrying a key, so be sure to pick it up. Take the northeast exit to find a supersecret cache of Rupees (just watch out for the flames!), then go back and unlock the door on the northwest wall.

In the subsequent room, peek under the jars for some arrows, hearts and -- most importantly -- a switch. The room after this one is guarded by three cyclops baddies. It's best to take them on one at a time, so try your best not to wake them all at once (doing so leads to utter chaos -- for real). Once you've defeated them all, hit the lowermost switch (the other three are fakes) and proceed. The next room is a madhouse -- you'll have to dodge balls from every direction as you try to find the right switch (it's the one on the top left). The room after that is protected by two skeletons and a red cyclops, who is even tougher than the green variety (and must be killed with arrows). Kill all the foes, then check the pots to find a heart and some arrows.

The final room before the boss is crawling with Gummi Worms (see what I did there?), and the doorway to doom is guarded by two red cyclopes. Deal with the Gummis first, then wake the cyclopes (one at a time, if possible) and hit them with a storm of arrows. Lift the jars for some last minute heart and arrow refills. Take a deep breath, build up your courage, and go in.

- Boss: BOUNCY KNIGHTS -

Numbering six in all, the Bouncy Knights take up a fair amount of the room, which doesn't leave us with much space in which to maneuver. As soon as they begin to move, single out one of the six knights and continually nail him with arrows. Three of 'em should do the trick. Once one knight has been neutralized, the battle becomes a bit easier. In particular, the knights' charge attack (in which they line up across the north wall and bounce toward you) becomes very easy to dodge. Keep pounding the knights with arrows (or sword strikes, should you run out of the arrows) until only one remains.

At this point, the surviving knight will change up his strategy. He'll turn red (with fury, perhaps) and repeatedly leap around the room in an attempt to squash you. As long as you stay on the move, he won't be able to touch you (so, like, keep moving and stuff). Your best method of mayhem at this point is to abandon the Bow and rely on your trusty sword -- unleash a spin attack whenever the knight hovers over you. Not only will this damage the knight, but it will also interrupt his own attack, causing him to miss when he tries to sit on you. Keep up the attack and this battle won't last much longer.

Upon the knights' demise, a full Heart Container will appear, followed by the Pendant of Courage. Fantastic.

I know that you just want to get a move on, but before moving forward to the next palace in search of the next Pendant, there are a number of loose ends to tie up (as well as some new loose ends to create). Ch-check it out:

- First and foremost, let's go revisit our friend Sahasrahla (he's still in the building near the East Palace). He'll ramble on about some legend (who cares, dude!), then fork over the Pegasus Shoes (oh yes!), which allow Link to dash around like he's on speed. Also, it sounds like someone's shaking salt or something when you use the, so there's another plus. He also mentions that there's a useful item in the caves near Lake Hylia, but if you've been following this walkthrough you'll already have that (and if not, go read the "Lost Woods, the Ice Rod, and Other Fun" section in the previous chapter for the scoop).
- Next, we can go back to the Witch's Magic Shop north of here to see what's cookin' with that Mushroom we gave her. Step inside the shop and you'll receive the Magic Powder (which isn't the most effective weapon but is still all kinds of fun to mess around with).
- As you may or may not remember, there was a Bombable wall near Lake Hylia, on the way to where we picked up the Ice Rod. Remember? It was just east of the grassy area south of Link's house? Yeah, that's it. Before, we couldn't do anything inside because we had no means with which to defeat the squirmy worms within, but now we can use our Bow and Arrow to do the job. Once all the worms have been dealt with, the door will open. Talk to the shady-looking individual inside to receive the hefty sum of 300 Rupees (!!), then investigate the chests for Bombs, arrows, and even more Rupees. Good deal.
- With those brand spankin' new Pegasus Shoes firmly lodged upon Link's tiny pixelated feet, another Piece of Heart is now up for grabs. Let's start by heading for the Sanctuary, shall we? From there, head west on screen, then curve northward and turn back eastward. On the same screen as the Sanctuary (but on the ledge to the left of it), dash into the pile of white stones. Doing so will reveal a secret entrance. Venture inside and claim your prize.
- Now for some unfinished business in Kakariko Village. In the middle of town, there is -- as you might recall -- a weird person dressed in red. The jury's still out on whether it's a guy or a girl. In any event, this person flees whenever you get near it ("it" -- yes, I went there). But! With the blazing speed allowed by our new Pegasus Shoes, we can catch up to it (make sure you chase it eastward, because if you try going west you'll run out of space). Anyway, when you finally catch it, it'll tell you to try running into trees. Of course, we already knew that we could do that, so it turns out that this whole note was actually, in fact, pretty frickin' useless. Uhh... sorry?

That's about that in regards to extra stuff to do at this point, so let's get back to the main quest!

c. THE EARTH WILL SHAKE

[Desert Palace]

We're now headed toward the Desert of Mystery to retrieve the next Pendant, but first we'll have to make a detour to Kakariko Village to recruit the help of an

ancient text. Let's move.

== THE BOOK OF MUDORA =====

Okay, now before we can move onward to the second palace, it's imperative that we make a quicky pitstop in Kakariko Village (or rather, *just* south of Kakariko Village). If you leave the village from it's southern exit, there will be one building immediately in sight -- the library (it's just a bit to the west). Step inside and you should see a weird green book sitting conspicuously atop a shelf. Ram into the shelf using the Pegasus Shoes and ka-pow! The Book of Mudora is yours for the taking!

* NEW ITEM! Book of Mudora. I know what you're thinking: what the crap am I supposed to do with a book? I don't do none of that book-readin' stuff! Well, it's not particularly effective against baddies (in fact, it's not effective at all), but it is necessary to translate ancient writing. And to enter the Desert Palace, you'll have to do just that.

That done, we're off to the Desert Palace, which is located in -- surprise, surprise -- the Desert of Mystery! Starting at Link's house, you'll want to take an immediate south. The entrance to the desert is located on the west side of this big, grassy area, but you'll want to go south another screen before turning westward. You'll know that you're in the right place once you see a weird frog-lookin' dude sitting next to a sign. Ignore him (or feel free to destroy his stupid sign) and proceed further west.

Just ahead is the desert proper. On a disappointing note, you'll find that it isn't nearly as mysterious as its name suggests. If a game promises mystery, I want mystery -- what a cocktease. ANYWAY. Move on in a northwesterly manner, keeping an eye out for cactuses, sandmen, and vultures. When you find the gray pedestal in the middle of the desert, you'll know you're in the right place -- you've arrived at the Desert Palace. Pull out the Book of Mudora and inspect the tablet in the center of the platform. Link is prompted to make a wish, but instead of wishing for something totally awesome like Cristiano Ronaldo sustaining a horrible leg injury or a date with Evangeline Lilly, he just wishes for the stone ornaments to stop blocking the entrance. Moron.

== THE DESERT PALACE =====

Almost immediately upon entering the palace, you'll be set upon by weird spinning plant things. Cut a path forward and head north. Pretty soon, you'll probably notice what looks like an odd octopus/turtle hybrid with one rotating eyeball. When its eye spots you, it'll shoot a nasty laser beam, so be careful around these things (just move quickly and you'll do fine). Anyway, take a left at the statue, move the pots out of the way, and proceed north through the corridor. On the following screen, a monster will poke itself out of the sand. Slash it a few times or hit it with an arrow.

Take a left at the crossroads and move onto the next screen. Enter the door on the north wall, mind the octopus/turtle/eye/laser statue (hereinafter referred to simply as a "laser statue"), and dash into the upper left-hand torch to grab the key. There's also a tablet through which you can speak to Sahasrahla, but as always his advice sucks a big one. Return to the previous room, head east one screen, then duck into the northern doorway.

This room is bustling with enemy activity. Defeat the sand things and the green cyclopes, then search beneath the pots for a switch. Hit this switch to reveal a treasure chest, inside of which you'll find the coveted Map. Exit via the southeast door and keeping trekking eastward. The door in the northeastern corner is a trap and contains nothing useful, so ignore it and head south.

There will be a locked door set against the right wall, but thankfully we've already got the key. Go in. Kill the Gummi Worms, be wary of the laser statue, check the chest to score the Compass, and finally exit north.

The next chamber is loaded with walls that poop cannonballs at you -- the best technique to get through here unscathed is to simply Pegasus Shoes your way through the gauntlet. The chest on the far side of the room contains the ever-so-exciting Big Key. Return to the dungeon's main room (that big room we entered through). Once there, make your way to the upper left-hand corner, where you'll want to take the door against the western wall. As you enter, you will find that you're locked in with a dreaded laser statue. Avoiding its gaze as best as you can, check beneath the pots for goodies and the switch that will unlock the room. Go north through the door to find the big chest (!). Pop it open to find the oh-so-macho Power Glove.

* NEW ITEM! Power Glove. With this stylish little glove in hand, Link can now lift those white stones that you've seen littered across Hyrule. You don't even have to equip it -- it works automatically! Sadly, the black stones that you might have spotted are still too heavy to lift. I'm not in a particularly creative mood at the moment, but you can bet that if I was I would be making some hilarious comment about HORSE the Band right about now (+10 golden cookies to you if you have any idea what I'm talking about).

Regress two rooms, then head south. There is a door on the western wall and, since we've explored everywhere else, this is probably the right place to be. Again, watch the laser statue and push the third block from the left to open the north door. This leads into a Fairy Fountain. Yay. Fill up your Bottles if they're empty, as we're nearing boss time. Exit to the south and you'll turn up outside, but that's a good thing.

Starting by venturing southward to score another Piece of Heart. Once that's done with, look to the north of where we just exited. There's a doorway blocked by white stones. But wait! Thanks to our Power Glove, we can lift those up without trouble. Go inside, dodge blasts from yet another laser statue (fed up with those things yet?), and push the second block from the right to open the door. Head through. The next room is full of something we haven't encountered before: super-annoying monster floor tiles. Scary, right? They fly at you without remorse, so trot around the room and slash at them to escape damage. There's a key hidden in the bottom left-hand jar, which will open the path ahead.

Cross the bridge. The subsequent room is filled with two of our favorites -- Gummi Worms and a laser statue. Kill all the worms to open the door. If you thought that room was bad, though, get a load of this next one: multiple laser statues, a locked door, and still more Gummi Worms! Uhh... Sweet. Sneak past the statues and peek in the jars for a key, then move along. The following chamber resurrects the idea of monster floor tiles, so hastily retrieve the key from beneath the upper right-hand pot.

In the final room before the boss, there's a red cyclops for you to defeat (bust out that handy dandy Bow and Arrow to do it). Search the pots for some hearts, arrows, and magic power, then... Wait a sec, this is a dead end! Or that's what it looks like anyway. Use your Lamp to light the four torches in this room and voila! There's the door. Hey-ho, let's go!

- Boss: REALLY-BIG WORMS x3 -

As was the case with the boss of the East Palace, the boss here is an ensemble foe. The modus operandi of these three nasty worms is to jump in and out of the sand, which makes it confusing to know where and when you're going to be attacked. To make matter worse, they spit up rocks

when they emerge from the sand. The sword is really the only weapon of any use in this battle, but be sure to target only the heads of the worms. Some people like to try planting Bombs where they think the worms are going to come out, but I find that to be a sorrowfully inaccurate strategy. Once you've finished off two worms, the remaining one will up his game a bit (more rocks). Keep up the same strategy and *be patient*! Patience is the key to this battle. It's better to avoid taking damage from the rocks and have to wait for another chance to attack than to end up dead because you couldn't wait for an opening.

Once you've defeated the scourge, a full Heart Container and the Pendant of Power will rain from the ceiling. Yum!

== THE FLIPPERS + OTHER SIDE-QUESTY STUFF =====

As usual, I'm gonna take this time to go off on a bit of a tangent and fill you in on all the latest side-quests. If you want to move ahead in the game, skip on down to the next chapter ("Such Great Heights"). That said, let's get on with it! First off, we're going to trek into the wetlands of northeastern Hyrule to purchase the Flippers. They're pretty expensive at 500 Rupees a pair, so make sure you've got the necessary cash before making the excursion.

To reach the wetlands, start off from the Witch's Magic Shop (north of the East Palace, if for some reason you haven't been there yet). Just right of the shop is a large white stone, previously far too heavy for Link to lift. But with the Power Glove in hand, it poses no problem at all. Move it out of the way and follow the path eastward. Three stacks of white rocks block the path ahead, but you can destroy these barriers by ramming into them with the Pegasus Shoes. Curve around the path northward and continue along the road. When you hit water, keep moving north to reach the entrance to the river.

This area is positively swarming with Zoras (nasty fish-men who spit fireballs left and right), so navigating it isn't the easiest thing to do. Also, be sure to stick to the light blue shallows -- the dark blue water is too deep for poor Link and slipping into it will invite damage. The path forks pretty soon, so take the topmost path and keep on the move to minimize damage taken from Zora fireballs. As you move onward, you'll see a Piece of Heart off to the right -- don't worry, we'll be grabbing that little beauty on the way out.

The path remains straightforward for a while before breaking into four separate paths. Take the bottom path to meet a giant Zora. Tell him that you want the Flippers, then fork over 500 Rupees and they're all yours. The Zora also makes note that you can use water warps, which are detailed more fully in this guide's appendices.

* NEW ITEM! Zora's Flippers. Are you tired of Link taking damage and magically warping back to shore whenever you jump in some water? Not a problem anymore! With these Flippers, you can dive into whatever watery depths you please! (does this sound like some kind of sales pitch?). Just press A to stroke and B to dive. Simple!

When the Zora returns to his watery home, swim southward and drop down the waterfall. Hop onto the path and follow the shallow water around toward solid ground. Take a look to the left and you'll find another Piece of Heart. Yeah! With the Flippers, we can acquire a few more goodies yet, so I'm hope you're not bored already. Leave the river area, but don't head back toward the Magic Shop just yet. If you go to where the wetlands begin (just on the other side of the river area), there is a waterfall in the northwest corner of the screen. Swim into it to discover the fabled Waterfall of Wishing (believe me, just because you haven't heard of it doesn't mean it isn't fabled).

Choose to throw in your Boomerang and a Fairy will appear. Be a man and tell her the truth ("Yes") when she asks if you threw it in and she'll repay you for your honesty. Not only will she give you back your Boomerang, but she'll improve it just for good measure -- the regular Boomerang becomes the Magical Boomerang! Mm-hmm.

* NEW ITEM! Magical Boomerang. The improved Boomerang has the same basic function as the old one, only it moves faster and farther. If only it sparkled or something -- that would be the *ultimate* in cool. Oh wait, it does sparkle. Hell yeah.

Leave the waterfall, but go right back in. Follow the same steps as last time, only this time throw in your shield. When the Fairy returns it to you, it'll become the Red Shield.

* NEW ITEM: Red Shield. This new shield blocks everything that your old one did, as well as fireballs. It also looks cooler. You'll have the chance to buy it later, but it costs a ton of Rupees, and you just got it for free, so this whole sentence is more or less utterly useless crap.

Finally, now, we can head south again. Go to the bridge between Link's house and the East Palace -- y'know, the one that's always guarded by archers and other knights? That's the one. The plan is to swim underneath it, so once you get there head east (kind of toward the East Palace). If you head southeast from the trees on the next screen you'll come across a ladder that you can use to get your feet wet. Swim back north toward the bridge, then continue on underneath it. The man living under here is a hobo (cue Red Hot Chili Peppers - "Under the Bridge"), but he's a unique hobo because he's more than willing to give something away to you. And it's not just anything, the guy contributes a third Magic Bottle to your cause. Like, totally awesome and stuff.

There's one last piece of business on the agenda before we set out for Death Mountain and the third Pendant. Exactly one screen easter of the Sanctuary is a graveyard. In the top-left corner of this cemetary is a grave blocked by two white stones. Lift the stones and push the grave back to reveal a supersecret entrance to Hyrule Castle (you should recognize this room). Bomb or ram the cracked portion of the western wall and head inside to pick up some goodies -- hearts, Bombs, arrows, and 300 Rupees! To escape this place, you'll have to retrace the steps you followed when escaping Hyrule Castle with Zelda at the outset of the game.

Now then, how about that third Pendant?

d. SUCH GREAT HEIGHTS

[Mountain Tower]

In order to find the Pendant of Wisdom, we'll have to ascend Death Mountain and brave the Mountain Tower. As always, I'd suggest hitting up the Magic Shop to stock up on Red Potions before heading out, as the path ahead isn't very easy (it's not very difficult either, but saying that doesn't sound dramatic at all, does it? No, it doesn't).

== SCALING DEATH MOUNTAIN (OOH, SO OMINOUS) ==

The base of Death Mountain is located quite near the Sanctuary, so let's begin from there. Proceed west one screen, then north another screen. After dispatching the annoying bird enemies and the weird jellybean-looking thing

that electrocutes you, press northward until you see a signpost. Read it to learn that entrance to Death Mountain is prohibited without the King's permission. We don't have the King's permission, but we're too cool to follow the rules (check out my rhymes), so ignore the sign, lift the giant white stone to the right of it, and enter the mountain.

Hmm... It's dark in here. Drop off the ledge (there's no going back now!) and walk forward until you reach a crossroads, at which it's best to take a right. This area is full of annoying dead ends, but there's really only one way to move onward, so don't worry about getting lost. Slash past a few bats, then head north when given the option. Shortly thereafter, you'll be able to take a path to the right. There's an old man standing in front of a doorway -- talk to him and he'll invite himself to this mountain-climbing party of ours. Okay.

More dark caves await you through the doorway. Avoid the dark pit of doom directly ahead and move eastward. Continue travelling east until you reach a north-or-south crossroad, at which point the old dude will tell you to turn right (which is incredibly helpful when the options are up or down). Go down, fighting off some bats along the way, to reach the exit.

Back outside (and now atop the inappropriately-named Death Mountain -- there's nothing particularly deathly about it), watch out for falling rocks (wtf? Where are they coming from?) and the fast-moving enemies as you trot eastward. The old guy will depart at the mouth of a cave, imparting the Magic Mirror before he takes his leave. Excellent -- an item that is, for now, totally useless! Just what we needed!

* NEW ITEM! Magic Mirror. This item does absolutely nothing for you at the moment, but it will come in handy shortly. When you are in the Dark World, looking in this shiny purple mirror will magically transport you back to the Light World, leaving a flashy whirlwind of flashiness behind. Step back into this residue to return to the Dark World. In dungeons, using the Mirror will return you to the entrance, which can come in useful should you screw up or want to retreat outside.

Follow the old man into the cave and chat with him to restore Link's hearts. Ascend the ladder behind him to find a series of caves that ultimately lead nowhere. Awesome? Not really. Head outside and move to the right, where you will find a ladder that leads higher up the mountain. Try your best to avoid the enemies and the tumbling rocks as you press as far north as possible, then move west. There's a sign and a doorway over here, but it only leads back toward Kakariko Village, so climb the (really long) ladder instead.

Like, awesome view, right? (Not really). Walk east to find another doorway in the rock wall. Step inside to find a pit which, if you drop in, will bring you to a handy Fairy Fountain, from which you can fill up any empty Bottles with Fairy friends. After stocking up, exit to the northwest and follow the cave to find the exit. Drop off the ledge upon which you emerge, then climb back up the long ladder to the west. This time, walk past the doorway to find what, at first, appears to be a dead end. But wait! What's the weird swirly blue tile thing in the middle of all those rocks? Step onto it to see what it's all about.

* DIGRESSION: GETTING ANOTHER PIECE OF HEART. Before you step on the blue tile, go back toward the cave just to the west. See the big brownish rock in front of it? If you walk southward from that rock, you'll find that a barrier that prevents you from leaping off the ledge. However, if you stand just west of there, you can jump off, landing on a ledge with a doorway. Head into the cave and follow the linear path to score a Piece of Heart.

Oh crap. It's the apocalypse.

As Bunny Link, talk to the deformed people to the left (if you feel like being abused, that is). If you want, you can descend the ladder to the west and do some exploring, but there isn't much to see or do. Instead, position your long-eared self in the center of the brown diamond shape on the ground near the deformed dude and his ball, then look into the Magic Mirror you got a few minutes ago. Ta-dah! Not only are we back in the Light World, but there's a Piece of Heart right there! Good deal!

Drop off the ledge to the north. The Mountain Tower is directly ahead (there's more to explore to the west and the east, but not much to find as of right now, so just go inside the Tower for the time being).

== THE MOUNTAIN TOWER =====

What you'll immediately notice upon entering this dungeon is a shiny blue orb sitting right in front of you. Let's take a moment here to discuss how these things work, since you haven't yet encountered them (and they're all over this place): when an orb is blue, smacking it with anything (sword, boomerang, whatever) will lower any blue barriers. Likewise, however, it will raise any orange barriers. Hitting an orange orb, predictably, does the exact opposite. In order to make it through this dungeon, you'll have to get used to working with these things.

Okay, now let's get to it.

Start off by whacking the blue orb directly in front of you to lower the blue barriers. There's a downward staircase on the left -- go down it. Defeat the skeleton baddies and the squirmy worm, then snag the key before returning upstairs. Hit an orb (or don't) to lower the orange barrier in the center of the foyer, then head north, killing the worm and the fire-breathing baddies before raiding the treasure chest for the Map. There's also a Saharahla tablet, but you already know that he doesn't have anything worthwhile to say. There's a locked door in the northwest corner, so pop it open with the key you just grabbed and head in.

So. Flying floor tiles. Annoying much? It's kind of impossible to proceed until all the tiles have been destroyed (either by smashing against the walls, being chopped apart by Link's sword, or -- more commonly -- by ramming into Link's pointy-eared head), so hit the orb in the corner to lower the blue barrier, then circumambulate the room until the tile mayhem is over. When the door opens, head through and deal with three worms. Smack the orb to lower the orange barriers, allowing passage into the room to the south. Kill both the skeletons in here, then break out that Lamp of yours and light the four torches in this room to reveal a treasure chest. Inside is the Big Key (already? You know it!). Cool. Now track back to the foyer.

Back where we started, there's one last doorway to explore. It's located in the southeast of the foyer, so hit orbs as you must to make your way in that direction. Head upstairs. This next room is crawling with enemies -- weird creepy-crawlies types. These guys can be killed easily enough with Link's sword (they take a fair few blows to die, but keep at it), but it's so much more fun to knock them into one of the room's various pits. It may be worth noting, by the way, that you can fall into any of the surrounding pits as well without sustaining any damage, but as there's no reward for doing so it isn't worth your time. Whack the orb to turn it orange before proceeding into the subsequent room.

Another three baddies are waiting for you. Fantastic. Step on the star tile directly in front of the doorway and, if your timing is good, the first of the three will plummet into the pit. If not, it's just as easy to slice and dice the baddies up before heading through the northern door. The following room is even more of the same: more enemies, more pits, more star tiles, more orbs/barriers -- more fun! First off, deal with the two enemies near the door. If, for whatever reason, the orange barriers are raised (they shouldn't be, so if they are you've screwed up), you'll have to backtrack a couple rooms and smack the orb. Otherwise, proceed east (whacking another few baddies along the way). On the far side of this room is a staircase. Climb it.

Immediately to the left is a worm contained by a series of barriers. Lift the pot and kill it -- there's no practical purpose for doing this, but it's fun, right? Similarly, lift one (or all) of the pots to the south, handle another couple of worms, then move west into the center of this room. There's a treasure chest here -- inside is the Compass (bom bom bom bom!)! Further north is the Big Chest, which we'd be able to open if only there was some way across that pit. But there isn't. Not for now, anyway. But -- and this is really important, so listen up -- in order to reach the Big Chest, it's absolutely imperative that you step on the star tile directly to the left of the chest in which we found the Compass. Did you do it? Did you? You're now lying, are you? Actually, it was probably already activated, but if you messed around with it like an idiot be sure to step on it again. This will help us to get to that Big Chest later on.

