

[Mage and Machine theme plays.]

Announcer: **Mage and Machine. Season One, Episode Eight: "The Rules"**

[Quiet city background noise. Kai is walking down the sidewalk.]

KAILIRA: (muttering to herself) *Lozan. Ameiks unwara. Swifan!*

[Mack runs to catch up to her.]

MACK: Hey, just hold up a second, all right. Kai, come on!

KAILIRA: Go away, Mack.

MACK: Look, I know. I reeeeeally bit the big one in there.

KAILIRA: I said, go away!

MACK: Just wait. Lemme talk. Please?

KAILIRA: (wary) What do you want?

MACK: I wanna apologize.

KAILIRA: Why should I believe you?

MACK: You probably shouldn't. I wouldn't, if I were you. But ... I'm sorry, kid. I was using you, just like Chandley. And I don't ever wanna be like her.

KAILIRA: All your talk about keeping me away from Cassia, and you meant to take me back the whole time.

MACK: Not the whole time. But ... at first, yeah. Uh, that was the plan. And Plin was right, it was a stupid plan.

KAILIRA: (scoffs)

MACK: B-but after what Oublie said ... it got me thinkin'. About how you're like

me.

KAILIRA: I'm *not* like you.

MACK: You lost everything. You lost ... more than I can even imagine. And now ... now you know you can't even trust people you thought were your friends.

KAILIRA: Yeah. Lesson learned.

MACK: What I'm tryin' to say is, I wanna start over. Honest, this time. No secrets. (beat) 'Cause I can't just turn away and leave you all alone.

[Small magic noise.]

KAILIRA: Yes, you can.

MACK: No, I -- ah ... (small gasp)

KAILIRA: "No magic around Mack" he keeps telling me. "It screws up his systems". (beat) You're gonna leave me alone or my magic will *make* you leave me alone.

[Magic noise stops.]

MACK: (suddenly trying to catch his breath as Kai loosens her magical grip)

KAILIRA: I'm done being used. And I'm done believing in anyone but me.

[Kai starts to walk away. Mack stands stunned for a split second, then hurries to catch up.]

MACK: Kai, *listen* to yourself! Is that who you are?

KAILIRA: I ... don't even know who I am.

[Chandley's expensively-booted footsteps approach.]

MACK: Please, just think for a minute!

CHANDLEY: (deadly warning) Take your hands off her.

KAILIRA: (startled gasp)

MACK: (let's all stay cool now) There. See? I ain't touchin' her.

KAILIRA: (to Chandley) It's okay. I mean, *I'm* okay. I've seen so many things today, Cassia! There's so much in this city I only knew from books and now I've seen them and smelled them and I want to do more.

CHANDLEY: (completely calm) Kailira, I've been turning the city upside down looking for you. It's time to go back to the Hall.

KAILIRA: (hesitant) I ... I think --

CHANDLEY: We can discuss all of this somewhere safer. Now step away from that brute and come with me.

MACK: (quietly) Don't worry, kid. However you wanna play this, I got your back.

KAILIRA: (gaining a little confidence) I ... don't want to go. Not yet.

CHANDLEY: That's unfortunate. I don't believe I made a request.

MACK: Hey, if she don't wanna go she don't gotta.

CHANDLEY: (laughs) You sing a different tune now that you don't stand to profit.

MACK: Talkin' to you was a mistake.

CHANDLEY: (laughs again) Thinking I would lose a battle of wits with the pitifully unarmed was your mistake.

KAILIRA: (trying to defuse) Cassia, please. I'm tired of spending all day every day staring at the same walls. That's why I left.

CHANDLEY: Why you ran away, you mean. (trying to sound maternal but not really succeeding) I know this isn't what you want to hear, but staying in the Hall is what's best for you.

KAILIRA: What's best for me, or what's best for *you*?

CHANDLEY: You don't know anything about living in the modern day.

KAILIRA: You never taught me!

CHANDLEY: You don't even know who that is standing next to you.

KAILIRA: You mean Mack?

CHANDLEY: (snort of derision) Mack? Is that what he's calling himself?

MACK: What's it to you?

CHANDLEY: The Hall of Justice knows him as Mechanimo. He's a criminal, Kailira. A thief. A brute. The man standing next to you is a murderer.

MACK: Eh, depends how you define murder.

KAILIRA: (confused) No. That's not possible. He brought me tea.

CHANDLEY: For years he was one of the most wanted criminals in Hallamere. He worked for bank robbers, vandals, smugglers, drug runners, anyone who needed acts of wanton destruction. There was your "Mack".

MACK: Oh please, I got standards. I wouldn't work for you.

CHANDLEY: He used cutting-edge cybernetic implants to become the biggest bully he could.

KAILIRA: Mack ... is that true?

MACK: Well ... yeah. That's my rap sheet. (to Chandley) But excuse *you*, I'm no murderer. I don't kill for fun.

CHANDLEY: You think that somehow makes you better?

MACK: I mean ... it's the principle.