Now then, shall we move onward? This room's exit comes in the form of a staircase on the northwest wall. Watch the fire-breathing nasties as you make your way toward it -- they like to regurgitate blobs of fire as you walk past, which is both gross and painful. Anyway, the following room is filled with pits that are safe to fall into. As has been the case throughout this dungeon, however, falling into most of them won't lead to anything fruitful. However, stomp on the star tile directly to the south of the entrance (next to the rotating column of flames), thus creating a perfectly square-shaped pit to the north. Step into this pit from the top and you'll land directly in front of the Big Chest. Score!

* NEW ITEM! Moon Pearl. As far as weaponry and items that make a big impact on the way you play this game go, the Moon Pearl is pretty disappointing. On the bright side, having this item means that whenever you enter the Dark World you get to play as Link instead of a defenseless little Bunny. So it's not such a bad deal in the end, all things considered.

After emptying the Big Chest, return upstairs. This time you're looking for a door on the eastern side of the room. Just south of said door are two rows of pots surrounded by an orange barrier (which should already be retracted -- if not, backtrack to the last orb to lower it) which all contain heart refills, so make sure Link's at full health. Enter the door -- it's boss time already.

- Boss: SUPER BIG WORM -

This is an interesting boss battle. The weird and unique thing about it is not that the Worm is likely to kill you (because it's not), but rather that it will knock you off the platform (no barriers on the sides!) into the adjacent pit. This makes the battle more frustrating than anything, because if you fall into the pit you'll have to make your way back up to the boss room before the fight can continue. There's no sure-fire way to combat this. Just try to stay in the center of the platform -- there's not much more advice I can give than that.

In terms of the actual fight, there isn't much to it. At the tip of

the Worm's tail is a kind of spinning ball. This is its weak point. Stand in the center of the platform (don't chase the Worm into the narrow ledge on the left side of the platform -- doing so is tantamount to asking to be pushed off the ledge) and wait for it to come to you. Lash out at the tail whenever you get the chance, and after sustaining several hits the Worm will speed up (uh-oh!). Keep up the same strategy and, with any luck, you'll come out on top without getting knocked off too many times.

Another boss vanquished, another full Heart Container for you (don't jump off the ledge now, by the way, as doing so means you get to fight the boss again -- no, I'm not joking)! The final Pendant also falls from the rafters, meaning that we now have all the necessary ingredients to acquire the Master Sword. Awesome.

* NOTE: Normally after a dungeon, I run through a list of sidequesty stuff (extra Rupees, new weapons, etc), but since there's a bunch of stuff that only becomes available after you obtain the Master Sword, it just makes more sense to wait until you've done that to go through all the sidequest-type stuff. So if you're one of those completionist people, check the chapter below ("I Will Follow You Into the Dark").

But before we can even think about the Master Sword, we need to find a way off of this rock. From the entrance to the Mountain Tower, drop off the ledge directly ahead (and take note that, if you step onto the blue warp tile, Link will retain his normal form in the Dark World -- holla!). Descend the long ladder off to the west. At the base of said ladder is a cave, which you should enter. As was the case with the caves that brought us to this mountain, there are some dead ends, but only one way to progress, so getting lost shouldn't be a worry. These caves are fraught with pits and bats, though, so watch where you're going. After two screens of dark, depressing caves, you'll emerge on a ledge near Kakariko Village and the Lost Woods. Hop down and get movin'.

e. I WILL FOLLOW YOU INTO THE DARK

[Hyrule Castle Again]

With all three Pendants in hand, it's time to claim that which is rightfully yours: the Master Sword, which is waiting for you in the Lost Woods. From there, we'll be returning to Hyrule Castle to kick some wizard butt. Let's move!

== THE MASTER SWORD + THE ETHER MEDALLION =====

The Master Sword lies in a grove that is located in the northwestern portion of the Lost Woods. The quickest way to get there is to enter the woods via the path northwest of Kakariko Village. To find this path, enter the village, then exit through the trees in the top left-hand corner. Fight past a couple of green knights (easy!), then enter the first proper. Ignore the detour to the right and press northward to find a couple of log tunnels -- you can take either one as they both lead to the same place.

Continue north, eluding the oh-so-annoying thief as you do so, to find another two log tunnels. Trot through the one on the right to reach yet another set of these wooden tunnels. The one on the left leads to the Master Sword, so, like, go in. This is the second-most hallowed grove in existence (the most hallowed is, of course, Ashburton Grove, but that has nothing to do with Zelda so I'll shut up). There's a pedestal at the back of this colorful, animal-filled grove, but in order to lift the sword you'll need to translate some ancient text. Bust out your Book of Mudora to do the job, then circle around the pedestal and

claim the blade as your own.

* NEW ITEM! Master Sword. The so-called Blade of Evil's Bane isn't the best sword in the game (not by a long shot), but it's a significant step up from that glorified dinner knife you've been using up to this point. Not only does it take fewer slices to dismantle enemies now, but whenever Link's hearts are full you'll be able to blast (admittedly weak) laser beams from the tip of your sword. Give it a try! You can also cut signs in half, which is kinda fun... for a little while (then it gets old).

When you're finished playing around with your shiny new sword, leave the grove. Doing so prompts the ever-defenseless Zelda to whine telepathically about some soldiers coming to get her. What a nag. No matter what you do or how fast you move, there's nothing you can do to prevent Zelda being kidnapped yet again. As a result, there's no reason to visit the Sanctuary, so we'll just skip that. You can head to Hyrule Castle immediately if you want to get down to saving Zelda's worthless butt, but there's one extra thing to do first if you're interested in some side-questin'.

With the all-powerful Master Sword in hand, we can trek back to Death Mountain to acquire a magic medallion that you'll probably never use but can be slightly fun to play around with. I know it's tedious going back up there when we just got back, but stop whining and do it anyway. Why? Because I said so. Make your way through the caves and climb back up toward the Mountain Tower. However, instead of entering the dungeon again, circle around to the west of it to find a rope bridge. Cross it, then whop out the Book of Mudora to examine the tombstone-looking epitaph to score the Ether Medallion.

* NEW ITEM! Ether Medallion. This cool item is almost as magical as Robin van Persie's left foot (emphasis on the *almost* -- nothing is more magical than RVP's left foot, but as usual I digress). Unfortunately, because it consumes magic power, this magical medallion isn't very practical. When used, magical blasts of ice-cold wind will freeze all enemies on the screen. It's cool to play around with, but it isn't the most useful piece of weaponry.

Awesome, now go back down and make your way toward Hyrule Castle: it's time to save Zelda (again) and confront the evil wizard who is responsible for making us run all over Hyrule collecting stupid Pendants. What a butthole.

== RETURN TO HYRULE CASTLE =====

At the gates of Hyrule Castle is a team of guards, but they should be no match for you at this stage of the game. Fight your way through them and enter via the front doors. Our goal now is to find a way onto the castle roof, so enter the first door to the west. In the subsequent corridor, take an immediate south. Ascend the stairs and continue south to reach the rooftops. A few steps to the east is the door that will take us toward the wizard, but there's an electrical barrier precluding our entrance. No problem! Whack the electricity with your Master Sword and voila! We're in.

The heavily-guarded rooms leading in to the wizard's lair don't constitute a dungeon per se, but there are a number of obstacles (almost always in the form of nasty baddies) to clear before we can have our showdown with Agahnim. Proceed through the empty foyer to meet two ball and chain-toting soldiers. As is the case with most rooms in this place, the door leading onward will remain locked until you finish off all the enemies. These guys aren't too difficult, but they're just a warm-up exercise for what's to come. They can only swing their morning stars every few seconds, so wait at a safe distance for them to attack, then rush in and get a few slices in. Lather, rinse, and repeat -- not

only will you have no trouble killing them both, but you'll also be squeaky clean! Uh... move on.

As soon as you enter the next room, two dagger-wielding soldiers will rush you. A single whirling blade technique will kill these guys, so dodge their attacks and give 'em hell. Once they've been dealt with, a treasure chest will appear. Grab the key inside and unlock the door. The subsequent chamber is dark, which makes it difficult to tell what you're up against. In addition to a single bat (located on the statue directly to the south), there is another dagger dude. However, the door on the western wall is wide open, so you can either stand and fight like a man or skip past this room without getting your recently-washed hands dirty. Your choice.

It's still dark in the next room, which also happens to consist of a series of barriers that form a sort of maze. I suggest using the Boomerang to bother any foes that you can't quite reach as you weave northward, then west, then south, then west again -- there's a treasure chest set against the western wall. Inside is the key you'll need to unlock the door against the eastern wall, south of where we entered this place. It's another dark room beyond here, and again two quick-moving soldiers will swarm you. Stay mobile to avoid their attacks and finish them off quickly before heading upstairs. Up next is one blue knight accompanied by a blue archer. Again, the door is open, so there's no need to fight them, although doing so is the easier course of action.

So now you're locked in a room that is comprised solely of a narrow walkway surrounded by dangerous pits o' black doom. Spectacular. You can take either the north or the west walkway, as they reconnect shortly. The main foes here are blue knights, so proceed with caution as you move toward the open doorway to the northeast. In the following chamber, deal with another blue knight and his two archer friends to score a key. Keep movin' -- we're almost there!

Okay, at least there's proper lighting in this next room. Take care of a couple of spear-tossers (remember that your shield can block their projectiles) and some bats, talk to Saharahla via the tablet, and continue your conquest of chaos. It's two spear-using knights up next. Use the barriers in the room to separate the two, as taking them on one at a time will -- believe it or not -- make things significantly easier. Was that too obvious to point out? Oh well. The next room is filled with supplies hidden underneath pots, but be sure to finish off the bat and the knight before raiding them.

The next area contains a mixed bag of baddies: you've got a ball and chain trooper, one of those fast blue dudes, and a spear-tosser. The good news is that the door leading ahead is wide open, so feel free to make a run for it (or use that Ether Medallion of yours to freeze them all, whichever you prefer). You'll emerge behind some statues -- push the westernmost one aside, kill the enemies, and move on to find some more narrow catwalks. Terrific. If you have full hearts, Link's laser beams are helpful here. If not, just proceed with your sword at the ready. Climb the staircase at the opposite end of this chamber to find yourself on the precipice of the wizard's lair.

One room later you'll witness Agahnim doing something to Zelda (if you're reading this but not playing the game, that might sound kind of weird). He'll disappear, but cut through the curtains at the back of the room to find a secret doorway.

Here we go.

- Boss: AGAHNIM -

So here's the thing: as totally awesome and legendary as the Master Sword is, it won't do a thing against Agahnim. For that matter,

neither will any of your other weapons. If Agahnim was smart, he'd just sit there and laugh at Link's complete inability to damage him. But he's not smart -- in fact, he's his own worst enemy. By flinging balls of magical energy at you, he's supplying you with the only way of inflicting damage upon him. Who's up for some baseball?

There are two ways to do this: you can use either the Bug-Catching Net (lame) or the whirling blade technique (awesome). Either way, wait for Agahnim to launch a ball of energy at you: if it is one solid ball, then you can use one of the aforementioned methods of attack to deflect the blast back at him. If it connects, Agahnim will sustain damage. If not, wait for the next attack and get it right -- go David Ortiz on his wizard butt. This is the *only* way to hurt the wizard, so keep it up.

Now, Agahnim has a couple of tricks up his sleeve that you should know about. First of all, he'll sometimes shoot several small, blue balls of energy at you. These can be deflected, but they won't hurt him so it's best to simply dodge them. Also, when Agahnim appears in front of the northern wall, he's preparing to fry you with lightning. This cannot be deflected at all and causes significant damage, so move as far to the side as you can to avoid getting hit. Aside from that, it's all about persistence. After taking enough blows, Agahnim will regress into the Dark World, taking you with him.

Goodbye pleasant, happy Light World, hello depressing, apocalyptic Dark World.

f. FILTHY BEASTS

[Dark Palace]

So here we are standing on top of a giant golden pyramid at the end of the world. Oh dear. This twisted version of Hyrule is known as the Dark World (scary, huh?). For the time being, however, only so much of the Dark World is accessible. The first of seven Crystals is found in the Dark Palace, which is located roughly in the Dark World's equivalent of the Light World's Eastern Palace. Let's move.

== DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE =====

From atop this giant golden pyramid (called the Pyramid of Power), go down two flights of stairs, then go right and drop off the ledge via the gap in the wall (there's a doorway in the pyramid wall below and a gray statue to the left). Ignore the doorway, there's nothing pertinent in there, but instead curl around the ledge and follow the path northward to discover a Piece of Heart. Snazzy. Make your way to the base of the pyramid.

At this point, you've got two options: if you want, you can proceed directly to the first dungeon (do not pass Go, do not collect \$200), or, if you're up for it, there are two other pieces of sidequesty business that we can attend to beforehand. Your choice (just skip the next four paragraphs if you want to take on the dungeon immediately). Okay! Sidequests! Let's get down to it. Firstly, equip the Magic Mirror and gaze into it to warp back to the Light World. Note the swirly residue left in your wake -- step back into this to return to the Dark World. Anyway, once you're back in the brightly-colored Light World, head toward the northwest corner of Hyrule.

Remember the lumberjack brothers? The two guys who lived in a small cabin nestled in between the Lost Woods and the base of Death Mountain? Well, that's where we're headed. When you arrive, you may notice that the lumberjack bros are missing in action, but -- curiously -- the tree in front of their house is

kind of an odd color. Stand on its north side and dash southward at it with the Pegasus Shoes. Doing so reveals a supersecret entrance. Go inside to discover a Fairy Fountain and, more importantly, another Piece of Heart.

Okay, now get Link's elf butt back to the Dark World, either by returning to the aforementioned swirly residue that was left behind when you used the Magic Mirror, or by passing through the main gate at Hyrule Castle. Either way works just fine, so go for whichever is more convenient for you. Once back in the Dark World, walk east from the base of the giant golden Pyramid of Power to reach a rocky field. Head northeast, as if you were heading toward the Witch's Magic Shop in the Light World. There's a shop in the same location here in the Dark World, but there's nothing good for sale. All they've got is Red Potion, a basic shield, and some Bombs -- nothing special. Stock up if need up, otherwise ignore this shop and continue northeast past it, as if you were headed toward the Zoras' domain.

Instead of a watery domain, however, the Dark World ends here with a dead end waterfall. Noteworthy, however, is a sign nearby that promises "curses" to anyone stupid enough to throw something into the adjacent circle of stones. Well, under normal circumstances it would be very stupid to throw something into a circle of stones when a sign guarantees curses if you do so, but this is a videogame, so live on the edge a little bit and toss the sign into the circle. Instead of the curses as advertised, the fish that lives within the rocks hands over the Quake Medallion under the condition that you promise to leave it alone. See? Aren't you glad you listened to me and not that stupid sign?

* NEW ITEM! Quake Medallion. As the second of three Magic Medallions in the game, Quake, predictably, generates a minor earthquake which affects all enemies in the vicinity. It's a powerful tool if you're surrounded, but it eats your Magic Power faster than a fat kid eats a cupcake (which, if you never witnessed a fat kid eating a cupcake, is *very* fast). Because of this, it's hardly the most practical piece of weaponry. Even so, it's fun to mess around with. So, like, feel free to mess around with it.

Alright, that's all the sidequesty stuff done for the time being. Get back to that rocky field (south of here or, if you're at the Pyramid of Power, simply walk one screen to the east). Beware! The Dark World is brimming with new enemies -- in most cases they're just beefed up versions of the guys you already know from the Light World, but some, such as the one-eye giant bomb-tossers, are a bit tougher than the garden variety you're used to. Anyway, at the rocky field there's a sign that signifies that the Dark Palace is this way (-->). So, like, go that way. Head south one screen -- note that the bridge leading to the rest of the world is blocked off by pegs that we can't do anything about at the moment. This means that heading east is our only option from here.

On this next screen, there are three options: the northern path, a cave set against the northern wall, and a south path. The cave leads to a Fairy Fountain, so duck in there if you're low on Hearts, otherwise ignore the south path and go north to find yourself nearer to the Palace. Now, this area is somewhat labyrinthian and it's quite easy to get lost, so pay close attention (or not, whatever). Upon entering the area, head east toward a bomb-tossing cyclops patrolling the ground just south of a walkway which is flanked by stones with goblin heads on them. Dispose of or avoid the cyclops at your discretion, then head north on the path, curving slightly eastward as you do so and enter the building at the end of the path.

Inside is a weird little spongy thing. Talk to it (I know that sounds weird,

but I promise it'll talk back to you). He doesn't really have anything interesting to say (at all), so once he's finished ram the upper wall with the Pegasus Shoes to reveal a hidden room containing some Heart refills (lame, I know). Go back outside and continue eastward from the cyclops dude patrolling the bottom of the path. Turn northward when you reach the orange-brown trees and follow the white arrow on the ground into the canopied bushes. It's difficult to see Link while he's in here, but keep pushing upward on the D-Pad and you'll find a way through without too much trouble.

Head further north, then west (there's really nowhere else to go -- just stay on the path) until you have the option of either entering another heavy bush or continuing west. You can try to find a way through the brush, but you won't have any luck. Instead, continue west through a small underpass of brush, then go north when you have the option. Now, take the next right and, from there, enter the heavy brush at its nearest entrance. It may take some time to find a path through here, but remember always that you want to exit on the far east side of the bush. You'll have to travel in a roundabout southeasterly manner to find a way through it and, shockingly, unexpectedly, when you emerge on the eastern side there's a purple monkey following you. What the bleep is that all about?

Even weirder, the little scam artist will introduce himself (herself?) as Kiki and immediately demand 10 Rupees. Jeez, these Dark World types have no concept of manners, do they? Fork over the money anyway and he'll keep you company for a bit longer. Head north rather than south when you have the choice, then press on eastward, southward, eastward and finally northward to reach the Dark Palace.

* Note: It's important to not get hit by enemies while Kiki is present, by the way, because he's a little you-know-what and if Link sustains any damage at all he'll run away. Should this occur, you'll have to revisit the heavy underbrush to find him again.

So, we're at the Dark Palace. But wait! There's no door! How do we get in? Unfortunately, there's nothing in Link's arsenal that can open it, so you'll have to condescend to ask Kiki for help. Pay him another 100 Rupees and he'll open it. That monkey is a greedy little c-word, but you don't have a choice. Give him the money, watch him do his thing, then big the little guy adieu and enter the Palace.

== THE DARK PALACE =====

Let's do this shizzle.

Directly ahead of you are three doors. The central door is open, whereas the ones to the left and right must be opened via floor switches (which you'll step on en route to either door). Let's start with the door on the right. Stomp the floor switch in the corner as you make for the door. As soon as you enter the next chamber, an annoying little enemy will charge toward you. He's covered in armor which renders your sword useless, so grab one of the skull-shaped pots instead and chuck it at him to kill him. Underneath the upper-right pot is a switch that, when stepped on, will re-open the southern door, allowing access to the previous room. But you don't need to bother with that right now. Instead, proceed through the stairs on the northern wall.

You'll find a couple of things in the next room: three warp pads (although only one is functional) as well as one of those annoying roaming flame enemies. Avoid the baddie and step onto the swirly warp pad. This takes you to a similar room. There's a tile on the north wall -- check it out to hear a message from Zelda herself. Apparently the princess is imprisoned in Turtle Rock, which is

atop the Dark World equivalent of Death Mountain. She doesn't have anything interesting to add, so dodge the two flaming baddies and smash the cracked southern wall to find a corridor filled with floating, electrified jellyfish. Slash through them (but not when they're pulsing with electricity!) and proceed to the end of the hallway to find several cracked walls and floors. Blowing open the floor only reveals a black pit of doom, so don't do it. Just Pegasus Shoes your way through the wall and head north into the following room.

Okay, here's something new. The three enemies in this room won't directly attack Link. Odder still is the fact that their movements mirror yours. If you move up, they move down, if you move left, they move right, et cetera. The green ones are completely non-threatening -- just make them walk toward you or pin them against a wall and cut them up. The red guy, on the other hand, is a different issue completely because if you look directly at him he'll spit something nasty and painful at you. So here's what do: equip your Bow and stand either north or south of him. Now, fire an arrow toward him and quickly move vertically to direct the enemy into your arrow. You have to move fast, so it may take a few tries, but keep at it and you'll get it done eventually. Do this twice and the northern door will open up. As a side note, don't bother trying to blow open the cracked walls -- it won't work. Fake cracked walls seem to be a recurring theme in this dungeon, so don't get your hopes up every time you see one.

This next room is another tricky one. Conveyor belts force you to continually move north while dodging spiked blocks and more flying jellyfish. Take your time moving through here to minimize the damage Link sustains. Stairs at the top end of the room lead onward. Finally! We're at the end of the road (not the end of the dungeon, just the end of this particular area). Cut down three more red jellyfish and check the treasure chest to receive the Map. Awesome. Contrary to what I said about cracked walls just a few seconds ago, both the east and west walls in this particular room can be blown open. The eastern one leads to a Fairy Fountain (fill up those empty bottles!) while the western one leads to a small ledge upon which you'll discover a Key. Cool. Now regress all the way back to the room with the flaming baddies and the warp pads. Push the block directly beneath the active warp pad to the right to access it, then step onto it. Take the stairs at the top of the room and we're back to where we started.

Smash the upper-right skull pot to unearth a switch that opens the southern door. This door, as you already know, leads back to the foyer. This time take the door on the far left. Just like you did last time, kill the armored baddie with a pot and head through the door at the top of the room. Now, this is much more straightforward than the previous area. There are three pots in this room -- the top-left and top-right contain the usual stuff, but the one in the bottom-left corner conceals a switch. Step on it to make a chest appear. It contains a second Key. Cool. Avoid the flame-spitting statues in the center of the room (totally **not** cool) as you head back the way you came.

Return to the foyer again and now we're finally ready to take on whatever lies through the central door. Immediately you'll need to expend one of your two Keys to open the northern door. Head through it and you'll notice two things as you travel north through the next room: firstly, you again have a choice to make in regard to which path to take (at least this time it's only two paths, not three like before); secondly, there are turtles coming straight toward you. Turtles! Not awesome. But what's even less awesome is the fact that, as of now, the turtles are one hundred percent impervious to anything you might throw at them. Link's sword is nothing more than a brittle twig against their shells. Because of this, all you can do is dodge them and take the path on the right. Head north across the bridge, pushing the lower block right into the pit in order to proceed.

You'll emerge in a room that should look at least a little bit familiar. Pop open the chest to score another Key, then walk onto the arrow at the tippy-top of the platform you're currently standing on to leap across the chasm. The paths to the left and right are procluded, so take the stairs. There's a closed door to your immediate north (ignore it) and a bouncy blue baddie coming at you from the west. Cut through it and head west, using a Key to open the door to the north.

This next part can be a bit on the tricky side, so listen up. As soon as you grab one of the skull pots directly in front of you and step onto the walkway ahead, it will begin to crumble beneath your feet. That means you need to move quickly. But! There's more to it than just that. As the floor behind you falls away, two helmet-clad enemies will charge at you from the north. Dispatch the first one with the skull pot you lifted and either dodge the second one or knock him off the ledge with your sword. Either way, when you reach the top, head left and use your last Key to unlock the door.

Who turned out the lights? Not only is it dark in here, but there are nasty flame-spitting enemies all over the place. And it's a maze. Darkness, fire, and mazes are not a good combination. To navigate this room safely, I highly recommend walking around and killing off all the baddies before anything else. This way, you don't run the risk of taking unnecessary damage while exploring this room. After doing that, check the northwest corner for some Bombs, the southeast corner for another Key, and the middle of the eastern wall for a cracked, Bombable wall. On the other side is... the Big Chest! Totally awesome! But wait... We don't have the Big Key yet. Totally lame. Don't worry, though, we'll come back soon enough. Make a mental note of this place, because we'll return shortly. For now, though, return to the previous room, and this time take the doorway to the right.

In here you'll find four more turtles (gah!) surrounding a treasure chest. Snag the contents (the Compass!) and duck into one of the doors on the north wall (they both lead to the same place, so it doesn't matter which one you choose). Another dark room -- lame -- but this one is full of blue Rupees -- awesome. Watch out for the spinning flames as you gather the riches strewn throughout the room. Don't forget to rob the chests on either side of the room to find an Arrow refill and another Key. Once you have everything, use either door to return to the turtle room. Exit south through another locked door.

The subsequent room is another case of fake cracked walls -- don't waste your Bombs. Crush the skull pot to the left and grab the blue Rupee in the chest, then push one of the grey statues into the center of the room to avoid having to dodge the spiked blocks. Go through the southern door to find yourself back in familiar territory. Fight off the blue baddie that'll come from the west, then ready your sword and use the downward arrow to jump onto the platform below, which is crawling, swarming, absolutely rife with those spongy baddies. When they've all been appropriately dealt with, push the lower of the two blocks to the left, head up the stairs and you're back to the room where you met the turtles.

So what now? Head over toward the eastern bridge, the one with the two blocks. Push the lower one to the right off the edge and, this time, instead of going north, follow the block off the edge and into the pit. It won't hurt, I promise. You'll land in a room full of turtles and, worse yet, when you move westward a quartet of skeleton baddies will descend from above. Fight them off, then smash the skull pot at the end of the line of blocks to reveal a treasure chest, inside of which is a Key. Use the the warp pad surrounded by pots at the upper right-hand side of the room to escape this death trap.

Take the stairs to the north to find yourself back at the start of the dungeon, in the room with three doors. Take the one in the middle and, this time, take the left path. As I'm sure you've already noticed, the floor here is cracked. Well, do the obvious thing: plant a Bomb to blow a gaping hole in the floor, then drop through it into the pit.

You'll land in the same room as before, except now you're on a high ledge. Ignore the fake cracked walls and raid the pots for some refills, then unlock the door to the north and go through. Check the chest to obtain the Big Key. Finally! Drop off the ledge and find your way back through all the rooms you've been through before. Return to that chamber with the crumbling floor, take the eastern door and work your way back through the darkened maze to find the Big Chest again. This time, we can open it. Inside is...

* NEW ITEM! Magic Hammer. In addition to functioning as an effective weapon in its own right (this is the only weapon that works against the turtle baddies that run rampant in this dungeon, for example), the Magic Hammer is also essential to surmounting certain obstacles, namely pegs in the ground or weird whack-a-mole-esque obstacles that we'll encounter in just a few moments.

Alright then, find your way back to the room with all the bouncy blue baddies (and the one red one) and the arrows on the floor. Jump off the ledge into the middle of the room (where the big blue bouncy pad is) and hit the colored orb that's gleaming on a ledge to the south with your Boomerang. This will lower the blue blocks to the right and allow you to pass through into the as-of-yet unexplored eastern doorway.

This room is devoid of enemies, but there's a puzzle to solve. There's only one door other than the one we came through, but it's closed. Break the pots on the right side of the stairs to uncover a floor switch that, when stepped on, will open the door. However, there's a catch. The moment you step off of it, the door will slam shut again. Not to worry, there's a simple solution. Push the nearest of the four stone statues onto the switch. Easy! Move ahead to the next room.

Say hello to another batch of those baddies whose movements mirror Link's. You already know how to deal with them, so slay all three of them and move on via the door. As soon as you enter the next room, immediately stop moving. Like, take your finger off of the D-Pad. There's a spiky block bouncing back and forth right in front of the door. Wait for it to pass, then quickly make a break for the passage directly to the north. Hit the colored orb at the top of the screen, then dodge the spiky block again as you explore the eastern half of the room. But wait a minute -- it's a dead end! No, actually, it's not. Equip your Bow and fire an Arrow directly into the eye of the grey statue at the top of the room. Doing so reveals a secret passageway and some stairs leading downwards.

It's dark in here and, ostensibly, there's nowhere to go -- every direction is blocked off by those whack-a-mole things I mentioned earlier (I don't know how else to identify them, so "whack-a-mole things" they shall be from here on out). No problem! Whip out your shiny new Hammer and pound them into the ground. Voila! You can pass! But be careful, because this room is dark and full of turtles (which, by the way, can be flipped onto their backs with the Hammer, thus exposing their soft underbellies, which can be slashed at will with your sword). The door leading onward is to the west, but to reach it you will have to first cross the withdrawn orange blocks, then use a ranged weapon like the Boomerang or Bow to hit the colored orb on the other side of the room. Use your last Key to open the door and move on.

The following room is a narrow corridor containing a solitary turtle. Flip him over with the Hammer and go to town on him. Note that he'll eventually flop back onto his feet, so work quickly before exiting to the south. Here you'll be swarmed by six or seven turtles, so be careful. The boss fight is right around the corner and you don't want to be low on Hearts for that. Try to flip over as many as possible with a single pound of the Hammer then slice them up. When they're all taken care of, the door will open. There are no enemies in the next room, thankfully, but there is a block-pusing puzzle of sorts. The room is set up as such:

```

      [1]
     [2]  [3]
    [T]  [W]  [T]
     [4]  [5]
      [6]
```

Where "T" represents a torch, "W" represents the warp pad that is your ultimate goal and the number represent blocks. Only block number 3 can be moved -- slide it downward to create a path to the warp pad. This warps you to a narrow corridor. Keep your Hammer equipped as you walk northward because there are two waves of turtle enemies headed straight for you. Kill them as you go. At the end of the path is the door that leads to the boss. Ready? Then let's go.

- Boss: GIANT ARMORED SCORPION THING -

The most difficult thing about this battle is not the boss's range of attacks, it is that this beast is literally a beast -- he takes up most of the room, meaning that there is very little space to maneuver. There are also spiky blocks at the top of the room, so you're better off staying in the lower half. As far as his attacks go, he's got two things to watch out for: a tail attack which happens without much warning and, as a result, is difficult to dodge. Although, I find that his tail is easier to avoid the closer you are to the boss himself, so stay as close as you can without making physical contact with him. Also, he likes to spit out fireballs which then divide into smaller fireballs before finally disappearing. This is easier to avoid -- just keep your eyes open and stay on the move.

So how do we hurt this thing? Use your Hammer to smash it's blue face mask. As you do this, the mask will begin to crack before eventually shattering completely. When this occurs, replace your Hammer with the Bow and start firing Arrow after Arrow at the green gem that, for some odd reason, is lodged in this creature's forehead. He doesn't have any new attacks in this new phase, but he moves much more quickly, which makes it a bit difficult to be accurate with your Arrows. My recommendation is simply to keep the Arrows coming -- the sooner you defeat this guy, the less damage he can inflict upon you.

When he's dead and gone, you'll receive a complimentary full Heart Container (as always) in addition to the first of the seven Crystals that you'll be earning in place of Pendants here in the Dark World. With the Dark Palace officially conquered, we're one step closer to saving both Zelda and Hyrule. Cool.

== EXPLORING THE DARK WORLD =====

As always, there's stuff a-plenty to explore and find before heading on to the next dungeon. If you're not interested in these extras, skip ahead to the next chapter ("Into the Flood"). Otherwise, keep reading.

- Before we conquered the Palace of Darkness, we visited a bridge south of

that rocky field between the Palace of Darkness and the Pyramid of Power. But that bridge was covered in pegs, and we couldn't cross it. With the Magic Hammer, that bridge is no longer an obstacle. Smash in the pegs and cross it. Head south first to the reach the Dark World equivalent of Lake Hylia. Hop off the ledge and into the green water, looking for a wide circle of rocks surrounding a patch of shallow water. Stand in the center and use the Magic Mirror to return to the Light World, where you'll find a Piece of Heart and one of those green electrical enemies.

- Now find your way back to the bridge with all the pegs and head west this way, toward where Link's house. There's still a building there in the Dark World, but it's not Link's house -- it's a Bomb Shop. There's nothing noteworthy in there as of now, but there will be a special surprise at this very shop later on in the game, so don't forget about it. Anyway, head south from here into a big grassy field. To the immediate east is a Bombable wall, inside of which is a cache of Rupees.
- Don't leave the field yet! Head west now -- on the other side of the wall near the northwestern lake is a heavy stone. Lift it and toss it aside, then head west. There are some Piggies patrolling this area, so deal with them, then check the southwest corner of the area to find a circle of bushes. Stand in the center of use the Magic Mirror again. In the Light World, you'll appear on a plateau, right next to a cave. Head inside to find some Heart refills and a Piece of Heart.
- Back to the Dark World. From the circle of bushes mentioned directly above, take a few steps north, cut through some more bushes and enter the grove here. In the middle you'll find a... thing. This thing wants to play his Flute, but he's too lazy to look for it himself, so he entrusts his Shovel to you. You can dig around here if you want, but you won't find what you're looking for (you might find some Rupees or other minor goodies, though). Instead, warp to the Light World and dig in the upper left-hand corner of the grove to find his Flute. Go back to the Dark World and play it for him. Now it's yours.
- With the Flute in tow, return to Kakariko Village (Light World). Stand in front of the weathervane (the stone bird in the middle of the village) and play it. Doing so will free the bird trapped inside (what?), who repays your kindness by carrying you to various points in Hyrule anytime you play the Flute. Good deal.
- Alright, get your butt back to the Dark World and head toward Kakariko Village. Instead of entering the village proper, check out the area south of it. There's a digging mini-game here. It costs 80 Rupees to play, which seems a bit steep, but what can you do? Anyway, it'll be worth the cost when you dig up another Piece of Heart.
- While you're still in the vicinity of Kakariko Village, warp to the Light World and head to the Blacksmith's Shop (one screen east from the village). There's a wooden peg just outside the Blacksmith's house -- hammer it into the ground. Hop off the ledge into the black pit below, then choose the northern door. Inside is an altar of sorts. Sprinkle some Magic Powder onto it and a surprisingly respectful and polite bat will appear. He's a bit peeved that you woke him up, so he'll exact his revenge by cutting your Magic Meter in half. This doesn't make your magic weaker -- what it really does is lessen the amount of Magic consumed when you use a magic item like Ether or the Ice Rod.
- Okay, last thing before we move on to the next dungeon, I promise. Enter the field south of the Bomb Shop and head southwest, like you're headed for

the Light World's desert. However, you'll find that there's no entrance to where the desert would be -- there's just a stone wall. But there are a bunch of pegs in the ground. I wonder what those are for? Stand to the left of them and warp to the Light World. Head left one screen to find a stone covered in scripture. Use the Book of Mudora (and you thought you'd used that for the last time, didn't you?) to translate it and receive of the Bombos Medallion.

That's it for now, so let's make our way to the second of the Dark World's seven dungeons.

g. INTO THE FLOOD

[Swamp Palace]

The watery next dungeon lies in a field located just south of where Link's house would be if it existed in the Dark World, but we can't just waltz in there. Well, you can, but you can't make any progress. First, we need to take care of something really quick. Let's get started.

== BEFORE THE SWAMP PALACE =====

The Swamp Palace is a small building located in the southern part of the field just south of the Bomb Shop (which is located in the Dark World's equivalent of Link's house). But there's a problem -- if you enter it now, there's nowhere to go. We need to open the floodgates first, so warp to the Light World and enter the corresponding building. Push the blocks out of the way (push the middle block forward and the right block to the right). There are two levers in the back room. Pull the one on the right (the left switch rains bombs upon you -- no fun) to open the floodgates and release the water. Go back outside and return to the Dark World.

Now we're ready. Go in.

== THE SWAMP PALACE =====

Assuming that you followed the steps listed directly above, the previously dry tunnel in this first room of the Swamp Palace should now be filled with water. Hop in to get your feet wet and swim to the stairs on the right. Examine the tablet on the wall to get some (predictably useless) info from Sahasrahla, then swim to the left and use the ladder to get back to dry ground. Watch out for the spiky block bouncing back and forth in front of you and kill the three baddies in the shallow pool. Your reward for doing so is a treasure chest, inside of which you'll find a key. This is handy, because the only door leading onward is locked. Unlock it and move on. Also, watch out for the shadowy creature bouncing around in the water -- you can't kill it, so you're better off just avoiding it.

The next room is quite a bit larger than the previous one, and as a result there are a few things to check out. First of all, blast open the cracked wall in the alcove to the left. Inside is a chest containing this dungeon's Map. Sweet. In the previous room, dodge the various enemies (daddy long-legs, more of those bouncy shadow creatures and, just for good measure, some fireballs) and raid the skull pots in the center of the room for some general goodies as well as a Key. Use it to unlock the door in the southwestern corner of the room.

The following room, much like the preceding one, is chock full of enemies. In addition to some floating electric jellyfish, there's a skeleton soldier, a traveling ball of flames (you can't destroy it, so just do your best to stay

out of its path), and to top it all off, there's a fireball-spewing statue in the middle of everything. Do your best to remain damage-free as you head for the staircase on the left. At the bottom of it you'll find a second staircase which takes you to a locked door. However, we don't have any keys at the moment, so ignore said staircase and instead go through the open doorway at the bottom of the stairs. Conveniently enough, there's a key hidden underneath a pot here. Take it back to the previous room and open the locked door.

Okay, start off by slaying the two skeletons. Once they're out of the equation, use the Hammer to pound the weird whack-a-mole things into the ground, thus granting you access to a switch. Press it to release a cascade of water into those tunnels that we were just exploring. But hold on a second, don't head back there just yet. First, use a Bomb to detonate the cracked western wall and grab the goodies inside the pots, then regress two rooms to discover that the raised water level allows you access to a ladder that was, previously, unreachable. Head through the doorway to reach a large room full of different doorways that will serve as a sort of hub for the immediate future.

In the center of this room, you'll notice, is that which we must desire when conquering a dungeon -- the Big Chest. Unfortunately, we don't have the Big Key just yet, but we'll rectify that soon enough. For now, though, take the southern door (directly south from the Big Chest). It leads to a circular series of rooms -- the route to the left is impeded by some blocks, so do the sensible thing and head to the right, slicing through any enemies that are stupid enough to cross your path. After traveling back westward through the southern chamber, you'll return to where you just came from, except now you're on the other side of the blocks. Push the lower one to the right to reveal a hidden treasure chest. Plunder it to attain the Compass, then return to the hub.

There are two more currently accessible doors in this cavernous chamber, but one of them is locked, so take the stairs in the lower left-hand corner of the room and enter the doorway at the top of them. Again you're faced with skeletons, electric jellyfish, and two kinds of flames. Furthermore, a retractable wall at the top of the room makes the situation a bit cramped, so move carefully. Take the stairs to the left; an arrangement of blocks blocks (haha) the way to the west, so peek into the door at the top of the screen instead. Just like last time, there's a Key beneath the skull pot. Grab it and return to the hub.

Now, how about we deal with that locked door? Get Link's elfish butt to the northwest corner of the room and unlock it. On the other side is a switch and a colored orb which, when hit, will lower the retractable wall. Defeat the various enemies first, then smack the colored orb to lower the wall, flip the switch, hit the orb to lower the wall again (make sure you do this, otherwise you'll have to return here in a bit), head out through the eastern door and re-enter the door at the lower left of the hub. With the water level in here raised, that series of blocks in the tunnel below is now irrelevant. Simply swim over it and onto the dry land on the other side. Go through the door.

Dodge some more enemies and drop off the ledge (or take the stairs, whichever you prefer) into the shallow water below. Ignore the long corridor leading to the north, it's a dead end. Instead, turn your attention to the four blocks that are impeding your path to the left. Unlike the last time this happened, these blocks can be moved. Check it out:

[1] [2]

[3]

[4]

Push block number four to the left, then block number three upward and -- hey presto! -- the path is clear. The stairs lead to a staircase that leads to a room filled with shallow water. Push the solitary block out of your way and head north to find a pit on either side of the room. These aren't the usual black pits of doom that you're accustomed to, however; dropping into these won't cause you any damage (I promise) and you'll land in the room below. Drop into the left pit and you'll land next to a chest, inside of which is a single red Rupee. Cool, but not exactly what we're looking for. Don't worry, just drop off the ledge to the right and return to the previous room. This time, fall into the pit on the right side of the room.

You'll land on a platform with two skull pots and another one of those retractable wall (if it's raised, you'll have to go back and hit the colored orb in that other room -- I told you you'd have to if you didn't listen to me earlier). In any case, proceed east through the doorway to find a line of pots (blue Rupees lay underneath each one -- score!) and, more important, a chest containing the Big Key. Awesome. Now get back to the hub and pop open the Big Chest to receive one of my personal favorite items in the game.

* NEW ITEM! Hookshot. Welcome to Awesomeville, population: You. The Hookshot's function is twofold: Firstly, it functions as a longer-range version of the boomerang, stunning distant enemies or snagging otherwise out of reach goodies. More importantly, however, it has the amazing ability to latch onto certain objects (pots, statues, et cetera) and pull Link toward them. This works even over chasms, gaps, or pits. BOING!

With the Hookshot in tow, there's move to explore in this room that I've been calling the hub. For starters, move to the edge of the platform that the Big Chest is sitting on. Do you see the skull pot on the ledge over to the right? Line yourself up parallel to it and fire the Hookshot at it. Boing! Now you're on that ledge. Pretty cool, huh? Yeah, totally cool. Anyway, there's a Key under the adjacent pot, so grab that before dropping off the ledge in the water below. Now get yourself to the platform in the upper left-hand corner of the room (the one with the door that used to be locked). If you stand on the far right edge of this platform, you can see a pair of skull pots on the ledge to the right. Hookshot yourself over there and use your shiny new Key to open the door.

In the subsequent room you're presented with a choice: left or right? Let's start with the left. The door at the end of this path is locked, but look underneath the nearest pot to find a switch. You know how this works: Move the nearby stone statue onto the switch, but don't head through the adjacent door -- it'll only take you to a dead end. Instead, take the path to the right and enter the door on that side -- the door, not the staircase. You'll emerge in a room with a switch and a pool of water. Hit the switch to drain the pool, then descend into it and head through the door.

The next room consists of a hallway which presents you with a north-or-south option. Opt for the southern path. Going through the doorway here will bring you to a pair of pots and a pair of chests (+40 Rupees). There's also a staircase, but don't be tempted by its lure. It just leads back to a previously-explored room, so ignore it and return to the preceding hallway. This time, go all the way north, through the doorway at the very top of the screen.

You'll find yourself in a room with a single doorway and a whole lot of waterfalls. Start by heading through the doorway -- it's a dead end, but there are some goodies stored within the pots. Back to the room with the waterfalls. It may seem like there's nowhere else to explore in this chamber, but things

are not always as they seem. Walk north *through* the penultimate waterfall (that means the second to last one before you hit the eastern wall) to find a secret door. Inside you'll find some more goodies, which are guarded by electric jellyfish, as well as a door leading still deeper into the dungeon.

Cut through the lone enemy in the following corridor and enter the room below. This room is filled with water, and the water is, in turn, filled with those annoying daddy long-legs type enemies. The longer you wait on the ledge, the more of them will congregate around you, so it's best to just take the plunge immediately. There's a Key stashed beneath the pot on the ledge to the right, so grab that before getting your feet wet again and heading west. Blow open the cracked wall to score some important refills, then use your Key to open the door. It's that time again: Boss time!

- Boss: JELLYFISH COVERED IN POPCORN -

Like many bosses in this game, this one consists of two stages. In the first stage, your task is to destroy the various popcorn-looking puffs floating around the boss's body. However, this can't be accomplished simply by slashing your sword at it. No, sir, you'll need to take on each puff on an individual basis. To do this, use the Hookshot to grab one, then quickly slash, slash, slash away at it until it either dies or returns to the boss's body. Lather, rinse, repeat. As you do this, the boss will float around the room, occasionally releasing all of its puffs at once. For now, this is its only attack, so take your time, be patient and you shouldn't take on much damage.

When the last puff has been destroyed, round two commences. The boss will now crash down onto the watery floor from high above and jettison around the room at high speed. A single swipe of the sword will prompt the creature to take to the sky, crash down again, and repeat the process all over again. At this point, a good offense is the best defense. Just keeping moving and whack it with your sword whenever it comes close. After enough slashes, it'll die and your job here will be done.

So that's two Crystals now, and another full Heart. We're making progress.

== PIECES OF HEART AND SOMETHING MAGICAL =====

With the Hookshot in hand, even more of Hyrule's dark, twisted twin brother is available for exploration. As always, if you want to move on immediately to the next dungeon, skip down to the next chapter ("Feed Me to the Forest").

- First up is the "something magical" mentioned above. We're headed for the Dark World's equivalent of the Light World's graveyard (which is just east of the Sanctuary, if you don't already know). The problem is that, where in the Light World there is a bridge that allows you to cross the river near the Witch's Hut, no such bridge exists in the Dark World. Instead, there is just a wooden plank (one screen north of the rocky field between the Pyramid and the Palace of Darkness, and one screen south of the shop). Equip the Hookshot, stand on said plank, and shoot yourself across the river. Cool. Now head one screen north and one screen east to find the graveyard (it's not so much a graveyard in the Dark World, but I'm gonna keep calling it one for the sake of easiness).

Once you arrive, you'll notice a stack of five rocks surrounded by a fence in the top-right corner of the graveyard (you'll have to use the Pegasus Shoes to smash an identical pile near the entrance to the graveyard). So, here's what you do: Smash the pile of rocks in the top corner, then stand directly above where they once were and use the Magic Mirror to return to

the Light World. You'll be in a corner of the graveyard that's surrounded by black rocks -- rocks that, as of now, are too heavy to lift. But that's not an issue, is it? Circle around to the front of the headstone, crash into it with the Pegasus Shoes (maybe a bit disrespectful, but oh well) and head inside to claim the Magic Cape. This cool item is essentially the same thing as the Invisibility Cloak from Harry Potter, except that it drains your Magic Power like crazy (something HP never had to worry about).

- While you'll still hanging around the Dark World version of the graveyard, why don't you circle around behind it. There's a ladder than leads up to a platform that is rather conspicuously devoid of anything. Hmmm. Seems odd, right? Try the Magic Mirror. Aha! There's a cave here. Go in, bomb the cracked wall, and claim your Piece of Heart.
- It's convenient that we've got the Magic Cape now (see two paragrap above if you don't have it), because the next Piece of Heart we're going after requires that you have it. Head west a couple screens from the Dark World's graveyard, then north as if you're headed toward Death Mountain when you get to the sign that reads "This way -> Cave." Continue north until you reach another sign, this one reading, "I'll give a Piece of Heart to the person who wears the Cape." From here, turn right and lift the large slab blocking access to the adjacent cave. Inside the cave, head north and up the stairs at the end of the cavern. There's a pit blocking the path ahead up here, but you can use the Hookshot to cross it. Here's the part where things get a bit tricky: There's a big blue bouncy pad blocking the road onward. How to get past it? Well, put on your Magic Cape and you can walk right through it. Very cool. Outside is your Piece of Heart.
- Finally, head to the Dark World's Kakariko Village. It's not so much a village as a haven for criminals and various other ne'er-do-wells, so watch your back while you're there. The Piece of Heart can be won in a mini-game found in a building on the west side of the village (the building is the one with the treasure chest symbol above its doorway, believe it or not). The game is pretty simple: The room is filled with treasure chests, you fork over 30 Rupees, open two chests, and keep whatever is inside. It's completely random, so there's no further help I can give you. There is a Piece of Heart in one of the chests, though, I promise. Good luck! I hope you brought a lot of Rupees, just in case it takes a while.