CHANDLEY: (proudly) I ended his reign of terror. I disrupted the technology that made him so powerful.

MACK: Oh yeah, yeah, super powerful. In fact, it's so powerful, it *keeps me alive?*

CHANDLEY: But he's still a brute. And still dangerous. How long have you been listening to him, trusting him, and not even known who he was? That's what I mean when I tell you the Hall is where you belong. Where you're safe.

KAILIRA: But ... he ...

MACK: I know I messed up pretty bad with you before, Kai. But I ain't about to

hurt you now.

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CHANDLEY: Get away from her!

[Chandley whips out something magical.]

MACK: (gasp of pain)

KAILIRA: No! No magic!

CHANDLEY: Don't worry, I have him under control. Now come with me.

KAILIRA: At least modulate the frequency of the --

CHANDLEY: (interrupting coldly) Do not presume to tell me what to do.

[Magical sound intensifies.]

MACK: (cries out in pain)

KAILIRA: Cassia, stop!

[the word "stop" reverberates/echoes magically, stopping Chandley's magical whatever.]

[Mack falls to his knees.]

MACK: (trying to catch his breath)

CHANDLEY: (sharply) Apprentice Kailira. You know better than to interfere with my magic.

KAILIRA: It's not your magic.

CHANDLEY: I beg your pardon.

KAILIRA: It's *my* magic.

CHANDLEY: You don't understand.

KAILIRA: You put my sigil on Mack to destroy him. You didn't even tell me.

CHANDLEY: I try to spare you the sordid details of my work for Hallamere.

KAILIRA: (getting angrier) It was designed to be on things. Not people.

CHANDLEY: The difference is not always significant, Kailira.

KAILIRA: That sigil can stop his heart!

CHANDLEY: You're talking about someone with blood on his hands! Do you want me to list the things he's destroyed, the people he's killed?

KAILIRA: Well you almost killed him, so what does that make you?

CHANDLEY: Come now. You know it's not that simple.

KAILIRA: And you made it so something as small as leaving the city was lethal.

CHANDLEY: I needed to monitor the long-term effects of the sigil, to ensure it wouldn't lose power. I had to be certain it couldn't be circumvented.

KAILIRA: And did the ethics board review your plan for experimentation on a human subject?

CHANDLEY: Don't try to throw regulations at me. What's required in the world of academics doesn't apply when innocent lives are in danger.

MACK: (chuckles) Oh yeah, you're all about the rules until they're inconvenient to you.

CHANDLEY: Enough of this nonsense!

[Chandley whips out her phone and hits a button.]

WINLOW: (on phone) Ready.

CHANDLEY: Move in.

WINLOW: (on phone) Yes ma'am.

[Chandley hangs up.]

CHANDLEY: We are done discussing this. You are coming back to the Hall with me.

KAILIRA: But --

CHANDLEY: This worthless brute has manipulated you enough.

[Chandley uses her magical doohickey again.]

MACK: (grunt in pain but grits his teeth and powers through it) If she doesn't wanna go ...

KAILIRA: Mack --

MACK: (still powering through but faltering) ... she doesn't ... gotta go.

CHANDLEY: You don't get a say.

[Chandley's magical thingie dials to 11.]

MACK: (cries out)

[Mack falls to the ground.]

KAILIRA: You're killing him!

CHANDLEY: I'm saving you.

KAILIRA: ... no.

[Kailira's magic beginning to rise.]

CHANDLEY: Apprentice. Cease this nonsense.

[Kailira's magic gets louder.]

KAILIRA: (magical intoning) *Densamen ... ogdra ...*

CHANDLEY: Stop!

MACK: (struggling to get the words out) Yeah! Magic yourself ... outta here, Kai!

KAILIRA: (magical intoning) *To-agos, to-kal, to-kormo ...*

CHANDLEY: That's not a teleport. (realizing) Kailira, no!

KAILIRA: (mystical intoning) *Pellei ikreg agos skend!*

[The sound of Kai's magic culminates in a sharp sound and dies away.]

MACK: (sharp gasp!)

CHANDLEY: (horrified) What have you done?!

MACK: (catching his breath again) What ... what in the ...

CHANDLEY: You little fool!

KAILIRA: The sigil's gone, Mack. You're free.

MACK: (can't believe it) Free ...?

CHANDLEY: How could you?! After everything I've said, everything I've taught you?

KAILIRA: It wasn't right, Cassia.

CHANDLEY: (cold seething anger) Do you care so little for the people of this city? What will you do next, open up the prisons and let every violent criminal back out into the street?

[Cars start to pull up somewhere nearby as agents arrive -- sounds a bit like a SWAT team.]

MACK: Kai, I ... I dunno what to say.

CHANDLEY: Whatever lies you're planning to feed her, save it.

KAILIRA: (quietly) All right, Cassia. I'll go back now.

MACK: What?!

CHANDLEY: (taken by surprise) Huh. At least you haven't completely taken leave of your senses.

KAILIRA: On one condition.

CHANDLEY: We are not negotiating.