That's it for the time being; now, the next dungeon beckons!

h. FEED ME TO THE FOREST

[Skull Woods]

The third dungeon -- and the Crystal guarded by its boss -- is a change of pace from the ones we've explored and conquered so far. Instead of consisting of a single building, this one is comprised of various buildings scattered through the Dark World's Lost Woods. Enter the woods from the south (the entrance just north of the Village of Outcasts) and let's begin, shall we?

== THE SKULL WOODS =====

I'm tempted to brand The Skull Woods with the title of "Most Annoying Dungeon in the Game", but we still have to explore Misery Mire, the Ice Palace, and Turtle Rock, all of which are equally, if not more, annoying, so I won't jump the gun and do that.

Anyway, from the southern entrance to the woods, head north until you arrive at

a bush next to a black pit. Fall into the pit (you won't get hurt, I assure you). You'll land in a room full of blue bouncy pads, mummies, and spike traps. Welcome to the Dark World's third dungeon. There are also vines covering the walls. These can be cut with your sword, which doesn't help right now, but you'd do well to remember this little bit of miscellany for later. Also, there's one other really important thing to be aware of in this dungeon: Every so often, a giant hand will descend from the ceiling. If it grabs you -- and if you're standing beneath it, it will catch you -- you'll be taken back to the dungeon's entrance (which is **really** annoying*). You can try killing it, but it'll only come back, so the best thing you can do is stay on the move and hope for the best. Don't get caught off guard!

As for the task at hand, there are two exits in this room. The one in the southwest corner is closed, and the one in the top-right corner is locked. Luckily for us, there's a Key in the chest in the center of the room. Grab it, then, and exit north. Be careful upon entering the next room because a red shell enemy will immediately charge you down. Kill it. Now, there's a treasure chest in the corner, but black pits of doom are situated on either side of it. No problem -- simply step onto the nearby star panel to relocate the pits, allowing access to the chest. It contains the Map. The problem now, though, is that those same pits that were blocking the chest before are now blocking the path to the north. Oh well, we'll have to find a way to circumvent this issue. Head through the door on the western wall instead.

Look! It's the Big Chest! Already! Unfortunately, we don't have the Big Key yet (and even if we did, we can't get to the chest from this position -- sorry to be Debbie Downer, but it's the harsh truth). We don't have a normal Key either, which means the only option for now is to head back out into the scary forest via the southern door. You'll emerge from a skull-shaped door, just north of the pit that we used to enter the dungeon in the first place. There's a second pit just to the southwest of us. Drop into that one.

Without warning you'll be charged by a blue shell enemy, so consider this your warning. Some electric jellyfish reside here, as well. Head south past the bouncy pad and rotating column of flame (wait for it to pass 12 o'clock, then quickly move past it) and enter the open doorway to the right (don't worry about the skull pots behind the flames -- there's nothing special underneath any of them anyway). Enemy-wise, the following room is quite similar to the previous one -- there are shell enemies (in both the blue and red varieties) in addition to another rotating column of fire. Check the chest north of the flames to score the Compass. The act of opening the chest creates a series of pits across the floor, so watch your step.

Besides the door through which we entered this room, there are two more: One that leads to the east and one to the north. The eastern doorway leads back to that first room we explored (when we fell through the pit), so take the northern one instead. A bunch of mummies are waiting for you in here -- kill them all (or just the one blocking your way to the chest on the left, if you want), avoid the hand monster, and pop open the eastern door. This leads back to the room with the Big Chest -- again, there's nothing we can do here just yet, so head out into the forest again.

Mosey northward until you reach the cluster of nine purple bushes -- turn left at them and head further north through the tunnel of bones (ominous). At the end of the path you'll find another entrance to the dungeon. Like, go in. In addition to a couple of mummies, you'll find a couple of doors. The closed one to the north can and will be opened, but let's check out the left door first. Just head straight left through a second doorway to reach a room with a southern door that leads back out into the forest. Ignore this door and instead grab a Key from underneath the pot in the top-left corner. Regress two

rooms, to the chamber with the mummies, jellyfish, and closed door.

A;right, now let's get that door open, shall we? First things first, make life easier for yourself by clearing out all the enemies. With that taken care of, check the skull pots in the center of the room to find a floor switch that, when stepped upon, opens the door. But, as you know, you need something heavy to hold the switch down. The obvious thing to do is to grab one of the two stone statues nearby -- but you have to drag it, you can't push it (otherwise you'll open the door but be trapped behind the statue, so use the right shoulder button to grab the statue and drag it with you). One final thing to take note of: That super-annoying hand enemy patrols with room with an iron fist (do you see what I did there?). The faster you work, the less you'll have to worry about it. My best advice is to drop the statue and move away when you see the hand coming down, then resume your task once it disappears. Trust me, there's nothing more annoying than getting grabbed when you're on the verge of setting the statue in its proper place. This can be one of the most frustrating parts of the game, so be patient and stick with it.

When you finally reach the northern room, start as always by defeating the various enemies (a mummy, a skeleton, and a jellyfish -- blurgh). After that, raid the treasure chest to find the Big Key. Totally effin' sweet. Take care to avoid the skull pot at the north of this room, by the way -- underneath it is a "powerup" that temporarily morphs Link into a very cute but ultimately defenseless bunny. Don't touch it. I know it's temping, but don't touch it. Don't do it. Just leave it alone. Okay. Bomb the cracked eastern wall to find a replenisher for your Magic Power (if you needed it), then go back outside. Travel back through the tunnel of ribs and head for that cluster of nine bushes. Cut them up to reveal another pit -- fall into it to find yourself in the northern part of a room that we'd previously explored.

There are a few enemies to worry about in here, namely a blue shell monster, a ball of energy that crawls along the various skull pots, and one of those armored bugs that we first encountered in the Dark Palace. Deal with them all accordingly (the ball of energy can't be destroyed, so just ignore it) and Bomb the western wall. Before heading through the doorway that you've just created, make sure that the nearest star panel has been stepped on. Did you do that? Okay, then let's go. There are various cracks along the southern wall here, but Bombs won't dent them any further. Just pull the level on the wall instead. Doing so will blow open the southern wall and allow you to get to the Big Chest.

* NEW ITEM! Fire Rod. Did you ever wonder what the Ice Rod would be like if it shot fire instead of ice? No? Well, like it or not, that's exactly what the Fire Rod does. The Fire Rod is essentially the Ice Rod's twin, except that instead of chilling baddies with icy blasts, it fries them with balls of fire. It's a lot of fun to play with, but as always the caveat is that it eats up Link's Magic Power. So, like, use it sparingly and stuff.

Okay, so we've got the Fire Rod, but where to next? Head outside and north again through the skeletal tunnels. Head back inside through the entrance here (I'm sure you remember this room from earlier -- it was really annoying). Thankfully, there's nothing quite so annoying this time around -- just head west through a couple of rooms and exit south to find yourself outside once again. There are now two sets of bone tunnels -- the one on the right doesn't lead to anywhere particularly fruitful, so take the left one instead. "But wait just a second!", I hear you protest. "This is a dead end!" Well, not quite. Equip your shiny new Fire Rod and swing it at the long, thin bone protruding outward toward you. A secret entrance -- wow! Go in.

Go ahead and cut up the worms on the walkway ahead, but the door at the end of

it is locked, so you'll need to take the stairs near the entrance first. This lower area is slightly misleading -- you can't, for instance, access that tantalizingly-close treasure chest from where you are, so simply stand out of sight beneath the overhead walkway and move north until you can enter the doorway at the top of the screen. The next room is filled with obstacles galore -- do your best to avoid them as you dash south to find a doorway on the western wall. Head through to find that chest from the previous screen -- inside is a Key. There's a set of stairs in the previous room, but it leads to a dead end. Ignore it, then, and return to the first room of this area. With that Key in hand, you can now unlock the door at the north end of the walkway. Do so.

Star panels littered across the floor make this next room a bit difficult to explain. Whenever you step on one of the panels, the various black pits in the room will re-arrange themselves. The door we need to exit this hellhole is located on the eastern wall, so tread carefully from star panel to star panel, always trying to work your way toward that side of the room. There's another nasty hand enemy in this room, as well, so be vigilant for that. In the next room, make taking out the various mummies your primary objective. Once that's done, equip your Fire Rod and light all four torches to open the door. Again, watch out for the aggravating hand baddie.

Be prepared for sensory overload when you enter the next room -- there are worms and mummies and one of those weird yellow swirly things that turns Link into a bunny (oh my!). Do your best to avoid it and kill all the enemies. After that, you might start to think that this room is a dead end. But do you remember what I told you about the ivy on the walls? Hack away the green stuff on the northern wall to expose a hidden doorway. The next room is, again, teeming with enemies. Defeat them all to win the Key that will open the door leading onward.

And here we are again -- the final room before the boss. Heal up, save your game, whatever you need to do to ensure that you're ready, then drop into the hole in the floor to meet the fearsome master of the Skull Woods.

- Boss: GIANT MOTH -

Oh yes, the fearsome master of the Skull Woods is a big moth. Uh... Scary? This is kind of an odd boss fight because the most difficult part of the battle isn't the actual boss itself, but rather the various spikes that form a makeshift ring around the room. Not only do these restrict your movement and make for a rather cramped arena, but as the battle rages on, they'll begin to fall toward you. As a result of this, it's an absolute necessity that you stay on the move in order to minimize the damage you take on.

As for the offensive side of things, the Fire Rod is your best bet to fry this dude (which is ironic because moths are usually drawn toward flames). Fling shot after shot of fiery goodness at this creature as you do your best to dodge the spikes as well as the orange rings that he shoots out. If you run out of Magic Power, don't fret -- your sword also works against this boss, although it's significantly weaker than the Fire Rod. The Giant Moth only has one form, so once you've sufficiently fried him, the battle will come to a close.

Another full Heart, another Crystal. Whoa-oh, we're (almost) halfway there. Now, I know that we usually go on all kinds of fun adventures to score lots of awesome goodies between dungeons, but I'm sorry to say that that is not the case in this instance. There's nothing new to explore at this moment in time, so all we can do is head for the next dungeon.

Our next destination is the dungeon known as Thieve's Town, which is located in the Village of Outcasts (which, predictably, is the Dark World's dark and twisty version of Kakariko Village). It's just south of the Skull Woods, so get movin'. When you arrive at the village, check out the central plaza. Do you see the giant gray gargoyle (hooray for alliteration!) statue? Approach the grate formed by its trident, grab it with the right shoulder button and give it a good tug to open it. Welcome to Level Four.

== THIEVES' TOWN =====

The entry room of this dungeon consists of two parts: An upper tier and a lower tier. On the upper tier are some skull pots and a closed door on the eastern wall, but nothing else worthy of note, so take the nearby stairs or hop off the ledge to get to the lower area. Remove the skull pot that's blocking the path to the north and head in that direction. You'll meet a pair of blue lizardmen up here as well as the slightly-more-hardcore red lizardman -- kill them all, then check the chest on the left to acquire the Map. From here, there are two paths leading north off-screen. Take the one on the right.

Kill off another red lizardman and run due north toward a set of stairs that will take you back to the upper tier. Follow the walkway south until you reach a cracked wall -- bust through it with the Pegasus Shoes and duck inside the hole you've just created. To the north and south you can find blue Rupees stashed beneath skull pots, and in the case of the northern path there is a second cracked wall. This one requires a Bomb to blow open, so set one and go through the hole to score another two blue Rupees. Now regress two rooms (to the first room that had a cracked wall) and use the stairs to return to the lower tier. Head west, avoiding the moving flames that are roaming around this area, then press southward and finally back east toward a staircase. See the treasure chest just over to the left? Well, follow the walkway west, then south, then east, then finally north to reach it. Inside is a red Rupee.

Drop down to the lower level and stroll east onto the next screen. From here, turn south and keep walking down until you pass below the upper tier and onto the next screen. Fight off a couple more lizardmen and use the stairs to the southeast of where we entered this room to access the upper level. Move south, then west, then finally north to find the chest containing this dungeon's Compass. Okay, now from this chest, drop off the ledge and walk west onto the next screen, where you'll find yet another chest. This is a really exciting chest, because inside is no more, no less than the Big Key. I know what you're thinking: Already!? Yep, we already have the Big Key. But don't worry -- we're nowhere near being done with this dungeon yet.

Head east one screen, then walk all the way north onto the next screen. In this room, find the nearest staircase and, once you've accessed the upper tier, check out the north wall to find the door that you can unlock with the Big Key. The subsequent corridor has three doors: The closest one requires a Key (and we don't have one of those at the moment), the one in an alcove to the north is closed for the time being, and the one due north is open but completely and somewhat conspicuously empty (don't worry -- we'll be back here in due time). Search the skull pots near the northernmost door to find a Key, then use it to open the locked door and head on through.

In the next room, deal with a couple of lizardmen and simply walk due west through the wide open doorway. In addition to some conveyor belts, spike traps, and mobile flame enemies, the next room boasts two doors. Take the door

to the left, doing your best to avoid all the nasties as you cross the room (you can't kill either of the flame-type enemies, so don't bother trying). The following room is quite similar, except it's more north-south than the previous one was. Hop onto the conveyor belt and carefully directly Link northward, doing your best to dodge the flames, spikes, et cetera along the way. There's a door directly north and one on the eastern wall, but a retractable block is impeding your path to the latter, so go with the former.

Spikes fill the next room, but they're conveniently held at bay by retractable blocks. Snag the Key from beneath the skull pot, hit the colored orb to release the various spikes, and open the door at the top of the room. There are several things of note in the following room: For one, there's a tablet to the left, which you won't be able to reach if you hit the colored orb in the past room, as I suggested. Don't worry, it's just Sahasrahla and you know by now that he doesn't have anything interesting to say. There's also a lever to the right of the doorway, but do yourself a big favor and ignore it: Pulling it will bring you nothing but trouble, I promise. Furthermore, there are some notable fractures in the floor, but they can't be blown open, so don't waste your time trying. Finally, there's the issue of the closed door on the eastern wall. Check the skull pots at the bottom of the screen to find a switch. Move along.

Ignore several more cracks in the floor as you traverse the subsequent hallway. In the room at the end of the hall is what you really want: There's a chest that contains some Bombs, which you should toss over the barrier and onto the cracked floor that's spotlighted by the sunbeam streaming through the window. Doing so allows the sunlight to filter into the room below this, which is that oddly empty room we checked out just a little while ago. This may seem pointless, but I assure you that you'll understand why we had to do this before long.

Now, work your way back to that corridor with the conveyor belts. Assuming that you activated the colored orb in the room before it (and if you didn't, go back and do it), the nearest door on the eastern wall should now be open. Go through it. Deal with a couple of lizardmen in the next room before exiting through the eastern doorway. There are an additional three doors in this next conveyor belt-filled room: The easternmost door takes us back to a prior corridor, the southern one leads to some Rupees, and the northern one leads deeper into the dungeon. So grab the Rupees from the southern doorway, then take the northern one.

Kill three enemies in the next room to open the sealed door to the left. Don't worry about the southern door. There'll be a door directly across from where you enter the next room, but ignore it because there's absolutely *nothing* of any worth in there. Instead, hop onto the conveyor belt and work your way to the south as carefully as possible. I recommend using the Hookshot to deal with the electric jellyfish from a distance. At the bottom, there's a locked door and an open door. We don't have any Keys at the moment, so do the sensible thing and opt for the open one.

Dash straight across through the doorway to reach the dungeon's, er... dungeon. You'll have to deal with several lizardmen as you fight your way northward through the various gates (which look like they're locked but really aren't). At the top of the room is the prototypical damsel in distress. Don't talk to her just yet; instead, take the Key from the nearby chest and return several rooms to that locked door we passed. Check it out! It's the Big Chest! Pound the whack-a-mole things into the ground and snag Titan's Mitt.

* NEW ITEM! Titan's Mitt. This is a long-overdue upgrade for the Power Glove that we found aaaaaaall the way back in the Desert Palace. I'm sure

you've noticed black rocks in various locations throughout Hyrule -- rocks that were, frustratingly, too heavy for Link to lift, even with the Power Glove. Well, be frustrated no longer! Titan's Mitt grants Link the might he needs to lift any stone in the game.

Now, quickly return through the door before the floor completely disappears. Return to the prison cells and talk to the girl, who'll implore you for help. From this point onward, she'll follow your every move. Despite her claims that she wants to be taken outside, however, returning to the dungeon's entrance is a complete and utter waste of time -- a fool's errand, you might say, because this young lady doesn't actually want to leave the dungeon. Instead, take her to that weird room that didn't have anything in it. You know, the one at the end of that long corridor? Yep, that's the one. Take her there and lead her into the sunlight (assuming you blew the floor in the room above as I instructed, if not you'll have to go and do that now) to reveal her true form.

- Boss: FAKE MAIDEN / REAL MONSTER -

Uh, so not your prototypical damsel in distress, then. This boss's modus operandi is as follows: He floats around from wall to wall, blasting laser beams at you. There's no foolproof way to avoid them, so your best bet is simply to stay in motion at all times. You can, in turn, damage him by slashing his head with your sword. Once you've inflicted enough damage, his head will come off (what?) and start floating around the room of its own volition, shooting lasers at will. You can't hurt the disembodied head, so wait until you body begins to move again and redouble your efforts. Again, after you land another few blows, a second head will enter the fray (how many heads does this dude have?). This time, when you land the final blow it will be the final blow for real.

As always, the end of the battle brings you another full Heart, another Crystal, and another lame plea from some random Maiden.

== THE TEMPERED SWORD & OTHER COOL SHAZZ =====

The Titan's Mitt we found in Thieves' Town opens up a whole lot of new things to check out. Most importantly, we can get an upgrade for that Master Sword that you've been dragging around for quite a while now. Let's get crackin'.

- Warp to the Light World and speak to the Blacksmith (homeboy who lives in the house one screen east of Kakariko Village). He'll promise to temper your sword if you can find his partner. To do so, you'll need to return to the Dark World. One screen south of the Village of Outcasts, you'll encounter a weird little Frog-man (ribbit!) bouncing around behind some black stones. Toss the stones out of the way and talk to him. He'll beg you to take him back to his partner -- be a good man and help him out. With him following you, warp back to the Light World and return to the Blacksmith's house. The brothers are now reunited, and to reward you for your kindness, they'll temper your sword. The caveat is that you'll have to give up your sword while they work on it, which means you'll be temporarily weaponless. Don't worry -- just work on a couple of the things listed below, and when you're done with them you'll have your sword back and it'll be better than ever.
- How about a Piece of Heart? Warp to the Dark World and visit the screen east of the Village of Outcasts (the same place where the Blacksmiths live in the Light World). Toss the giant black slabs out of the way and hammer all the pegs in front of you into the ground. Doing so reveals a secret staircase. Head down it to earn another Piece of Heart.

- Don't leave the area yet! Inside the Dark World's version of the Blacksmith brothers' house is an odd treasure chest that Link can't open. However, if you inspect it, it will follow you (how can it move when it doesn't even have legs? I have no idea). Now, do you remember that weird old man who lived near the Desert of Mystery in the Light World? No? Well, there's this weird old man who lives near the Desert of Mystery in the Light World (he's sitting next to a sign one screen east of the Desert proper). Bring the chest to him and he'll open it for you, revealing the fourth and final Bottle. Just make sure that you don't dash with the Pegasus Shoes while the chest is following you, otherwise you'll lose it.

- Okay, one last thing before we move onto the next dungeon. First off, fill up your Bottles with Red or Blue Potion, especially if you don't have the Magic Cape. Then, go to the Light World and climb up Death Mountain, climbing that long ladder as if you're headed toward the Mountain Tower. Step onto the swirly blue warp tile (the same one we used the very first time we went to the Dark World -- nostalgia!). Once you're in the Dark World, walk due south to find a small gap in the barrier. Drop off the ledge here and you'll land on a small ledge below. Go through the doorway. The floor in this cave is covered in spikes, which means you need to either have the Magic Cape or be able to take a lot of damage without dying (hence the Potions). With either method, smash the whack-a-mole things in with your Hammer and move as quickly as possible across the spikes. Your reward at the end of the road is the Cane of Byrna. Not really worth the trouble, honestly, but if you're a perfectionist you'll want to take the time to acquire this item.

Onto the Ice Palace.

 j. THE COOLEST

[Ice Palace]

The ice-covered Ice Palace is located in the chilling waters of the Lake of Ill Omen, the Dark World's green, goopy version of Lake Hylia. To get there, cross the bridge south of the Pyramid of Power by hammering the pegs into the ground and, instead of heading west toward the Bomb Shop, continue moving in a southerly direction. Plop into the water and swim toward the southeast of the screen -- the Ice Palace is the big white-gray building floating on the water. However, there's no discernible entrance. What are we gonna do? No problem, I'm a problem-solver. Gaze into the Magic Mirror to warp to the Light World. You'll emerge on (or near) an island in the middle of Lake Hylia. Lift the black stone in the center of the island to reveal a warp tile -- step on it to find the entrance to the Ice Palace.

* Note: Take care to watch out for the bouncy orange monster that keeps lashing its tongue at you. It likes to steal (and eat) your shield, and the last thing you want going into this dungeon is to be defenseless.

== THE ICE PALACE =====

The Ice Palace's foyer isn't the largest room we've explored, but there doesn't appear to be any exit. The door to the left is closed, but there's a tablet on the northern wall. Move toward it and an ice monster will detach itself from the wall and charge toward you. Not to fear! Whip out that Fire Rod of yours and toast him. Doing so opens the door to the east. Check the tablet before leaving to get some (useless) advice from Sahasrahla.

You'll be familiar with the brand of enemy that occupies the next room -- electric jellyfish are nothing new. However, don't go running willy-nilly

toward them, because the floor is covered in a sheet of ice. Ice, as I'm sure you know, is quite slippery, so it's important to move slowly and carefully. This dungeon is full of ice (what? you mean there's *ice* in the *Ice* Palace? no way!), so now's as good a time as any to get acclimatized to moving around on it. I recommend defeating the jellyfish with a ranged weapon like the Hookshot if at all possible. One of the three will drop a Key, so use that to unlock the northern door and move onward.

There's another closed doorway in the subsequent corridor. Look for the floor switch in the southern alcove to open it, but watch out for the green blobs that pop out of the floor. Move along. This next room is cross-shaped, with a door at each point. It will become a sort of hub for the time being -- this isn't the last time you'll cross through this room, believe me. For now, your only option is to push the block to the right, allowing access to the northern and southern doors. Since the one to the north is closed, head south.

More ice, and this time the room is filled with scaly, greenish penguin-esque baddies who are quite adept at moving on the ice. I find that the whirling blade technique is quite useful in this particular situation -- since there are so many enemies in such a cramped area, you're sure to connect with at least one of them. Clear out the penguins, then grab the Compass and return to the cross-shaped room. This time push the central block to the north. Doing so grants access to the eastern door. It's locked, but there's a floor switch right in front of it. Step on that to open the door and head through it.

Tired of sliding around on the ice yet? I hope not, 'cause this room is again covered in a layer of it. There are more penguins to deal with, as well as a circulating fireball. Kill the penguins and check beneath the lower skull pot to open the eastern door (ignore the upper pot -- lurking beneath it is one of those rings of energy that transform Link into that helpless but oh-so-cute bunny). In the next room you'll find... a dead end. Hmm. What to do, what to do? Well, there's no point staying here (but we'll be back later, I assure you), so trek back to the cross-shaped hub room.

Push the central block to the west this time, and you'll finally have access to the northern door. Go through it. Okay, there are a couple of things to deal with in this room. Start off by killing the electric jellyfish. Once that task is complete, smack the orb to lower the blue blocks and move into the northern half of the room. Defeat the jellyfish in this area, too, then take a look at the cracked floor. That's a bit conspicuous, don't you think? Toss a Bomb onto it to blow a hole in the floor, but you won't be able to access yet because those confounded red blocks are impeding your path! Calm down, here's what you do: plant a Bomb next to the crystal orb, then quickly dash onto the north side of the room. Where the Bomb detonates, the blue blocks will rise and the red ones will recede into the floor. Drop through the hole.

You'll land on another cracked floor, but don't bother trying to Bomb it -- it won't have any effect. Instead, check out the tablet on the northern wall to get some classically vague information from Sahasrahla about how to defeat the Skeleton Knight. Right on cue, said Skeleton Knight will appear as soon as you're done talking with Sahasrahla. A single blow from your sword will cause the Knight to collapse into a pile of bones, but before long he'll be as good as new. In order to defeat him for good, you need to blow those bones up with a Bomb. There's a second Skeleton Knight in the southern half of the room -- use the same tactics to dispatch of him, then proceed through the door.

Now, this is a bit tricky. The floor is moving, and there are spike traps all over the place. If ever there was a time to move slowly, cautiously, this is it. Use the Hookshot to target the electric jellyfish from a distance -- make sure you take them all out, because one of them is carrying a Key. Fight your

way to the western side of the room, make sure the orb is currently colored red, and unlock to the door.

On the other side is a narrow walkway, the crossing of which is complicated by the presence of one of those clockwise-moving columns of flame. You know how to deal with these by now: wait until it moves past you, then move to safety. Be sure to check beneath each of the skull pots in this room, because beneath one of them is a floor switch that opens the door leading onward. The following room is pleasantly uncomplicated -- an open doorway and few blob baddies is all there is to think about.

Head downstairs to encounter a line of penguin enemies. The moment you enter, they'll all charge toward you. Cut a hole through them and proceed to destroy each and every one of them to unlock the door on the northern wall. Step into the next room, but don't make a move. As soon as you enter, a giant spiked enemy will slide toward you. As long as you're standing in the doorway you'll be safe, but make the slightest movement toward the north and you'll be looking at a spike in the face. Ouch. Just hang out in the doorway until the spiked thing backs off, then quickly head north and duck in either the eastern or western alcove. Neither the locked door to the right nor the wide open one to the left leads to anything particularly fruitful at the moment, so get the spiked thing to move south again by moving ever-so slightly into the middle of the room, then quickly dash into the northern door before it has the chance to crash you.

When you enter the next room, the floor tiles will begin to crumble. Don't bother trying to run away from the disappearing floor -- just fall in. You'll land next to another one of Sahasrahla's tablets -- check it out and he'll warn you not to waste Magic Power. Uh, like we didn't already know that. Anyway, there are two doors to the south, but don't venture that way just yet. Take the closest door -- the one on the northeast side of the room -- instead. Shoot down the electric jellyfish with the Hookshot, then use the same item to grab the block across the pit. Head south.

As before, don't move! This time there are four giant spiked monsters waiting to crush you. The exit to this room is just to your left, but you'll need to maneuver south around a barrier in order to get there. Ready? Go! Move as quickly as possible and you should make it there without sustaining any damage. Now, deal with some electric jellyfish. We don't have a Key for the locked door to the left (and it just leads back to a previous room, anyway), so ignore it, use the Hookshot to grab the skull pot across the spikes and check beneath it to find a floor switch. Step on that to reveal a chest back on the other side of the spikes. Again Hookshot across the spikes and snag the Key inside the chest. Now, you could just simply open the locked door to the east, but I wouldn't recommend that. Instead, I suggest crossing the spikes again (if you have the Cane of Byrna or the Magic Cape you can do so without sustaining any damage, otherwise you'll have to lose a few Hearts) and heading up the stairs on that side.

At the top of the stairs, fight off a Skeleton Knight, then smack the whack-a-mole things into the ground and lift the giant grey stone in the center of the room. Take the Key beneath it, defeat another Skeleton Knight, raid the skull pots for some assorted goodies and a floor switch (finally, the Map is yours!) and finally pull the statue's tongue (yes, you read that correctly) to open the eastern door. Ascend the staircase here and you'll find yourself in a room that should look very familiar. The only difference is that, this time, you're on the other side of the barrier. Raid the chest to score the Big Key (oh yes!), then push the lower block to the left and the upper block upward to create a path to the door to the west. Head through it and now we've got some backtracking to do.

Make your way back through all of the rooms that we've already explored until you arrive at the cross-shaped hallway with that giant spiky enemy that tries to smash you as soon as you enter. If you remember, last time we were in this room we took the northern doorway. Well, this time we want to take the western one. In here, there's a stairway located on the far side of a rotating column of flames. Avoid the flames and head down the staircase (the ice makes it difficult to line Link up properly with the stairs, but just keeping pressing down and eventually you'll get it). You'll enter a room that seems devoid of baddies, but be on guard because there are two ice monsters encased in the northern wall. Defeat them, then grab the Bombs from the chest that appears.

Now, your first impulse will be to drop through the hole in the floor on the right side of the room. Don't do it! Instead, use one of your shiny new Bombs to blow open the cracked floor on the left side of the room. Fall through that hole instead and you'll land right next to the Big Chest. Pop it open to receive something cool...

* NEW ITEM! Blue Mail. You've got mail! (do you see what I did there?) Not a weapon or tool, the Blue Mail is a brand new suit of armor for Link to don. Apparently blue is a stronger color than green, because wearing this sweet outfit reduces the amount of damage that Link sustains from enemy attacks by half. Very cool.

Okay, now let's blow this popsicle stand. Push the blocks in your way to the right and exit through the eastern doorway. An ice monster will attack as soon as you enter the next room -- roast him with the Fire Rod, then use the Big Key to open the door at the top of this room. Deal with some electric jellyfish, as well as a Skeleton Knight, then unlock the door at the top of the room with one of the two keys that you should already have. Avoid the roaming flame enemy in the subsequent room and head due south.

Now, take on some more jellyfish and another ice monster than unlock the door to the right (you should have a Key for it already). In here you'll find exactly what you need: a colored orb. Smack it once to to lower the blue blocks, check the pots for some random goodies, then return through the previous few rooms until you return to the room with the giant grey block in it. Unfortunately, the raised red blocks impede our path to said giant grey block, so we'll have to take a detour. Head east through the open doorway.

Another icy room -- blurgh. Check the skull pot to the immediate north to find a Key, then check the solitary pot in the northeast quadrant of the room to find a floor switch which opens both the western and southern doors. Head south. Take it easy is the best advice that I can give you for the next room -- an icy floor, black pits of doom on either side of the narrow catwalk, and a rotating column of flames make this room quite difficult to navigate. As always, wait for the flames to move past, then run for the door. Good luck not falling into the pits of doom along the way.

The stairway to the north of the following room is wide open, but don't get ahead of yourself -- check the skull pot to the south first to score a Key. Now head north to reach a room filled with ice monsters and blob monsters, as well as one of those rings of energy that transform you into Bunny Link. By now you know how to deal with all these obstacles, so clear the room then open the locked door and move on.

You'll emerge in a room that may or may not look familiar. This room is full of baddies, spike traps and other nasty things that you don't want to deal with. Well, here's the good news: you don't have to deal with them! Simply check the pots directly ahead to find a switch that opens the door to your

immediate left, and go through it. Now this room definitely looks familiar. Just drop into the pit to return to the Big Chest room. Head west and you'll arrive back at that giant grey block that I was going on about earlier. Lift it up, toss it wherever you want, and drop into the pit that was concealed beneath it.

You'll land in the southern half of a room that we explored previously. Smack the jellyfish and Skeleton Knight and continue south. More jellyfish. Kill them, then lift the big slab to the right to discover four more jellyfish. Quickly cut them down, then Hammer the pegs into the ground to reach the pots in the bottom corner. Okay, so what do we do now? This room appears to be a dead-end, but it's not. See the two statues on the left side of the room? Grab the right one with the shoulder button and pull him northward, thus creating a path to the pegs to the south. Smack them with the Hammer and lift another giant block to uncover a pit. Ready for this? Okay, drop in.

- Boss: GIANT PUFFY EYEBALL ENCASED IN ICE -

The first half of this battle is surprisingly straightforward. The boss himself doesn't really do much of anything -- I guess it's hard to when you're frozen. As such, the only danger comes in the form of heavy chunks of ice that drop from the ceiling. You can see their shadows before they come crashing down, so keep your eyes out for them and keep on the move. In regard to attacking this beast, there's really only one option, isn't there? Whip out your Fire Rod and let him have it.

Once you've cooked him enough, the ice will melt, setting the eyeball, as well as two other eyeballs, free. The Fire Rod is still effective at this stage of the battle, but Link's sword is just as useful, so go with whichever you prefer. It's important not to be caught stationary, because in addition to the three giant eyeballs the chunks of ice are still raining down from above. The most effective strategy is to deal with the eyeballs one at a time. Try to pin one of them down in a corner and keep slashing until it's defeated. Once all three have been destroyed, the next Crystal is yours.

One more Crystal is ours, which means that we're that much closer to the final showdown with Ganon. Now then, there are two more Pieces of Heart to grab before we enter the next dungeon, but as they are located so near to the dungeon itself I'll just cover those in the lead-up to Misery Mire.

k. THE DRYNESS AND THE RAIN

[Misery Mire]

Misery Mire doesn't sound like a place that I'd want to visit, but unfortunately that's where the sixth Pendant is hidden. It's located in the Swamp of Misery, which is located in the Dark World's equivalent of the Desert of Mystery. Let's get movin'.

== PIECES OF HEART AND THE SWAMP OF MISERY =====

If you trek to the Swamp of Misery on foot, you'll be sorely disappointed, because there's nothing but a big wall blocking your path in. So, how do we get inside then? Easy, use the Magic Mirror to return to the Light World, then equip the Flute. Choose to travel to number six and you'll land on a plateau overlooking the Desert of Mystery. There are two black stones nearby -- lift the right one up to discover a warp tile. Swamp of Misery, here we come!

Drop off the ledge and head northward, following the western wall through the

super-depressing swamp (I guess this is why they call it the Swamp of Misery). Near the northern limits of the swamp is an small, odd-looking building -- head inside to find a pair of treasure chests at the far end of this mini-dungeon. Block pushing puzzles? Oh dear. Here's what the situation look like when you enter:

```
[6]      [7]
      [C][C]
[2][3]   [5]
[1]     [4]
```

The blocks marked with "C" represent the treasure chests. Push block 1 to the left, then slide block 4 to the right. Next, push block 2 one space north and, finally, move block 3 to the left. Easy! Check both chests to receive a Red Rupee and a Piece of Heart. Score. Go back outside.

In the northeast corner of the swamp is an small alcove. Stand in this area and look into the Magic Mirror -- back in the Light World, you'll be standing next to a big stone. Toss it out of the way to reveal staircase. Like, go down it and stuff. Here's another block pushing puzzle, and your reward for completing it is another Piece of Heart. Worth the trouble? You decide. Here's what we're looking at:

```
      [5]   [A]   POH
[2]   [7]   [B]
      [4]   [9]   [D]
[1]   [6]   [C]
      [3]   [8]   [E]
```

The letters "POH" denote, of course, Piece of Heart. Where to start? Why not start with block 1? Slide it north, then move onto block 4, which you should also move north. Block 9 is next -- move it to the right. Finally, slide the block labelled "B" to the right and the Piece of Heart is yours! See, that wasn't so hard, was it?

Okay, let's move on to the actual dungeon now, shall we? Go back outside and warp back to the Dark World. The entrance to Misery Mire is located on a stone platform just to the southeast of the building where we discovered the first Piece of Heart. However, when you get there you'll no doubt notice that there is no entrance. There is, however, an odd symbol carved in the ground. Isn't that the same symbol that's enscribed on the Ether Medallion? Equip it, stand on the symbol and use it to reveal the entrance to Misery Mire.

== MISERY MIRE =====

Let me preface: this dungeon is called *Misery* Mire for a reason -- it sucks. Be prepared for a tedious slog (although, really, it isn't *that* bad -- just wait til we get to Turtle Rock!). That said, let's get started! Move through the narrow hallway until you reach a black pit. Slay the gang of blobs that will have appeared behind you, then use the Hookshot to latch onto the block on the far side of the pit. Head down the stairs.

Defeat the gummy worm-type enemies on either side of the stairs, then move onward, heading toward that weird, shrill sound. What is that sound, anyway? Move ahead and you'll discover that it's the sound of nasty wizard enemies blasting laser beams here, there, and everywhere. There's also a laser statue (we haven't seen one of those in a long time), as well as a few more gummy worms. Defeat all the enemies in this room to open the door leading onward.

Now, there are quite a few options in this room. Downstairs, or through the door to the east? For starters, head downstairs and make your way toward the northeast corner of the room. To do so, you'll have to follow the barriers westward, then curve back eastward once you've moved to the north side of them. There are two staircases in the northeast corner, but one of them is inaccessible for the time being, so take the one on the left and enter the doorway at the top of it.

Defeat two more gummy worms, be vigilant of the fireballs that fly out of the torches in the center of the room, and head east through the open doorway. Here's a busy room -- there are skeletons, spikes, a locked door, and a laser eye statue. Where do we start? I'd suggest taking out the various skeletons first. After that, lift the skull pot in the top-left corner of the room to find a Key. Don't leave just yet, though. Do you see the skull pot sitting in the middle of the spike pit? Well, we're gonna need to lift that pot up. If you've got the Cane of Byrna, then awesome, use that and you won't sustain any damage. If not, be prepared to take some damage. Beneath the pot is a switch that reveals a chest (also in the spike pit). There's a second Key in this chest. Take it, then exit north through the locked door.

There are two doors in the next room: one that leads north and a second one down below that leads west. Take the one to the north and you'll emerge on a long, narrow walkway. Follow it, as well as the one on the subsequent screen to reach the next room. Defeat the wizard that apparates directly in front of you (that's a Harry Potter reference, btw), then head east past the skull pots and around the oddly-shaped barrier. On the other side, you'll find a Key beneath a pot and, more importantly, an orb switch. Thwack it to make the blue blocks recede. This grants you access to the lower half of the room, where you'll find some skeletons baddies, skull pots, and -- finally -- a locked door. Open it up and head through.

There's another spike pit to cross here, so I hope you've got plenty of Magic Power. Equip the Cane of Byrna and hurry across. On the south side you'll encounter one of those giant spike baddies that we first met in the Ice Palace. Do your best to avoid it and go through the door to the south. Ahh, okay, this next room is nice and simple. There's only one skeleton to deal with and, as the western door is sealed, all we can do is exit to the east. Don't bother trying to blow open the cracked southern wall, it won't work.

Okay, we're back to that big room from earlier, except this time we're on the upper level of the northwest side. Cool. Head south (but watch out for the roaming flames). There's a locked door against the western wall, but ignore it for now and walk out onto the chain-link floor. There's a skull pot to the north, and underneath it is a switch. The chest that it creates contains yet another Key. Grab it, then head through the nearby doorway.

The next room contains four bomb-dropping slugs (eww) as well as a flame enemy. Defeat the slugs to open the door, then go through. Hey! This room looks really familiar! That's because we were just in here a few minutes ago. This time, instead of heading east, push the block in the center of the room to the right, thus opening the northern door. Head through it. Continue north through the next screen and onto a lengthy wooden bridge. There's a chest at the end of it, and inside that chest is a Key. You should have three of those in your possession now.

Okay, time to backtrack. Regress to that big room that we've been through a couple times already (you know, the one with the chain-link canopy). Remember the locked door on the western wall that we ignored earlier? Open it and head inside. There are a few things to take note of in the following room: the conveyor belt that surrounds the room makes movement a bit awkward, the

electric jellyfish will drop a Key when defeated, and the flying skulls are just plain annoying. Make sure the crystal orb is colored blue before you unlock the door to the west and head through it.

Gah! Flying tiles! How annoying. The door to the north is sealed and, unfortunately, that's our destination, so you'll have to wait out the tile attack. The best strategy is simply to circulate the room, keeping on the move at all times. Once all the tiles are gone, light the lamps in each corner of the room to open the northern door and go through. Hopefully you listened to me earlier and left the crystal orb colored blue, because the chest containing the Compass is sitting behind a pair of blue blocks. Grab that, defeat the skeleton, ignore the door on the right, and return to the previous room. This time we're heading south and, as the door is already wide open, you can go ahead and dash on through here without worrying about the tile attack again.

Head south around the barrier, dealing with the various threats as you see fit, and north up the staircase on the other side. Try not to fall into the pit that's situated directly in front of the staircase and head south onto another chain-link canopy. Note the lamps behind the blocks on either side of the door -- they look a bit conspicuous, don't they? Defeat the wizards in this room first, then push the blocks out of the way (push the bottom and top ones to the left and the middle one either up or down), thus gaining access to the lamps. Light them, then head south into the next room. It's the same old story here -- move the blocks out of the way and light the lamps. If you've done this quickly enough, you'll hear the sound of something shifting. Head east through the doorway to see what what happened.

See the pit just below the spike traps? Well, that was inaccessible until we lit the lamps like we just did. Seems like a clue, doesn't it? Fall into it and you'll land right next to a chest, inside is the Big Key! Ba dah dah dah! Awesome, now let's go find the Big Chest. Exit left to find a room that is empty save for a warp tile. Step on it to find yourself in front of the door leading to the boss, but we're not quite ready to fight the boss yet, so head east instead.

Here's a familiar room! Head south, then east to find yourself back in that really big room -- you know the one. Get Link's elf butt to the southeast corner of the room and enter the doorway there (not the one at the top of the stairs, to one directly to the east of that one). Walk due east through another open doorway to reach the next room. Be quick, because shortly after you enter the next room the walkway will begin to crumble. If this happens before you can get on it, you'll have to exit via the door on the western wall, circle back around, and try again. Once you do get on the walkway, it's important to keep moving -- those eyes on the walls will shoot lasers when you walk by, but if you stay on the move then you shouldn't have to worry about them. At the end of the walkway is the Big Chest, and inside is the Cane of Somaria.

* NEW ITEM! Cane of Somaria. The Cane of Somaria has a couple of functions, some more useful than others. When you use it, Link will create a magical block -- this can be pushed, lifted, and tossed just like any normal pot you might find. After creating a block, hit the item button a second time to destroy it, sending beams of energy in four directions. It's not the most useful weapon, but as a tool it'll come in handy, especially at later points in this dungeon.

Exit west, raid the chest to score the Map, then exit west through the locked door. Here we are again. Where to this time? Head to the northwest corner and enter the doorway against the western wall. Head north, then dodge the giant spiked baddie as you duck into the western door. Avoid or destroy the

wizards as you sit fit, then unlock the Big Door with the Big Key and head on through. A warp tile, huh? Better step on it.

There are two doors in the next room, but ignore the one to the far east -- it doesn't lead anyway worthwhile. Check the pots if you feel like it, but beware the southernmost pots as they contain those Link-bunny-transformers. Open the door at the top of the stairs. Due north is a long, wooden bridge -- cross it and take the stairs on the far side of it.

It's dark in here, so be extra careful. There are two doors on the southern wall: one is locked and the other is sealed. Check out the locked one first -- behind it is a cache of Blue Rupees. The sealed door is a bit trickier -- there's a floor switch hidden beneath a skull pot, but simply stepping on it once won't do the trick. What to do? How about trying your shiny new Cane of Somaria? Create a magical block, push it onto the switch and -- voila! -- problem solved!

The following room looks a lot more complicated than it actually is -- simply head west through the wide open doorway. A bouncing spike trap serves as a sentry blocking the northern path, so head south around the barrier before turning back northward. Quickly slip past the spike trap to move further west. Head north to find a crystal orb on the other side of a black pit of doom. Make sure the orb is colored red, then return south and walk through the open doorway on the western wall.

Exterminate the skeleton and dodge the roaming flame baddies. It may look like there's no way to get past the raised blue blocks, but fear not. The northern wall is cracked -- blow it open to find a crystal switch. Thwack it, then return to the previous room and exit to the west. Greenish blobs rain from the ceiling in the next room. Cut through them as you head north. Don't ascend the staircase until you've been to the top of the room and turned the crystal orb red, though.

Avoid the various flame enemies as you head west to reach the final door. Boss time!

- Boss: GOOEY EYEBALLS -

When the battle commences, you'll be limited to the southern half of the room because the boss takes up the entire northern half. This limits your movement, but that shouldn't be a significant problem. Why not, you ask? Well, this boss doesn't have too many attacks. In addition to sending his eyeball minions out one at a time to attack you, he has only one attack: lightning. This only targets the middle of the room, however, you move in either corner and you'll be totally safe. Your task during the first part of this battle, then, is to defeat each of the miniature eyeballs. This is a fairly easy task -- simply give each one a few slashes when it comes toward you. It might take a while, but if you're patient then you shouldn't have too many problems.

When the last mini-eyeball has been destroyed, it's time to deal with the big one. It will leave it's gooey puddle and begin bouncing toward you. This shouldn't be an issue -- just charge up your sword and whack him with it. The biggest issue here isn't the boss himself but rather the lack of space. Try to circle around the boss as best as possible so that you don't get cornered. Aside from that, there's not too much advice to give.

Congratulations! The sixth Crystal is yours, which means that there's only one more to collect. Now then, shall we sidequest?

== BIG BOMB, BIGGER EXPLOSION =====

There's only one place to start, and that's with the giant Superbomb that's now available at the Bomb Shop. Get your butt over there.

- In addition to the standard cluster of Bombs, there is a giant green Superbomb (not unlike the Superchicken, but that's something else entirely) for sale. It costs 100 Rupees, but the price is well worth it. Make the purchase and the Superbomb will follow behind Link. There are a few things to note as a result of this: don't dash with the Pegasus Shoes and don't hop off of ledges. Doing so will leave the Bomb behind, and if you can't reclaim it within three seconds it will explode, meaning you'll have to buy another one.

So now that we've got the Superbomb, where are we headed? Well, have you ever noticed the giant cracked wall in the Pyramid of Power? Let's head there! Luckily it's not a particularly long trek, so you shouldn't have too many issues getting the Bomb there intact. When you arrive, position the Bomb next to the cracked wall, set it to blow, and step back. When the dust clears, a secret entrance will be revealed in the side of the Pyramid. Go in.

Approach the so-called Mysterious Pond and you'll be prompted to throw something in. Why not start with your trusty sword? (don't worry, you'll get it back). In fact, not only will you get it back, but it will become the all-powerful Golden Sword, the most powerful blade in the game. Just be sure to claim responsibility for tossing it in by responding "Yes" when prompted. Exit, then head back in and toss in your Bow and Arrow to receive the totally awesome Silver Bow and Arrows.

Man, that fairy may be fat (really really fat), but she sure is cool!

We're not done sidequesting just yet -- there is one more Pieces of Heart to acquire (the second to last one, if you've been following this guide from the beginning), but since that is on the way to the next dungeon, I've opted to cover it in the next chapter.

1. THERE IS A LIGHT THAT NEVER GOES OUT [Turtle Rock]

The seventh and final Crystal awaits... What are you waitin' around for? Get moving!

== EN ROUTE TO TURTLE ROCK =====

Magic Mirror yourself to the Light World, then use the Flute to warp to the top of Death Mountain. You know where the warp tile is, right? It's located in the center of a makeshift circle of rocks near the entrance to the Mountain Tower. Use it to return to the depressing Dark World. From here, head west just a few steps (toward the weird looking guy and his talking ball... That sounds wrong, doesn't it?), use the Magic Mirror to return to the Light World, drop off the ledge to the north and walk eastward past the Mountain Tower.