KAILIRA: Let him go.

CHANDLEY: (incredulous) Let him g -- are you mad?

MACK: You don't have to do this, kid.

CHANDLEY: You want me to let this brute escape to fill himself back up with electronic enhancements and wreak havoc on the city?

KAILIRA: I want you to let him walk away. If he breaks the law afterwards, the Hall of Justice can deal with him. Promise that, and I'll go back with you.

CHANDLEY: Oh, I see. Is that all?

KAILIRA: That's all.

MACK: Ugh. No way, Sparkles. You deserve better than being stuck back in Castle Boring with Queen Asshole here.

CHANDLEY: And if I refuse?

KAILIRA: Then I guess you'll find out which of us is more powerful. Right here, in the middle of the city. And I'll make sure everyone sees.

CHANDLEY: (sigh) Very well.

KAILIRA: Promise me.

CHANDLEY: You have my word.

KAILIRA: (small sigh of relief)

CHANDLEY: Winlow!

[Winlow runs up.]

WINLOW: Here, my lady.

MACK: (quietly, to Kai) This is crazy, you don't have to do this.

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KAILIRA: I still think you're kind of a jerk, Mack. But maybe you are my first real friend after all. So, thanks. (beat) Take care of Plinio, okay?

CHANDLEY: Escort Apprentice Kailira back to her suite at the Hall.

WINLOW: (with relish) At once, my lady.

[Kailira starts to walk away with Winlow.]

KAILIRA: Remember, Cassia. You promised.

CHANDLEY: Of course.

[Kailira and Winlow get into a car. The door slams, and the car pulls away.]

CHANDLEY: (laughs) Finally.

[Hall agents rush in like it's the end of a hostage situation and start wrestling Mack into handcuffs.]

MACK: (struggling with the agents) Hey, hey ... What -- wait -- wait a second -- you told Kai --

CHANDLEY: I know what I told her. Agent Vell, take him into custody.

AGENT VELL: (like a cop after a car chase) Down on the ground!

CHANDLEY: You can't possibly think I would just let Mechanimo loose again.

MACK: All right, let's get on with this -- (attempting-to-throw-a-punch noise)

AGENT VELL: (shoving-someone-to-ground noise)

MACK: (heavy oof)

[Mack gets thrown to the ground and restrained.]

CHANDLEY: Who knows what kind of cybernetic nonsense you'd get put back in? No no no, I couldn't possibly risk it.

MACK: (seething) You lied to her.

CHANDLEY: Oh, I don't think that's anything you should be throwing stones about. (beat) The important thing is, she's back where she belongs. And soon, you will be too.

[Chandley walks calmly away in her dramatic boots as the agents finish restraining Mack.]

CHANDLEY: (over her shoulder) So long ... "Mack".

AGENT VELL: (punch throwing noise)

[Agent Vell's punch lands solidly and knocks Mack out.]

[A quiet prison cell. There is the sound of a noisy vent, and the irritating click/hum of a cheap light. Mack wakes up on the floor and starts to pick himself up.]

MACK: (disoriented) Ow. Frig ... friggin' ... what ... what the hell ... (remembering) No. No no, not here.

[Mack gets up.]

MACK: (yelling) Hey! Out there! Guards or whoever!

[Pause. No response.]

[Mack bangs on the cell door.]

MACK: (yelling) Somebody, come on!

[A pair of heavy boots approaching down the hallway.]

MACK: (yelling) Damn it, you can't do this!

[A little access window in the cell door slides open.]

AGENT VELL: (dryly) Is there a problem, Mechanimo?

MACK: (groans) Ohh ... one of Chandley's goons. Of course.

AGENT VELL: Keep it down in there. You wouldn't want to bother the other inmates.

MACK: (urgently) Listen. The kid, Kai. She has to know I'm locked up.

AGENT VELL: Does she.

MACK: Oh, don't be cute with me. Chandley promised her she'd let me g--

AGENT VELL: (totally uninterested) Lights out in twenty. I'm sure you remember the rules here.

MACK: You can't hide me in here forever. When I get to trial I --

AGENT VELL: (interrupting coldly) Oh, how cute. You think you're getting a trial.

MACK: There's a law!

AGENT VELL: Suddenly you care about the law?

MACK: (incredulous) You can't ...

AGENT VELL: I suggest you get comfortable in that little cell. It's all you're going to see for a very. Long. Time. (beat) Enjoy your stay.

[The access door slides shut. Vell walks off down the hallway.]

[Vell walks off down the hallway.]

MACK: (yelling) You can't do this! (quieter) You can't do this to me. (groan of frustration/despair, then sobs)

[Mage and Machine theme plays.]

Announcer: Mage and Machine. Season One, Episode Eight: "The Rules"

Featuring the voice talents of:

Anjali Kunapaneni as Kailira

Garan Fitzgerald as Mack

Emaline Tuck as Lady Chandley

Jordan Drayer as Apprentice Winlow

Katy Milholland as Agent Vell

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Produced by Pendant Productions

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