Continue east across a rope bridge and pound some pegs into the ground to keep moving. Head east one more screen to reach the end of the line -- sitting atop a small plateau are three wooden pegs. Lift the black stone, climb the stairs and smack the pegs into the ground, but only in this order: the one on the right, the top one, and finally the one on the left. Hit them in any other

order and nothing will happen, but hit them in the proper order and a warp tile will appear. Step into it. Hello Dark World, we've missed you (not really).

You're now standing on top of the entrance to Turtle Rock. As was the case with Misery Mire, you need to use a magic medallion to reveal the entryway; in this case, the medallion of choice is Quake. Stand on the symbol and use Quake to reveal the entrance. Feel free to head in and get started on this incredibly annoying dungeon right now, but there's another Piece of Heart to get first. If you're interested in that, keep reading; if not, skip ahead to the section marked "Turtle Rock."

Head one screen to the west and lift the large stone slab in the middle of the path to find a secret entrance. Go in. There's one important thing to remember when exploring this particular cavern: don't touch any of the pots. As there are black pits of doom between each platform, the only way to get from place to place is via the Hookshot. However, if there's nothing for the Hookshot to grab onto, then you could very well get stuck on a platform.

Okay then, where do we start? Walk toward the skull pot directly to the north and Hookshot onto the platform to your west. Defeat the electric jellyfish, then northward. You can't see it, but there's a skull pot that you can grab if you stand on the northwest corner of the platform. Do that, then snag 50 Rupees from the chest at the top of this new platform. There's a second chest on the platform to the west -- Hookshot your way over there to score another 50 Rupees. Now, grab the pot on the platform to the west, take a few steps to the south, then Hookshot back eastward to get 50 more Rupees. There's a fourth and final chest to the south, but you can only access it from the platform that is directly west of where we entered. Get back there, stand in the southwest corner and shoot your Hookshot to the south to reach it.

That's all the Rupees in here, so either Hookshot your way back to that very first platform or simply fall into the pit to get back there. Either way, head north toward the edge of the platform. There's nowhere to walk, and there's nothing for the Hookshot to grab onto, so what to do? Well, this may sound a bit weird, but equip your Ether Medallion and give it a try. It will temporarily reveal an invisible path to across the pit. Do your best to memorize the path -- it's kind of shaped like a backwards "C".

Once you've made your way across the pit, Bomb the cracked wall and continue onward. In the following cave, Bomb both the northern and western alcoves. There's a Fairy Fountain to the north, but the good stuff is to the west. Again, you're presented with two options. The northern wall, once Bombed, leads to another Fairy Fountain, while the southern door leads outside to what appears to be a dead end. Bust out your Magic Mirror, however, and return to the Light World to score the penultimate Piece of Heart. Awesome.

You can backtrack through the caverns if you want, but there's a small, almost unnoticeable gap in the barrier directly to the south of this tiny Dark World platform. Drop off this ledge to return to the cavern's entrance.

Okay, now we're ready to tackle Turtle Rock. Head back to east and enter via the rock turtle's head.

== TURTLE ROCK =====

Welcome to Hell. Well, maybe not, but Turtle Rock is without a doubt the most frustrating dungeon in the game. I hope you're in a patient mood today.

The first thing you'll notice upon entering is one of Sahasrahla's communication tablets. The S-Man suggests procuring some Medicine of Magic before venturing

further into the dungeon. He makes a good point -- you'll be using a lot of Magic Power as you explore this dungeon, so it's a good idea, although not an absolute necessity, to go get some Green or Blue Medicine.

When you're ready, walk due north to reach a dead end. What's the weird question mark thing in the middle of the pit? Pull out your Cane of Somaria and give it a swing to create a magical platform. Step onto it and ride it to the other side of the pit. Pretty cool, huh? Head north through the door on the far side to reach a cavernous chamber in with a number of exits. To navigate this room, you'll again need to use the Cane of Somaria.

Before we head anywhere in particular, why not take some time to get used to using the Cane of Somaria-created platform. When the track comes to a crossroad, hold the direction you want to move in and you'll do so -- for instance, if the track is heading left but there's a path that branches off to the north, hold up and your platform will change direction. It's impossible to fall off the platform while it's moving, even if you get attacked by an enemy. In that case, you can still use your sword to fend off airborne enemies. And finally, you can only disembark the Somaria-created platform when it stops at a question mark station. Got all that?

Okay, let's get started, then. From the entrance to this room, use the Cane of Somaria to travel westward. Get off at the first question mark station and exit south through the open doorway. The Compass is inside at chest at the end of this room, but watch out for the fireball-spitting torches stationed nearby. Also, leaving this room is a bit tricky because the door through which we entered is guarded by a laser eye. If you are facing the doorway, the eye will unleash an interminable barrage of lasers. How do we escape, then? Simple -- face southward and charge up the sword as if you were going to use the whirling blade technique. This way, you can move north even though you're facing south.

Back in the previous room, use the Somaria platform again to circulate the room, traveling west past a few platforms which contain nothing but skull pots. There's a locked door in the upper left-hand corner of the room, but as we don't have a Key yet there's no point checking it out at this point. Instead, move east. There are two doorways in the northeastern corner of the room -- stop at the one on the eastern wall and head through.

Alright, now this part is both tricky and frustrating as balls. Allow me to explain in more detail: the door on the northern wall is sealed, and the only way to open it is to light all four torches in this room. I realize that this doesn't sound difficult in theory, but when you factor in that you have to use the Somaria platform to reach said torches and still get back to the door before the flames go out, things become a bit harder. Here's my advice: get on the Somaria platform and head south, then east, then north. When you get to the little cul-de-sac, equip your Fire Rod. As you pass the first set of torches, quickly light both (it's not easy, but if you turn quickly enough it's possible). Do the same for the second set of torches, then let the platform take you back to the question mark platform. It'll probably take a few tries, but once you get the strategy down it'll just be a matter of time before you achieve success.

In the next room, there's a giant rolling pin (like the one a chef might use to make bread, except that this one is covered in deadly spikes) rolling back and forth. Slowly head north, hugging the walls when necessary to avoid getting crushed. There's a second pin further ahead, this one moving horizontally. Get past it to find two treasure chests, in which you'll find the Map as well as a Key. Cool, now regress through this room and the one before it to return to that first really big room with the Somaria platform track.

So now that we've got a Key, head for the locked door (I know there's one other doorway that we haven't checked out yet, but hold your horses -- we'll look in there a bit later). Unlock it and head through. Whoa! It's one of those bouncy cactus enemies from Super Mario World! What's that all about? Slash it to pieces, grab the Key it drops, deal with some slime enemies, and go north through the door.

Wow, more enemies from Super Mario. This time it's Chain Chomps, and they can't be destroyed no matter what you try. Not only that, but these guys are *fast*, which means sneaking past them isn't going to be easy. Here's how to do it: equip the Boomerang and chuck it diagonally at either one of the two crystal orbs to the north. With the orange blocks raised, you can make a dash for the southeastern corner. The Chain Chomps can't reach you here, luckily. Now, see the five blocks to your immediate left? Well, if you push the topmost block to the west, a chest will appear to the north. Do so, then toss the Boomerang again to lower the orange blocks and raise the blue ones. Run north, doing your best to avoid the Chain Chomps and collect the contents of the chest: it's another Key, which is handy because the door that leads onward just happens to be locked. Exit north.

Head down the stairs. To the east is a cache of skull pots which contain various assorted goodies -- after that encounter with the Chain Chomps, you might be needing some of them. That done, head to the southeast corner of the room, where you'll find the entrance to a giant pipe. Enter the pipe and you'll emerge on the other side in no time; grab the stuff from the skull pots and exit west.

There are two more pipes here. Take the one on the right and you'll end up next to another western doorway. Go through it. Avoid the roaming flames and head south, smack the colored orb to lower the blue blocks and continue south. This is where things get a little crazy: in addition to the four remaining fireballs from before, there are flying skulls, one of those bouncing cactuses, a bunny-transformer, and a laser eye to deal with. Do your best to deal with each obstacle on an individual basis, then use the Key that the cactus dropped to exit through the eastern door (you'll have to back into it again, otherwise the laser eye will blast you).

You'll be back in the previous room. Enter the pipe. It'll spit you out next to a chest, so check it out to receive the Big Key (!!!), then head south through a second pipe. Exit east, and you'll come face-to-face with yet another pipe. It'll take you to a dead end -- this is the end of the line, so raid the skull pot and drop off the ledge. Now, head for the southeastern corner and go through the pipe there (I know you've been through there already, but you'll understand in just a few seconds). Exit west and you'll again be in front of two separate pipes; last time we took the right one, so go with the left one this time. Exit south.

Slay the two bouncy cactuses, open the two sealed doors in here, and whatever you do avoid the pot in the bottom-right corner. When the doors are open, head south. Now which way -- east or west? Well, the eastern door leads to a dead end (albeit one with a nice view), so head west. Wow, see all those laser eyes on the northern wall? Better be careful. Two of them will shoot lasers no irrespective of what direction Link is facing, so it's best to simply hug the eastern wall, set a Bomb near the cracked wall, and exit south as quickly as possible.

We're outside, but not for long. Take a few steps to the east, then re-enter the dungeon. There's the Big Chest! Use the Cane of Somaria to bridge the gap, then open it up.

* NEW ITEM! Mirror Shield. This is it, the ultimate defensive tool in the game. Almost as big as Link himself, the Mirror Shield deflects any number of minor projectiles. Most importantly, however, it reflects those lasers that the laser eyes have been shooting at you throughout this dungeon. Effin' sweet.

* DIGRESSION: PIECE OF HEART. Want to collect the final Piece of Heart? Of course you do! Return to that outside ledge, stand right in front of the eastern entrance to the dungeon and use the Magic Mirror. There's another entrance to the mountainside in the Light World, so head in. There are four cyclopes in here, and all four must be defeated in order to open the sealed door. Thwack all of them, hammer the pegs into the ground, and move on. There, inside that chest just ahead, is the twenty-fourth and final Piece of Heart in the game. Take it, it's yours.

Okay, back to the dungeon, then. Head north through the doorway just above the Big Chest. Dodge the rolling pins and open the northern door with the Big Key. Go through the pipe, then exit north. Slay a bouncy cactus, then Bomb both the eastern and northern walls. Go east, defeat the slime enemies, then slide the upper of the two blocks aside. Tug on the left statue's tongue to open the closed door, then go through. Whoa! Rupees galore! Do your best to dodge the various rolling pins and collect your fortune. Once you've pillaged all the Rupees, go back two rooms and head north through the other wall that you Bombed.

There should be no trouble getting to the north side of the rolling pin in this room, but unfortunately the door is locked. Stand in between the two sets of orange blocks and toss something at the crystal orb, grab the Key from the chest, hit the orb again and leave. Hopefully you won't have taken any damage from the killer rolling pin.

So it's dark in here, and we're using the Cane of Somaria again. There are a number of platforms scattered around this room, but only one exit door. That door, of course, is sealed, so first we'll have to find a switch. The switch is located beneath a skull pot on a platform in the center of the room. Getting to this particular platform is made more difficult by the rotating columns of flame that are ubiquitous in this room. Once you've reached the platform, hit the switch, then head for the exit in the southwest part of the room. Move on.

The path southward is very narrow, and the laser eyes embedded in the walls will be blasting you like crazy. Knock the bug enemy out of the way as you head south, ignore the locked door on the western wall and head south instead. Defeat the shelled enemy, check each of the chests to score some Rupees as well as the Key we need for the previous room, then return there and unlock the door.

Okay, now this part can be a bit tricky. Essentially, the exit to this room is located to the north. To get there, you'll have to hit various crystal orbs to raise and lower the barriers. This room is really a lot bigger than it needs to be, and there are enough orbs that you don't have to worry about getting stuck. When you can't go any further, hit the nearest orb and progress. When you reach the top, head down the stairs.

Smash two pots to find some goodies, then use the Cane of Somaria to go north, where you'll find the final door in this dungeon.

- Boss: CERBERUS TURTLE -

This Boss has three heads, but for the immediate future you only have to worry about two of them. The blue head spits ice (which then

remains on the ground, making your movement more difficult) while the red one breathes fire. Their weaknesses, therefore, should be pretty apparent: use the Fire Rod to toast the blue head and target the red head with the Ice Rod. Once either head has been hit, quickly lash out at it with your sword. These heads don't have too much stamina, so it shouldn't take more than a few hits to destroy each one. Although you can't damage the third head just yet, it can damage you, so keep an eye out for its lunge attack.

When both colored heads have been destroyed, the shell will disappear and the third head will begin to slither around the room. Only the differently colored section of its body is vulnerable, so circle around it and slash it with your sword. It won't last much longer than either of the previous two heads -- just a few slashes will be enough to finish this fight off.

At last, the seventh Crystal is yours! All of the maidens have been saved, which means there's just one last thing to do: track down Ganon and kick his piggy butt. At this point, there are no sidequests left to do -- if you're missing any items or Pieces of Heart, either look back through the walkthrough or skip ahead to the corresponding section in the appendices.

m. SNICKER AT THE SWINE

[Ganon's Tower]

So here we are, guys. Ganon's Tower is the final dungeon and, as a result, it is the longest, most confusing, and most difficult dungeon in the game. Thus, it's important to make sure that you're properly prepared. Fill your four bottles with Blue Potion, collect each and every Piece of Heart, et cetera. It's always better to be overprepared than underprepared, right? When you feel like you're ready, head west from Turtle Rock, across the rope bridge toward where the Mountain Tower is located in the Light World.

And there it is, pulsating with evil energy -- Ganon's Tower. Approach it and Link will use the combined power of the seven Crystals to break the seal around the tower. Climb the stairs and head inside.

== GANON'S TOWER =====

If didn't believe me when I told you before that Ganon's Tower is the biggest dungeon yet, let this foyer be proof of it. Immediately you're given three options: down the stairs in the northwest corner, up the stairs due north of the entrance, or down the stairs in the top-right corner. Let's start with the stairs in the top-left corner. Defeat a pair of skeletons, then ram into the right torch with the Pegasus Shoes to jar that Key loose. It may be tempting, but don't use it to unlock the door on the eastern wall. In fact, ignore that door altogether and exit through the door on the left instead.

Immediately inspect the skull pot to the south to acquire another Key, then pound the four bouncy pink pegs into the ground with the Hammer. The door to the left is still locked, so push the centermost block in any direction to open the door. Be sure to step on the star panel that was concealed beneath the block to move those black pits of doom, then exit to the west. Equip the Hookshot and use the block on the platform to the west to jump the gap. Do the same thing to reach the northernmost platform, then exit through the open doorway.

Here's a room filled with skeletons, flamethrowers, and treasure chests. Kill the skeletons, raid the chests for some Rupees, Bombs, and Arrows, then return

to the previous room. Use the blocks and pots and Hookshot your way across several platforms. When you arrive at the southernmost area, defeat the lone skeleton and open the adjacent door with one of your Keys. Head through. Okay, now this is tricky. There's a treasure chest, but two separate rotating columns of flame make getting anywhere near it quite a chore. The best way to get the chest without taking any damage is to use the Cane of Byrna. After grabbing the Map from the chest, return to the previous room.

Smack the crystal orb to lower the blue blocks and go south, but don't go through the door just yet. Set a Bomb next to the crystal orb, then walk to the southern side of the blue blocks. When the Bomb explodes, the blue blocks will rise, trapping you on the southern side. Go through the door to find that the orange blocks, which would previously have blocked your path, have receded into the ground. It's a similar situation in this room: set a Bomb next to the crystal orbs, then hustle to the other side of the orange blocks. When the Bomb detonates, you'll be able to access the locked door. Make sure you check the pot in the bottom right-hand corner to find a Key, then open the door and go through.

This doesn't look like fun -- a veritable cascade of spike traps are held back by the raised orange blocks, but you know what you're going to have to do. Hit the crystal orb to lower the orange blocks, setting the spike blocks free. Carefully make your way to the other side of the room and step onto the swirly warp tile. You'll appear in a small labyrinth, patrolled by those snaking fire baddies. Carefully move west, but you'll soon notice that the western edge of the room is a black pit. There's nothing on the other side to Hookshot onto, so what do we do? Well, look at the rows of blocks that make up this mini maze. Do you see the solitary block in the middle row? Push it to the left to reveal a chest on the other side of the pit. Hookshot to it, open it to find a Key, then head south through the locked door.

To get through this next area, you'll be utilizing a number of those swirly warp tiles. Step onto the one on the right and you'll warp to a different room. Again, there are two active tiles to choose from -- go with the one on the left this time. You're back in the first room again, except this time you are on the other side of the barrier. Find the warp tile in the bottom left corner of the room and step onto it. Now simply walk eastward, knocking the two shelled enemies into the black pits as you go. There's another warp tile to the immediate northeast of the pits, so step into it. Grab the Arrows from underneath the nearby pot, then step into the only available warp. Okay, now you're on the far side of that previous room. Walk through the doorway to the east and we're done with these confounded warp tiles.

If you thought that last area was tricky, get a load of this. Follow the walkway northward, defeating the shelled enemies along the way, but don't go through the doorway up here. Instead, look to the east. Do you see the unlit torch over there? That must be a clue, right? Well, illuminate it with the Fire Rod and the light will reveal an invisible bridge that you can follow to access that northeastern platform. Using the Ether Medallion also reveals the bridge, but only temporarily, so lighting the lamp is your best bet. Once you've done that, hurry along the bridge, because it will become invisible again as soon as the torch goes out. From you reach the northeastern platform, head through the door.

This room looks like a dead end, but it's not. Grab the Bombs and Arrows from the pots and chest, then plant a Bomb on the cracked floor in the southeast corner. Fall through the hole.

- Boss: BOUNCY KNIGHTS ROUND II -

You remember these guys, they were the first real boss in the game.

Numbering six in all, the Bouncy Knights take up a fair amount of the room, which doesn't leave us with much space in which to maneuver. To make things worse, the floor is covered in a sheen of ice, which makes it quite difficult to dodge these guys. As soon as they begin to move, single out one of the six Knights and plunk him with a Silver Arrow. One shot is all it takes to do the trick. Do the same thing with the next four Knights. When only one remains, he'll turn red and try to crush you from above. Just stay on the move, charge up your sword, and let loose with the whirling blade technique whenever the Knight is hovering just above you. A few hits and this one is over with.

When they've been defeated, the northern and western doors will slide open. Go north to find a triad of treasure chests (check out my alliterative skills). They contain some Bombs, Arrows, and, most importantly, the Big Key. Return to the icy previous room and head west this time. Before you head up the stairs in the top corner, smash into the cracked northern wall to discover a quartet of Faires. Heal up, or stash some in them in your bottles if need be, then return to the room before and go up the stairs.

Hey, it's the Big Chest! At first, you appear to be trapped in the corner, but slide the easternmost block to the right and you're home free. Open the chest.

* NEW ITEM! Red Mail. Remember the Blue Mail that you found in the Ice Palace? Well, this is like that, except even better. This is by far the most protective garment available in the game, so it's a shame that you only get it so late on.

Ignoring the southern door, head north. This room should look familiar. Just like last time, don't pay any attention to the locked eastern door. Instead, head north up the stairs to return to the foyer. This time, climb the stairs in the center and head north up the stairs. This room is kind of pain, but we'll get through it, so don't worry. Start off by whacking the nearby crystal orb to lower the blue blocks. Once you've done that, you can head southwest around the spikes to find the exit. The problem, of course, is that the exit door is sealed. There are two blocks set against the western wall -- to open the door, you'll have to push the northernmost one. Hit the orbs accordingly to get over there, push the block, then return to the door and head south through it.

The exit in the next room is again sealed, and this time you'll have to defeat the two enemies in the room to open it. You should remember these guys from the Dark Palace. They're movements mirror Links, and if you look directly at them they'll spit fire in their face. So equip your Bow, shoot an Arrow in their general direction, then move Link in the opposite direction so that the baddie walks right into the oncoming Arrow. When they're both gone, the door will open. Kill another two while avoiding the laser statues to progress through the following room.

Walk north through an empty corridor and unlock the door with the Big Key. We're almost to the end, can you feel it? Descend the stairs directly ahead of you, dodge the spike blocks and hit either one of the crystal orbs to lower the orange barriers. Check the pots ahead to find a switch that will open the door on the upper level. Once you've activated the switch, return to the top and head through the door in the top-right corner. The following corridor appears empty at first, but it's not. As soon as you start walking eastward, cannons will begin shooting at you from both sides. You can't just speed through with the Pegasus Shoes, so try to be slow and methodical. Climb the stairs on the other side.

There's an assortment of enemies in this room: two skeletons, a red lizardman

and a blue one, all waiting for you on a conveyor belt. Defeat all four baddies to open the door. It's the same deal in the next room -- kill some skeletons to open the door, then head south through it. The room after that is the exact same thing (although the presence of spikes and two laser statues complicates things just a touch) -- destroy the lizardmen and go south. As you may have guessed, the next room also follows the same formula. This time there are icy patches on the floor, but your task is the same -- clear out the enemies and move on. The next room is entirely icy, but that shouldn't stop you from killing two more baddies before heading through the door.

Okay, we're done with that. Avoid the bunny-transformer in the otherwise-empty next room and head west. All of sudden, it looks like we're in the desert. You know what's coming, don't you?

- Boss: REALLY-BIG WORMS x3 ROUND II -

You know how this works. The three worms will emerge from the sand at varying times and in varying locations, each time showering you with damage-inducing rocks. It's your task to slash the heck of them when they get anywhere near you. With the Golden Sword in hand, that shouldn't take too long. It's worth noting that there is a fireball-spitting statue in the bottom left corner of the room, but aside from that there's nothing new about fighting these guys.

Once they've been defeated, head north. Grab some goodies from the pots, then continue north once again. It may not look like there's anywhere to go in the next room, but use the Ether Medallion to reveal another one of those pesky invisible bridges. Just getting to the other side of the room isn't enough, though -- you also have to defeat the three wizards in this room. Using the Ether Medallion should do that, just be sure to use it when they're visible, as they can't be damaged when they're invisible.

There's another assortment of enemies to deal with in the next room, namely soldiers and laser eyes. Dash past them and exit north. The following room forces you to deal with more wizards -- kill them all to open the door, then move on. Follow the catwalk due north to run into four soldiers. Continue along the path and exit east once you've defeated them all. There are four unlit torches and a sealed door in this next room, so your task should be obvious: light all four torches and get to the door before any of them go out. It's best to start at the top and move southward, obviously. It may take a few tries, but you'll get it eventually. Walk up the stairs in the next room.

Now this is a bit tough. Again you have to light four torches, but this time to floor around you will crumble. If you fall into the pit, you'll land in the room below, meaning that you'll have to try again. I suggest immediately lighting the southernmost two torches, then getting the top two as you head for the door. In the next room, grab the goodies from the chests and kill the two hard-headed baddies to win a Key, which will open the western door. Go through. The next part is also a bit tricky, because you have to blow up a cracked wall all the while dealing with a conveyor belt, a spike block, and a giant spiked baddie. Set your Bomb to the east side of the cracked wall, and hopefully the conveyor belt will carry it to the crack just in time for it to explode. Head south.

Use the crystal orb to lower the blue blocks and get the Key from the chest in the center, then exit south.

- Boss: SUPER BIG WORM ROUND II -

Well, you knew it was coming, didn't you? As with the first time we fought this guy, the chief trouble isn't the damage that he can inflict upon you, but rather the simple fact that he can knock you off the

ledge, forcing you to work your way back here and start from square one. Here's the good news: with your totally awesome Golden Sword, two slashes to his tail will bring this battle to a close. It's also a much bigger battle arena than the first time around, so there's plenty of room to maneuver.

When the battle is over, it looks like there's nothing to do but fall off the edge -- DON'T DO THIS. Instead, walk over to the southeast corner of the arena and look south. See the treasure chest there? Hookshot over to it. Grab the Red Rupee inside, then take the stairs. There are some blocks in your way, but simply slide them all to the left and you'll be able to squeeze past, no problem. There's one last room of spikes, ice, conveyor belts, and enemies to deal with, and then we're at the end of Ganon's Tower. Open the final Boss Door of the game to meet the master of Ganon's Tower.

- Boss: AGAHNIM -

Oddly enough, the master of Ganon's Tower is not Ganon but Agahnim. This is good news for us, however, because Agahnim has hardly learned any new tricks since the last time we fought him. The only difference between this battle and the first one with Agahnim is that there are now two shadow copies of Agahnim. They can damage you, but you can't damage them. This complicates things a bit -- this battle can be pretty chaotic at times -- but the basic strategy is the same as before. Charge up Link's sword and knock Agahnim's energy balls back at him.

The difficult thing is not deflecting his energy balls, but rather figuring out which Agahnim is the real one. If you look closely, there is a notable difference between the real McCoy and the fake ones -- the real one has a darker shadow, while the other two are almost translucent. Something else to take note of is that, while you can't damage the fake Agahnims, you *can* deflect their energy balls toward the real, causing him damage. Hit him about ten times and this battle is done.

With Agahnim defeated once and for all, the true villain appears. Ganon shows his ugly face for just a moment, before fleeing to the Pyramid of Power. He's waiting for you there, so feel free to enter the Pyramid and confront him whenever you feel ready.

n. NO WORLD FOR TOMORROW

[The Final Showdown]

* Note: An alternate title for this chapter is "The Final Countdown" -- I couldn't decide which one to opt for, so I'll let you guys choose. Not that you give a crap, but whateva.

Okay, this is it, for real. This is your last chance. Once you drop into the gaping hole atop the Pyramid of Power, there's absolutely no going back. So, any loose ends that there might be need to be taken care of now or never. Check the appendices below to see what you may have missed. Make sure you've got four bottles full of Blue Potion. All that kind of stuff. Okay, then. Are you ready? No? Okay, deep breaths, nice and slow, that's it. Ready now? Yep, let's go.

- Boss: GANON -

This is the final battle of the game, and it's something of a marathon, so I hope that you're properly prepared. From the beginning, it's a fairly straightforward fight. As Ganon tosses his trident like a

wasting your Bomb supply. Press B to raise Link's sword, then walk into a cracked wall -- this will prompt Link to tap his sword against the wall, making a sound. If it makes a nice, clinky "tink tink" kind sound, then the wall can be blown open. Set a Bomb and claim the spoils within! But if the sound is kind of dull -- more of a bland "tok tok" sound -- then the wall can't be blown open. So don't waste your Bombs. Moral of the story: "tink tink" good, "tok tok" bad.

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FUN WITH TREES
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In the real world, trees are boring. Sure, they're nice to look at or climb in from time to time, but aside from that -- yawn! Luckily for us, Hyrulian trees are a bit more interesting. In fact, depending on the tree in question, there are a number of possible interesting things to check out. For instance:

- * After you acquire the Pegasus Shoes, trying dashing into trees. Sometimes you'll knock something loose from its branches -- it could be Rupees, a Fairy, apples, or a hive of Bees.

- * Some of the trees in the Dark World will talk to you (what?). Approach them like you would a person or sign and press A to talk. Some are friendly and will give you advice; others aren't so friendly and spit Bombs at you.

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THE WATERFALL OF WISHING
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In the northeastern corner of the Light World, in the wetlands near the Zoras' domain, there's a waterfall. If you go to where the wetlands begin (just on the other side of the river area), there is a waterfall in the northwest corner of the screen. Swim into it to discover the fabled Waterfall of Wishing (believe me, just because you haven't heard of it doesn't mean it isn't fabled).

Choose to throw in your Boomerang and a Fairy will appear. Be a man and tell her the truth ("Yes") when she asks if you threw it in and she'll repay you for your honesty. Not only will she give you back your Boomerang, but she'll improve it just for good measure -- the regular Boomerang becomes the Magical Boomerang! Mm-hmm. Do the same thing with your shield to receive the new-and-improved Red Shield.

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POND OF HAPPINESS
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In the middle of Lake Hylia, there's an island, and on that island is a cave. Enter the cave to find the so-called Pond of Happiness. Approach the pond and you'll be prompted to toss some Rupees into the pond. At first, it may not seem like you get anything for doing this, but the truth is that for ever 100 Rupees that you toss into the pond you'll receive an additional five Arrows or Bombs (meaning you'll be able to carry five more). You can do this until you've got a maximum capacity of 70 Arrows and 50 Bombs. It takes a lot of Rupees (more than you can spend in one go), but it's definitely worth it given how important both of those items are throughout the game.

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HALVING YOUR MAGIC POWER CONSUMPTION

- * Normal Sword: Link's Uncle entrusts him with this most basic of swords as you infiltrate Hyrule Castle at the beginning of the game. It's nothing to write home about, but it gets the job done until you can get something better.
- * Master Sword: Once you've conquered the first three dungeons and found the Pendants within, your itinerary becomes the Lost Woods, where the Master Swords is. It's located in a grove in the northwestern corner of the forest. Not only is this sword more powerful than Link's first blade (fewer swipes to kill off baddies), but it can also blast weak (but cool) laser beams when Link is at full health. You need the Master Sword in order to breach Agahnim's lair in Hyrule Castle.
- * Tempered Sword: After obtaining Titan's Mitt (find it in Thieves' Town), you can rescue the Blacksmith's brother. As a reward for your heroism, they'll temper your Master Sword, making it even more powerful. Talk to the Blacksmith (just east of Kakariko Village) in the Light World and he'll ask you to find his brother. Return to the Dark World and find the weird frog-man in the area just south of the Village of Outcasts. With him following you, warp back to the Light World and reunite him with his brother. They'll make good on their promise to temper your sword, which is now significantly more powerful than the regular Master Sword.
- * Golden Sword: The Golden Sword is the best the game has to offer (hence "Golden"). After completing Misery Mire, swing by the Bomb Shop to find that there is a Super Bomb for sale. Purchase it for 100 Rupees, then make your way north toward the Pyramid of Power (you can't dash or jump off ledges with the Super Bomb, so take your time and go slowly). Use the Bomb to detonate the cracked wall on the side of the Pyramid and go inside to find a fountain. Toss in your sword, reply "Yes" when prompted, and you'll acquire the totally awesome Golden Sword.

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SHIELDS
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Shields are Link's best form of defense against projectile-vomiting baddies. Not that these enemies projectile vomit, but they do vomit projectiles, if you know what I'm saying (and I'm sure nobody does). In any event, if you have a shield in your hands, certain projectiles will automatically be deflected.

It's worth noting, as well, that there are certain enemies that can eat your shield. Should this most unpleasant of events occur, hack crazily at the foe -- if you're quick enough, you can win your shield back. If not, you'll have to buy a new one. Annoying, I know.

- * Normal Shield: Link's trusty first shield is one half of the butt-kicking combination entrusted to him by his Uncle at the outset of the game. It blocks any oncoming stones or arrows, but nothing more advanced than that. Nothing too special about it, but it's sufficient until you can find something better.
- * Red Shield: This shield blocks everything that the original one does, plus fireballs. It also looks cooler. You can obtain it by chucking the Normal Shield into the Waterfall of Wishing, or you can purchase it at a shop in the Dark World for, like, a crap-ton of Rupees. I'll let you decide how you want to go about getting it.
- * Mirror Shield: This is the ultimate defensive tool -- a shield almost as big as Link himself. It can deflect any number of projectile attacks, most

notably the lasers shot from those laser eyes that seem to be ubiquitous in the last few dungeons in the game. The Mirror Shield is found inside the Big Chest in Turtle Rock.

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ARMOR

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Armor is Link's most basic form of defense. Without it, he'd be naked (and I think we can all agree that no one wants to see that). You're stuck with Link's default costume for the bulk of the game, but in the later dungeons you will come across some better, snazzier outerwear.

- * Green Mail: This is Link's default garb -- as such, it offer little to no protection. It also makes him look like one of those Keebler elves (who make delicious cookies, but you wouldn't want one of them being responsible for saving the world, would you?). You'd better get used to it, though, because it's the only option for the bulk of the game.
- * Blue Mail: This cool costume is found in the Ice Palace. Given that it cuts the damage that Link takes in half, it's a significant improvement over the Green Mail that you're forced to wear for the majority of the game. The only drawback is that you find it so late in the game that it's almost obselete (almost).
- * Red Mail: Why is it called the Red Mail? Because it's red, butthole. ("Because he dodges bullets, Avi!") Digressions aside, the Red Mail is the ultimate piece of armor available in the entirety of the game. It reduces the damage that Link takes even more significantly than the Blue Mail, which makes it very useful to have in the final battle. It's found inside the Big Chest in Ganon's Tower.

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WEAPONS AND ITEMS

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These are the more fun pieces of equipment. You can equip them one at a time, then try them out by pressing the A button. Some are weapons, some are auxiliary items, some are just good for making Link look even more like a fairy (Bug-Catching Net? Holla!), but they all have some use.

- * Lamp. It's not much use as a stand-alone item, but whenever there are torches around the Lamp can be used to great effect to illuminate your surroundings. This really comes in handy when you need to shed some light on dark caves or chambers, as we'll see seen enough. Be careful with it, though -- using the Lamp consumes magic power, so you'll want to keep an eye on that green meter in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. It's the first item you get in the game, found in a chest inside Link's house.
- * Boomerang. This is one of the best weapons early on in the game -- not only can it be utilized to stun most enemies (or better yet, it actually damanges weaker foes), but it can also retrieve far off items. What's that? There's a far-off Rupee that you can't physically reach with Link? No problem, use your Boomerang to grab it! You'll find it in a chest as you infiltrate Hyrule Castle at the outset of the game.
- * Magic Bottles. The Magic Bottles -- there are four in all -- are absolute godsend. Finding and using these Bottles will make your life exponentially easier. Fill it up with healing potions, or once you get the Net, you can catch Fairies or bees to keep in it. Very cool. Here's where

you can find them all:

- 1: In Kakariko Village, enter the pub from the north (there is a door that you can't see, just try to walk in from the north and you'll find it). Check the treasure chest on the western wall to score the first Bottle.
 - 2: This one is also found in Kakariko Village. Talk to the vendor sitting on the carpet in the northwest quadrant of the village and he'll offer it to you for the not-so-low price of 100 Rupees.
 - 3: After buying the Flippers, walk south from the East Palace, hugging the eastern wall. You'll find a staircase from which you can drop into the water. Swim northward back toward the Palace, and follow the river as it curves underneath a bridge. Some dude is living under here! Talk to him to and he'll simply hand over the third Magic Bottle.
 - 4: Inside the Dark World's version of the Blacksmith brothers' house is an odd treasure chest that Link can't open. However, if you inspect it, it will follow you (how can it move when it doesn't even have legs? I have no idea). Now, do you remember that weird old man who lived near the Desert of Mystery in the Light World? No? Well, there's this weird old man who lives near the Desert of Mystery in the Light World (he's sitting next to a sign one screen east of the Desert proper). Bring the chest to him and he'll open it for you, revealing the fourth and final Bottle. Just make sure that you don't dash with the Pegasus Shoes while the chest is following you, otherwise you'll lose it.
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- * Red Potion: This is your basic recovery drink. Drink it to fully restore Link's Hearts. It's available in various shops throughout both the Light and Dark Worlds, usually for about 120 Rupees.
 - * Green Potion: Take a swig from this potion to fully restore Link's Magic Power. The best place to find it is the Witch's Hut in northeastern Hyrule.
 - * Blue Potion: The ultimate healing medicine. One sip of Blue Potion restores all of Link's Hearts and fills his Magic Power. It costs 160 Rupees at the Witch's Hut.
 - * Bombs: Mindlessly blowing stuff up is the pinnacle of video gaming fun, and that's precisely the kind of fun afforded by the Bombs. Set one down next to a cracked wall, step back, and watch with glee as the explosion creates a Link-sized hole in the wall. To start with, your capacity is a paltry 10 Bombs, but that number can be increased by donating Rupees to the fountain on the island in Lake Hylia (see the Secrets chapter for more info on that). Bombs are ubiquitous across Hyrule, but you can find your first set at the shop in Kakariko Village.
 - * Bug-Catching Net: It isn't the manliest weapon (in fact, it isn't really a weapon at all), but it has its uses. Namely, you can use the Bug-Catching Net to catch Fairies and bees, which can then be stashed in Bottles until you want to use them. If you have a Bottled Fairy and you die, never fear -- the Fairy will automatically revive Link. As for bees, trying catching one, then release it near an enemy. Fun! Talk to the sick kid in Kakariko Village to obtain it.
 - * Magic Mushroom / Magic Powder: The Magic Mushroom is found in the Lost Woods and, on its own, is quite useless. However, bring it to the Witch's Magic Shop and she'll create a baggie of Magic Powder from the Mushroom.

The Powder isn't much more effective than the Mushroom was, sadly, but it is quite fun to mess around with. Sprinkling it on the various baddies around Hyrule prompts all kinds of results.

- * Ice Rod. Much like the Lamp, this piece of weaponry requires magic power to use. It can be used to attack and freeze enemies from a distance with icy magic. I won't lie -- you probably won't use this very often (I don't), but it's always nice to have options. It's located in an icy cave on the eastern shore of Lake Hylia (go south from Link's house, then move southeast and, after that, northeast to find your way there). You'll find its complement, the aptly named Fire Rod, much later on.
- * Bow and Arrow: Along with the Boomerang, this is one of the most useful and practical items early in the game. It's a great way to attack enemies from a distance. It works wonders against cyclops enemies in particular, and it is the most effective way to deal with the boss of the East Palace, the dungeon in which you find the Bow. The initial arrow capacity is 30, but as is the case with the Bombs, you can increase that by visiting the fountain at Lake Hylia. Furthermore, if you toss it into the fountain inside the Pyramid of Power (blow up the cracked wall with the Super Bomb to access it), you'll receive the Silver Arrows, which are a must for defeating the final boss.
- * Book of Mudora: I know what you're thinking: what the crap am I supposed to do with a book? I don't do none of that book-readin' stuff! Well, it's not particularly effective against baddies (in fact, it's not effective at all), but it is necessary to translate ancient writing. To enter dungeons like the Desert Palace, you'll need it. It can be found in the library south of Kakariko Village -- use the Pegasus Shoes to charge the shelf at the back and it will fall down.
- * Magical Boomerang: This improved Boomerang has the same basic function as the old one, only it moves faster and further. If only it sparkled or something -- that would be the **ultimate** in cool. Oh wait, it does sparkle. Hell yeah. If you chuck the original Boomerang into the Waterfall of Wishing (hit up the Secrets chapter for more info on that) and reply "Yes" to the Fairy, she'll bestow you with this upgrade.
- * Ether Medallion: This cool item is almost as magical as Robin van Persie's left foot (emphasis on the **almost** -- nothing is more magical than RVP's left foot, but as usual I digress). Unfortunately, because it consumes magic power, this magical medallion isn't very practical. When used, magical blasts of ice-cold wind will freeze all enemies on the screen. It's cool to play around with, but it isn't the most useful piece of weaponry. To get it, find the epitaph to the west of the Mountain Tower and use the Book of Mudora to translate the writing. You can only do this after you've acquired the Master Sword.
- * Quake Medallion: As the second of three Magic Medallions in the game, Quake, predictably, generates a minor earthquake which affects all enemies in the vicinity. It's a powerful tool if you're surrounded, but it eats your Magic Power faster than a fat kid eats a cupcake (which, if you have never witnessed a fat kid eating a cupcake, is **very** fast). Because of this, it's hardly the most practical piece of weaponry. Even so, it's fun to mess around with. So, like, feel free to mess around with it. You can find this medallion in the very northeastern corner of the Dark World. Toss something into the circle of rocks and promise to leave the creature that lives there alone to receive it.
- * Bombos Medallion: This is the third and final of the three magic

medallions. It unleashes a series of explosions that decimates any foes unfortunate enough to be on the same screen as you. To find it, get to the Dark World and enter the field south of the Bomb Shop and head southwest, like you're headed for the Light World's desert. However, you'll find that there's no entrance to where the desert would be -- there's just a stone wall. But there are a bunch of pegs in the ground. I wonder what those are for? Stand to the left of them and warp to the Light World. Head left one screen to find a stone covered in scripture. Use the Book of Mudora (and you thought you'd used that for the last time, didn't you?) to translate it and receive the Bombos Medallion.

- * Magic Hammer: In addition to functioning as an effective weapon in its own right (this is the only weapon that works against the turtle baddies that run rampant in the Dark Palace, for example), the Magic Hammer is also essential to surmounting certain obstacles, namely pegs in the ground or weird whack-a-mole-esque obstacles that are scattered throughout the game. Find it in the Dark Palace.
- * Hookshot: Welcome to Awesomeville, population: You. The Hookshot's function is twofold: Firstly, it functions as a longer-range version of the Boomerang, stunning distant enemies or snagging otherwise out of reach goodies. More importantly, however, it has the amazing ability to latch onto certain objects (pots, statues, et cetera) and pull Link toward them. This works even over chasms, gaps, or pits. BOING! You'll get this item while exploring the Swamp Palace.
- * Shovel: Like any Shovel, the Shovel in this game is used for digging things up. In the Dark World, enter the grove to the southeast of the Village of Outcasts. Speak to the weird dude there and he'll give you his Shovel on the condition that you use it to find his Flute.
- * Flute: After doing the steps outlined directly above, warp to the Light World and use the Shovel to dig in the same grove. Sooner or later you'll unearth the Flute. Return to the Dark World and play it for the dude there. After that, it's yours. With it in tow, return to Kakariko Village (Light World). Stand in front of the weathervane (the stone bird in the middle of the village) and play it. Doing so will free the bird trapped inside (what?), who repays your kindness by carrying you to various points in Hyrule anytime you play the Flute.
- * Fire Rod: Did you ever wonder what the Ice Rod would be like if it shot fire instead of ice? No? Well, like it or not, that's exactly what the Fire Rod does. The Fire Rod is essentially the Ice Rod's twin, except that instead of chilling baddies with icy blasts, it fries them with balls of fire. It's a lot of fun to play with, but as always the caveat is that it eats up Link's Magic Power. So, like, use it sparingly and stuff. It is hidden in the Skull Woods.
- * Magic Cape: This cool item is essentially the same thing as the Invisibility Cloak from Harry Potter, except that it drains your Magic Power like crazy (something HP never had to worry about). To find it, get to the Dark World's equivalent of the graveyard (y'know, it's just east of where the Sanctuary would be). Once you arrive, you'll notice a stack of five rocks surrounded by a fence in the top-right corner of the graveyard (you'll have to use the Pegasus Shoes to smash an identical pile near the entrance to the graveyard). So, here's what you do: Smash the pile of rocks in the top corner, then stand directly above where they once were and use the Magic Mirror to return to the Light World. You'll be in a corner of the graveyard that's surrounded by black rocks -- rocks that, as of now, are too heavy to lift. But that's not an issue, is it? Circle around to

the front of the headstone, crash into it with the Pegasus Shoes (maybe a bit disrespectful, but oh well) and head inside to claim the Magic Cape.

- * Cane of Byrna: The Cane of Byrna creates a magical barrier around Link that protects him from any damage. As you might expect, it also drains your Magic Power. If you want to get it, start off by filling your Bottles with Red or Blue Potion, especially if you don't have the Magic Cape (see above for info on that). Then, go to the Light World and climb up Death Mountain, climbing that long ladder as if you're headed toward the Mountain Tower. Step onto the swirly blue warp tile (the same one we used the very first time we went to the Dark World -- nostalgia!). Once you're in the Dark World, walk due south to find a small gap in the barrier. Drop off the ledge here and you'll land on a small ledge below. Go through the doorway. The floor in this cave is covered in spikes, which means you need to either have the Magic Cape or be able to take a lot of damage without dying (hence the Potions). With either method, smash the whack-a-mole things in with your Hammer and move as quickly as possible across the spikes. Your reward at the end of the road is the Cane of Byrna. Not really worth the trouble, honestly, but if you're a perfectionist you'll want to take the time to acquire this item.

- * Cane of Somaria: The Cane of Somaria has a couple of functions, some more useful than others. When you use it, Link will create a magical block -- this can be pushed, lifted, and tossed just like any normal pot you might find. After creating a block, hit the item button a second time to destroy it, sending beams of energy in four directions. It's not the most useful weapon, but as a tool it'll come in handy, especially while exploring Misery Mire and Turtle Rock. Find it in Misery Mire.

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OTHER EQUIPMENT
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These are more like equipment upgrades than actual items, as you don't equip them and they take effect automatically.

- * Pegasus Shoes: Welcome to Awesometown. Talk to Sahasrahla after finishing the East Palace to score these new kicks, which make Link so fast that he could enter a race against Theo Walcott and Jacoby Ellsbury and still finish first. Not only do they provide a quicker way to get around Hyrule, but when dashing Link holds his blade outward, meaning that any foe you might crash into will feel the pain. Even better, some cracked walls can be broken if you dash into them. Very useful.

- * Power Glove: Wearing this glove, found in the Desert Palace, Link can lift up any and all white stones in Hyrule. Black stones, however, are still too heavy, but in spite of that finding the Power Glove opens up a lot of Hyrule for exploration.

- * Zora's Flippers: These guys will run you the muy grande sum of 500 Rupees at the Zora-infested wetlands in the northeast corner of the Light World, but it's well-worth splurging for them (which can be done as soon as you complete the Desert Palace) -- you'll have to buy them sooner or later no matter what. Besides, isn't it ridiculously annoying when you jump into a pool of water and Link just magically warps back to the land after sustaining some damage? Yeah, it is.

- * Moon Pearl: Ostensibly, the Moon Pearl doesn't really do much -- at first. But after you win this item in the Mountain Tower, you'll find out that you can now enter into the scary Dark World without losing your normal form

- * Overworld. South of Link's house is a field, and in the southern portion of this field is a small building. In there, watch out for the spinning flame and pull the switch on the right to open the floodgate. Ignore the left switch (pulling it means explosives will rain from the sky -- no joke) and leave. Back outside, the pools have now been drained, leaving a fish and a Piece of Heart
- * Overworld. From the Sanctuary, head west one screen, then curve northward and turn back eastward. On the same screen as the Sanctuary (but on the ledge to the left of it), dash into the pile of white stones. Doing so will reveal a secret entrance. Venture inside and claim your prize.
- * Desert of Mystery. Upon entering the desert, go west into the desert itself (vultures and all), then press northward. You should find an entrance to the caves here -- go inside to meet some dude named Aginah (weird name), but he's not why we're here. Bomb the wall south of him to find another Piece of Heart.
- * Desert of Mystery/Desert Palace. While conquering the Desert Palace, you step outside temporarily in order to travel from the main dungeon to the boss's lair. Before heading for the aforementioned boss's lair, travel south along the western ledge to find this Piece of Heart.
- * Zora's Domain. From the waterfall where you meet and buy the Flippers from the big Zora, swim southward and drop down the waterfall. Hop onto the path and follow the shallow water around toward solid ground. Take a look to the left and you'll find another Piece of Heart. Yeah!
- * Death Mountain. Climb the long ladder and walk eastward toward the swirly blue tile, but don't step on it. Instead, go back toward the cave just to the west. See the big brownish rock in front of it? If you walk southward from that rock, you'll find that a barrier that prevents you from leaping off the ledge. However, if you stand just west of there, you can jump off, landing on a ledge with a doorway. Head into the cave and follow the linear path to score a Piece of Heart.
- * Death Mountain. This one is sitting on a ledge near the Mountain Tower. To get there, use the nearby blue warp tile to warp to the Dark World. Position yourself in the center of the brown diamond shape on the ground near the deformed dude and his ball, then look into the Magic Mirror. Ta-dah! The Piece of Heart is yours for the taking.
- * Lake Hylia. Start off in the Dark World, and head for the bridge to the southeast of the Pyramid of Power (you know, the one covered in pegs). Smash in the pegs with the Magic Hammer and cross it. Head south first to the reach the Dark World equivalent of Lake Hylia. Hop off the ledge and into the green water, looking for a wide circle of rocks surrounding a patch of shallow water. Stand in the center and use the Magic Mirror to return to the Light World, where you'll find a Piece of Heart and one of those green electrical enemies.
- * Overworld. In the Dark World, enter the field south of the Bomb Shop and head west -- on the other side of the wall near the northwestern lake is a heavy stone. Lift it and toss it aside, then head west. There are some Piggies patrolling this area, so deal with them, then check the southwest corner of the area to find a circle of bushes. Stand in the center of use the Magic Mirror again. In the Light World, you'll appear on a plateau, right next to a cave. Head inside to find some Heart refills and a Piece of Heart.

- * Overworld. Go to the Dark World's version of the graveyard and circle around behind it. There's a ladder that leads up to a platform that is rather conspicuously devoid of anything. Hmmmm. Seems odd, right? Try the Magic Mirror. Aha! There's a cave here. Go in, bomb the cracked wall, and claim your Piece of Heart.

- * Overworld. This is only available after you've defeated Agahnim at Hyrule Castle and entered the Dark World. Do you remember the lumberjack brothers? The two guys who live in a small cabin nestled in between the Lost Woods and the base of Death Mountain in the Light World? Well, that's where this PoH is. When you get there, you may notice that the lumberjack bros are missing in action, but -- curiously -- the tree in front of their house is kind of an odd color. Stand on its north side and dash southward at it with the Pegasus Shoes. Doing so reveals a supersecret entrance. Go inside to discover a Fairy Fountain and, more importantly, another Piece of Heart.

DARK WORLD

- * Pyramid of Power. From atop this giant golden pyramid, go down two flights of stairs, then go right and drop off the ledge via the gap in the wall (there's a doorway in the pyramid wall below and a gray statue to the left). Ignore the doorway, there's nothing pertinent in there, but instead curl around the ledge and follow the path northward to discover a Piece of Heart.

- * Village of Outcasts. Get your butt to the Dark World and head toward Kakariko Village. Instead of entering the village proper, check out the area south of it. There's a digging mini-game here. It costs 80 Rupees to play, which seems a bit steep, but what can you do? Anyway, it'll be worth the cost when you dig up another Piece of Heart.

- * Overworld. You need to have the Magic Cape for this one. Head west a couple screens from the Dark World's graveyard, then north as if you're headed toward Death Mountain when you get to the sign that reads "This way -> Cave." Continue north until you reach another sign, this one reading, "I'll give a Piece of Heart to the person who wears the Cape." From here, turn right and lift the large slab blocking access to the adjacent cave. Inside the cave, head north and up the stairs at the end of the cavern. There's a pit blocking the path ahead up here, but you can use the Hookshot to cross it. Here's the part where things get a bit tricky: There's a big blue bouncy pad blocking the road onward. How to get past it? Well, put on your Magic Cape and you can walk right through it. Very cool. Outside is your Piece of Heart.

- * Village of Outcasts. This Piece of Heart can be won in a mini-game found in a building on the west side of the village (the building is the one with the treasure chest symbol above its doorway, believe it or not). The game is pretty simple: The room is filled with treasure chests, you fork over 30 Rupees, open two chests, and keep whatever is inside. It's completely random, so there's no further help I can give you. There is a Piece of Heart in one of the chests, though, I promise. Good luck! I hope you brought a lot of Rupees, just in case it takes a while.

- * Village of Outcasts. Visit the screen east of the Village of Outcasts (the same place where the Blacksmiths live in the Light World). Toss the giant black slabs out of the way and hammer all the pegs in front of you into the

ground. Doing so reveals a secret staircase. Head down it to earn another Piece of Heart.

- * Swamp of Misery. Near the northern limits of the swamp is an small, odd-looking building -- head inside to find a pair of treasure chests at the far end of this mini-dungeon. Block pushing puzzles? Oh dear. Here's what the situation look like when you enter:

```
[6]      [7]
      [C][C]
[2][3]   [5]
[1]     [4]
```

The blocks marked with "C" represent the treasure chests. Push block 1 to the left, then slide block 4 to the right. Next, push block 2 one space north and, finally, move block 3 to the left. Easy! Check both chests to receive a Red Rupee and a Piece of Heart. Score.

- * Swamp of Misery. In the northeast corner of the swamp is a small alcove. Stand in this area and look into the Magic Mirror -- back in the Light World, you'll be standing next to a big stone. Toss it out of the way to reveal staircase. Like, go down it and stuff. Here's another block pushing puzzle, and your reward for completing it is another Piece of Heart. Worth the trouble? Of course!. Here's what we're looking at:

```
[5]  [A]  POH
[2]  [7]  [B]
[4]  [9]  [D]
[1]  [6]  [C]
[3]  [8]  [E]
```

The letters "POH" denote, of course, Piece of Heart. Where to start? Why not start with block 1? Slide it north, then move onto block 4, which you should also move north. Block 9 is next -- move it to the right. Finally, slide the block labelled "B" to the right and the Piece of Heart is yours! See, that wasn't so hard, was it?

- * Death Mountain. From the entrance to Turtle Rock, head one screen west and lift the large stone slab in the middle of the path to find a secret entrance. Go in. Head north toward the edge of the platform. There's nowhere to walk, and there's nothing for the Hookshot to grab onto, so what to do? Well, this may sound abit weird, but equip your Ether Medallion and give it a try. It will temporarily reveal an invisible path to across the pit. Do your best to memorize the path -- it's kind of shaped like a backwards "C".

Once you've made your way across the pit, Bomb the cracked wall and continue onward. In the following cave, Bomb both the northern and western alcoves. There's a Fairy Fountain to the north, but the good stuff is to the west. Again, you're presented with two options. The northern wall, once Bombed, leads to another Fairy Fountain, while the southern door leads outside to what appears to be a dead end. Bust out your Magic Mirror, however, and return to the Light World to score the penultimate Piece of Heart. Awesome.

- * Turtle Rock. Just before the room with the Big Chest, there's a narrow ledge outside of the dungeon. Return to that outside ledge, stand right in front of the eastern entrance to the dungeon and use the Magic Mirror. There's another entrance to the mountainside in the Light World, so head in. There are four cyclopes in here, and all four must be defeated in

worms are going to come out, but I find that to be a sorrowfully inaccurate strategy. Once you've finished off two worms, the remaining one will up his game a bit (more rocks). Keep up the same strategy and *be patient*! Patience is the key to this battle. It's better to avoid taking damage from the rocks and have to wait for another chance to attack than to end up dead because you couldn't wait for an opening.

- Mountain Tower: SUPER BIG WORM -

This is an interesting boss battle. The weird and unique thing about it is not that the Worm is likely to kill you (because it's not), but rather that it will knock you off the platform (no barriers on the sides!) into the adjacent pit. This makes the battle more frustrating than anything, because if you fall into the pit you'll have to make your way back up to the boss room before the fight can continue. There's no sure-fire way to combat this. Just try to stay in the center of the platform -- there's not much more advice I can give than that.

In terms of the actual fight, there isn't much to it. At the tip of the Worm's tail is a kind of spinning ball. This is its weak point. Stand in the center of the platform (don't chase the Worm into the narrow ledge on the left side of the platform -- doing so is tantamount to asking to be pushed off the ledge) and wait for it to come to you. Lash out at the tail whenever you get the chance, and after sustaining several hits the Worm will speed up (uh-oh!). Keep up the same strategy and, with any luck, you'll come out on top without getting knocked off too many times.

- Hyrule Castle: AGAHNIM -

So here's the thing: as totally awesome and legendary as the Master Sword is, it won't do a thing against Agahnim. For that matter, neither will any of your other weapons. If Agahnim was smart, he'd just sit there and laugh at Link's complete inability to damage him. But he's not smart -- in fact, he's his own worst enemy. By flinging balls of magical energy at you, he's supplying you with the only way of inflicting damage upon him. Who's up for some baseball?

There are two ways to do this: you can use either the Bug-Catching Net (lame) or the whirling blade technique (awesome). Either way, wait for Agahnim to launch a ball of energy at you: if it is one solid ball, then you can use one of the aforementioned methods of attack to deflect the blast back at him. If it connects, Agahnim will sustain damage. If not, wait for the next attack and get it right -- go David Ortiz on his wizard butt. This is the *only* way to hurt the wizard, so keep it up.

Now, Agahnim has a couple of tricks up his sleeve that you should know about. First of all, he'll sometimes shoot several small, blue balls of energy at you. These can be deflected, but they won't hurt him so it's best to simply dodge them. Also, when Agahnim appears in front of the northern wall, he's preparing to fry you with lightning. This cannot be deflected at all and causes significant damage, so move as far to the side as you can to avoid getting hit. Aside from that, it's all about persistence. After taking enough blows, Agahnim will regress into the Dark World, taking you with him.

- Dark Palace: GIANT ARMORED SCORPION THING -

The most difficult thing about this battle is not the boss's range of

attacks, it is that this beast is literally a beast -- he takes up most of the room, meaning that there is very little space to maneuver. There are also spiky blocks at the top of the room, so you're better off staying in the lower half. As far as his attacks go, he's got two things to watch out for: a tail attack which happens without much warning and, as a result, is difficult to dodge. Although, I find that his tail is easier to avoid the closer you are to the boss himself, so stay as close as you can without making physical contact with him. Also, he likes to spit out fireballs which then divide into smaller fireballs before finally disappearing. This is easier to avoid -- just keep your eyes open and stay on the move.

So how do we hurt this thing? Use your Hammer to smash it's blue face mask. As you do this, the mask will begin to crack before eventually shattering completely. When this occurs, replace your Hammer with the Bow and start firing Arrow after Arrow at the green gem that, for some odd reason, is lodged in this creature's forehead. He doesn't have any new attacks in this new phase, but he moves much more quickly, which makes it a bit difficult to be accurate with your Arrows. My recommendation is simply to keep the Arrows coming -- the sooner you defeat this guy, the less damage he can inflict upon you.

- Swamp Palace: JELLYFISH COVERED IN POPCORN -

Like many bosses in this game, this one consists of two stages. In the first stage, your task is to destroy the various popcorn-looking puffs floating around the boss's body. However, this can't be accomplished simply by slashing your sword at it. No, sir, you'll need to take on each puff on an individual basis. To do this, use the Hookshot to grab one, then quickly slash, slash, slash away at it until it either dies or returns to the boss's body. Lather, rinse, repeat. As you do this, the boss will float around the room, occasionally releasing all of its puffs at once. For now, this is its only attack, so take your time, be patient and you shouldn't take on much damage.

When the last puff has been destroyed, round two commences. The boss will now crash down onto the watery floor from high above and jettison around the room at high speed. A single swipe of the sword will prompt the creature to take to the sky, crash down again, and repeat the process all over again. At this point, a good offense is the best defense. Just keeping moving and whack it with your sword whenever it comes close. After enough slashes, it'll die and your job here will be done.

- Skull Woods: GIANT MOTH -

Oh yes, the fearsome master of the Skull Woods is a big moth. Uh... Scary? This is kind of an odd boss fight because the most difficult part of the battle isn't the actual boss itself, but rather the various spikes that form a makeshift ring around the room. Not only do these restrict your movement and make for a rather cramped arena, but as the battle rages on, they'll begin to fall toward you. As a result of this, it's an absolute necessity that you stay on the move in order to minimize the damage you take on.

As for the offensive side of things, the Fire Rod is your best bet to fry this dude (which is ironic because moths are usually drawn toward flames). Fling shot after shot of fiery goodness at this creature as you do your best to dodge the spikes as well as the orange rings that he shoots out. If you run out of Magic Power, don't fret -- your sword

also works against this boss, although it's significantly weaker than the Fire Rod. The Giant Moth only has one form, so once you've sufficiently fried him, the battle will come to a close.

- Thieves's Town: FAKE MAIDEN / REAL MONSTER -

Uh, so not your prototypical damsel in distress, then. This boss's modus operandi is as follows: He floats around from wall to wall, blasting laser beams at you. There's no foolproof way to avoid them, so your best bet is simply to stay in motion at all times. You can, in turn, damage him by slashing his head with your sword. Once you've inflicted enough damage, his head will come off (what?) and start floating around the room of its own volition, shooting lasers at will. You can't hurt the disembodied head, so wait until you body begins to move again and redouble your efforts. Again, after you land another few blows, a second head will enter the fray (how many heads does this dude have?). This time, when you land the final blow it will be the final blow for real.

- Ice Palace: GIANT PUFFY EYEBALL ENCASED IN ICE -

The first half of this battle is surprisingly straightforward. The boss himself doesn't really do much of anything -- I guess it's hard to when you're frozen. As such, the only danger comes in the form of heavy chunks of ice that drop from the ceiling. You can see their shadows before they come crashing down, so keep your eyes out for them and keep on the move. In regard to attacking this beast, there's really only one option, isn't there? Whip out your Fire Rod and let him have it.

Once you've cooked him enough, the ice will melt, setting the eyeball, as well as two other eyeballs, free. The Fire Rod is still effective at this stage of the battle, but Link's sword is just as useful, so go with whichever you prefer. It's important not to be caught stationary, because in addition to the three giant eyeballs the chunks of ice are still raining down from above. The most effective strategy is to deal with the eyeballs one at a time. Try to pin one of them down in a corner and keep slashing until it's defeated. Once all three have been destroyed, the next Pendant is yours.

- Misery Mire: GOOEY EYEBALLS -

When the battle commences, you'll be limited to the southern half of the room because the boss takes up the entire northern half. This limits your movement, but that shouldn't be a significant problem. Why not, you ask? Well, this boss doesn't have too many attacks. In addition to sending his eyeball minions out one at a time to attack you, he has only one attack: lightning. This only targets the middle of the room, however, you move in either corner and you'll be totally safe. Your task during the first part of this battle, then, is to defeat each of the miniature eyeballs. This is a fairly easy task -- simply give each one a few slashes when it comes toward you. It might take a while, but if you're patient then you shouldn't have too many problems.

When the last mini-eyeball has been destroyed, it's time to deal with the big one. It will leave it's gooey puddle and begin bouncing toward you. This shouldn't be an issue -- just charge up your sword and whack him with it. The biggest issue here isn't the boss himself but rather the lack of space. Try to circle around the boss as best as possible

so that you don't get cornered. Aside from that, there's not too much advice to give.

- Turtle Rock: CERBERUS TURTLE -

This Boss has three heads, but for the immediate future you only have to worry about two of them. The blue head spits ice (which then remains on the ground, making your movement more difficult) while the red one breathes fire. Their weaknesses, therefore, should be pretty apparent: use the Fire Rod to toast the blue head and target the red head with the Ice Rod. Once either head has been hit, quickly lash out at it with your sword. These heads don't have too much stamina, so it shouldn't take more than a few hits to destroy each one. Although you can't damage the third head just yet, it can damage you, so keep an eye out for its lunge attack.

When both colored heads have been destroyed, the shell will disappear and the third head will begin to slither around the room. Only the differently colored section of its body is vulnerable, so circle around it and slash it with your sword. It won't last much longer than either of the previous two heads -- just a few slashes will be enough to finish this fight off.

- Ganon's Tower: BOUNCY KNIGHTS ROUND II -

You remember these guys, they were the first real boss in the game. Numbering six in all, the Bouncy Knights take up a fair amount of the room, which doesn't leave us with much space in which to maneuver. To make things worse, the floor is covered in a sheen of ice, which makes it quite difficult to dodge these guys. As soon as they begin to move, single out one of the six Knights and plunk him with a Silver Arrow. One shot is all it takes to do the trick. Do the same thing with the next four Knights. When only one remains, he'll turn red and try to crush you from above. Just stay on the move, charge up your sword, and let loose with the whirling blade technique whenever the Knight is hovering just above you. A few hits and this one is over with.

- Ganon's Tower: REALLY-BIG WORMS x3 ROUND II -

You know how this works. The three worms will emerge from the sand at varying times and in varying locations, each time showering you with damage-inducing rocks. It's your task to slash the heck of them when they get anywhere near you. With the Golden Sword in hand, that shouldn't take too long. It's worth noting that there is a fireball-spitting statue in the bottom left corner of the room, but aside from that there's nothing new about fighting these guys.

- Ganon's Tower: SUPER BIG WORM ROUND II -

Well, you knew it was coming, didn't you? As with the first time we fought this guy, the chief trouble isn't the damage that he can inflict upon you, but rather the simple fact that he can knock you off the ledge, forcing you to work your way back here and start from square one. Here's the good news: with your totally awesome Golden Sword, two slashes to his tail will bring this battle to a close. It's also a much bigger battle arena than the first time around, so there's plenty of room to maneuver.

- Ganon's Tower: AGAHNIM -

Oddly enough, the master of Ganon's Tower is not Ganon but Agahnim. This is good news for us, however, because Agahnim has hardly learned any new tricks since the last time we fought him. The only difference between this battle and the first one with Agahnim is that there are now two shadow copies of Agahnim. They can damage you, but you can't damage them. This complicates things a bit -- this battle can be pretty chaotic at times -- but the basic strategy is the same as before. Charge up Link's sword and knock Agahnim's energy balls back at him.

The difficult thing is not deflecting his energy balls, but rather figuring out which Agahnim is the real one. If you look closely, there is a notable difference between the real McCoy and the fake ones -- the real one has a darker shadow, while the other two are almost translucent. Something else to take note of is that, while you can't damage the fake Agahnims, you *can* deflect their energy balls toward the real, causing him damage. Hit him about ten times and this battle is done.

- The Final Showdown: GANON -

This is the final battle of the game, and it's something of a marathon, so I hope that you're properly prepared. From the beginning, it's a fairly straightforward fight. As Ganon tosses his trident like a boomerang, you should close in and go crazy on him with the sword. He will teleport around the room in an attempt to stay away from you, so close him down. Early on in the battle, I highly recommend placing a higher priority on defense than offense, however. It's more important to avoid his attacks than to get in your own, because later on you don't want to have to worry about running out of Hearts.

Pretty soon, Ganon will introduce a new element to the fray: fireballs. This circle around him, forming a sort of protective barrier, but he also shoots them outward. This is your cue to close in and attack -- you'll almost certainly take some damage from the fireballs as you do so, but there's really no way to avoid this. Just do your best to get as many sword slashes on target as possible. In addition to having his fireballs circle around him like a shield, Ganon will also shoot them at you, almost like homing missiles. Stay on the move to evade them.

His next gambit is a floor-shaking attack that causes the edges of the floor to collapse. Whatever you do, don't fall in -- doing so brings you deeper in the Pyramid of Power. When you get back outside, you'll have to start the battle all over again from the beginning. So, like, be careful. Once all four sides of the arena have collapsed, Ganon will start using what he refers to as his "technique of Darkness" -- basically the lights go out and he becomes invisible. Obviously, you can't hurt him if you can't see him, so light the two torches with the Fire Rod.

He'll resort to teleporting around the room, which makes it difficult to pin him down, but when you get a chance whack him with the sword. He'll temporarily turn grey -- this is your chance to put the nail in his coffin with a Silver Arrow. Repeat these steps a few times -- light the torches, hit him with the sword, then shoot him with a Silver Arrow -- and the game is won.

of Power and the Dark Palace. It's in the same place as the Witch's Magic Shop, only in the Dark World. Really, there's no reason why you should ever need to use this shop -- it charges an extra 30 Rupees for Red Potion. Just use the Magic Mirror and buy it at the Witch's Magic Shop for cheaper.

- * Red Potion: 150 Rupees
- * Small Sheid: 50 Rupees
- * 10 Bombs: 50 Rupees

=====
VILLAGE OF OUTCASTS SHOP
=====

This shop is in the southeast corner of the Village of Outcasts. The entrance is blocked off by a set of pegs in the ground.

- * Red Potion: 150 Rupees
- * Small Shield: 50 Rupees
- * 10 Bombs: 50 Rupees

=====
OTHER VILLAGE OF OUTCASTS SHOP
=====

I'm not entirely sure why there needs to be two separate shops in the Village of Outcasts, but there are. This one is located centrally in the village, just south of the entrance to Thieves' Town. The cool thing about this shop is that it has Fairies for sale.

- * Bee: 8 Rupees
- * Golden Bug: not for sale
- * Fairy: 77 Rupees

=====
DARK WORLD LAKE HYLIA SHOP
=====

North of the Dark World's Lake Hylia, in an almost identical location to the equivalent Light World shop, is this shop.

- * Red Potion: 150 Rupees
- * Small Shield: 50 Rupees
- * 10 Bombs: 50 Rupees

=====
BOMB SHOP
=====

In the Dark World, go to where Link's house would be. Here you'll find the Bomb shop. For much of the game there's not much worth seeing here -- just normal Bombs for sale -- but after you finish Misery Mire (the sixth dungeon) the Super Bomb will become available. Totally awesome.

- * Bombs: 100 Rupees
- * Super Bomb: 100 Rupees

question to get the full(-ish) scoop on that.

*

Q: Okay, I saw a sparkling rock! What is the deal with *that*?

A: This is a new addition to the GBA version of the game. If you encounter such a rock, whack it repeatedly with your sword to score some Rupees. But be careful: once the rock is out of Rupees, it'll spit out a bomb. So, like, grab the Rupees and get out of there.

*

Q: The door on the roof of Hyrule Castle is surrounded by some kind of electric barrier. How can I get in?

A: Until you've acquired the Master Sword (which is your goal after you conquer dungeons one through three), there's no way to break down this barrier. When you do have the sword, though, simply swipe the electrical barrier with it to gain entrance to Agahnim's lair.

*

Q: How do I get into the Dark Palace? There's no door!

A: Just outside the Dark Palace, you'll encounter a monkey named Kiki. He will ask you for 10 Rupees -- oblige him. Then, when you reach the Palace entrance, he'll demand another 100 Rupees. As there's no other way to get into the Palace, pay him and he'll open the Palace for you.

*

Q: I heard that I can increase my Magic Power! How?

A: Let's clear this up, first and foremost: You can't increase your Magic Power. What you can do is reduce the amount of Magic that magical items consume. To do this, warp to the Light World and head to the Blacksmith's Shop (one screen east from Kakariko Village). There's a wooden peg just outside the Blacksmith's house -- Hammer it into the ground. Hop off the ledge into the black pit below, then choose the northern door. Inside is an altar of sorts. Sprinkle some Magic Powder onto it and a surprisingly respectful and polite bat will appear. He's a bit peeved that you woke him up, so he'll exact his odd form of revenge by cutting your Magic Meter in half. Contrary to popular belief, this doesn't make your magic weaker -- what it really does is lessen the amount of Magic Power consumed when you use a magic item like Ether or the Ice Rod.

*

Q: There's this weird, really big Bomb for sale in the Dark World. What's it for?

A: This is the Super Bomb, and it can be used to blow open the cracked wall in the Pyramid of Power. Inside this wall is a fountain, and if you toss in your sword and your Bow and Arrows, you'll receive the Golden Sword and the Silver Arrows, two of the game's most powerful weapons.

*

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