

## **Maleficent As an Affectionate Fey in Disney's 2019 *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil***

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### **Abstract**

Although Maleficent's character as a wicked witch has been deconstructed by the first Disney's adaptation of Maleficent in 2014, the beginning of the 2019 sequel *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* started with a prologue that Maleficent was narratively still considered evil, from which the plot evolves to reveal how her marginalizing traits prevailed. Amidst this entanglement between the film's plot and Maleficent's character revelation, the present study aimed at elaborating on Maleficent's personality as an affectionate fey. The present study employed McKee's (2003) textual analysis to observe Maleficent's character development along the plot development to reveal how the film portrays Maleficent's growing affectionate dispositions despite her formidable strength and appearance. The study concludes that Maleficent's affections are highlighted through her loving, nurturing, and protective traits toward Aurora, the creatures of the Moors, other feys, and humans. With the depiction of these traits, Maleficent emerged as an affectionate Fey in human's eyes. They eliminate the prejudice against Maleficent, the feys, and the fairies, fostering a harmonious life between humans, the feys, and the fairies.

Keywords: affection; character; Disney film; fey; plot

### **Introduction**

Initially appeared in Charles Perrault's work entitled *Sleeping Beauty* in 1697, the Grim Brothers retold Maleficent as an evil fairy who cursed Princess Aurora as a sleeping beauty (Cardoso & Fonseca, 2020; Widyahening & Wardhani, 2021). Maleficent's powerful yet evil traits were maintained in Disney's animated version released in 1959 (Widyahening & Wardhani, 2021). Widyahening and Wardhani (2021) also said that in the story *Sleeping Beauty*, Maleficent is depicted wearing black clothes with pale green skin, yellow eyes, bright red lips, and a long chin. These are the prevailing depiction of Maleficent as the most antagonistic character among other Disney villains. It was only after Disney's 2014 *Maleficent* was released, did that Maleficent slowly depicted as a good fairy (Wulandari, Santoso, & Ocktarani, 2017). In this version, Maleficent fell in love with a human, Stefan. Unfortunately, Stefan betrayed Maleficent by cutting her wings. This betrayal turned Maleficent into a vengeful fey. Driven with anger, Maleficent declared war on humans and put a curse on King Stefan's daughter, Princess Aurora. Aurora was cursed to fall into a sleep-like death until a true love kiss woke her. However, Maleficent's dispositions change along the plot development because she gradually felt protective and sympathetic toward Aurora. Eventually, Maleficent was the one who lifted the curse on Aurora, revealing that Maleficent's love for Aurora was true love.

These changes in Maleficent's traits in Disney's 2014 *Maleficent* were studied by Setyawan et al. (2020) by analyzing the film's mise-en-scène. They reveal that Maleficent's characterizations dynamically developed from being protagonist, to antagonist, and to protagonist again, creating a three-dimensional character. Similarly, Wulandari et al. (2017) also focused on Maleficent's character development and explained the changes in her personality using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic. Farnush et al. (2018) took the theory of heroine and analyzed the portrayal of good and evil in Maleficent as a witch in Disney's 2014 *Maleficent* to fit her as a heroine in the film's narrative. Julietta scrutinized Maleficent's characters in the 2014 film using the perspective of liberal feminism and revealed Maleficent as a strong feminist. In line with Julietta, Widyahening and Wardhani (2021) also focused on Maleficent's characters in the same film and concluded that her portrayal as kind, compassionate, and motherly was a deconstruction of the character as an evil witch in previous versions of *Sleeping Beauty* tales.

Previous studies depict the complexity of Maleficent's good and evil characters, where her evil side sometimes overshadowed her good character when provoked by her opponents' unfair treatment. Further, the latest studies implied that Maleficent is a powerful and kind character showing a supportive deconstruction towards women's representation. Unfortunately, in the 2019 sequel of *Maleficent*, the fey was still labelled evil and feared by humans. This depiction becomes a setback in an attempt to reduce partial judgments of strong women as merely evil. Therefore, more recent studies have focused on Maleficent's characters in Disney's 2019 *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*.

Kurniawati (2020) compared the main characters in Disney's *Frozen 2* and *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil* using a feminist perspective and revealed that the sisters Elsa and Anna in *Frozen 2* and Maleficent and her nemesis, Queen Ingrith in *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil* were both rebellious toward the traditional depiction of femininity and domesticity. Comparably, Yolanda & Budiwaty (2022) used liberal feminism as the perspective to describe Maleficent's traits in the sequel film and concluded that Maleficent represents the sight of achieving equality between men and women. In contrast, Rowe (2022) argues that the film attempts to deconstruct the binary opposition of Good Mother/Terrible Mother by comparing Queen Ingrith and Maleficent. According to Rowe, the film maintains the traditional notion of good motherhood. It means, as a mother, Maleficent is revealed as loving, caring, and protective. The same result is found by Asis, Aso, & Armstrong (2021), that Maleficent was eventually a good character despite her dark looks.

These previous studies on the personality of Maleficent in Disney's *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil* generally highlight Maleficent as a good character. Following the view of Maleficent's characterization as a dynamic and three-dimensional character who shifts from good to evil to good (Asis et al., 2021; Rowe, 2022), the present study aims to follow the development of Maleficent's affectionate trait from the beginning to the end of the plot.

According to Floyd and Morman (1998), as cited in Dillow et al. (2014), affection is a feeling of loving, caring, and fondness towards other persons. Affection is considered a desirable and valuable human trait (Nasir et al., 2019). Affectionate is the act of caregiving by providing comforting touch (Cekaite & Bergnehr, 2018; Pal, 2017). Affection can be seen in one's fondness, caring, and endearment towards their loved ones and is easily identified in mothers (Pal, 2017; Tracy, 1981). The expression of affection can also be sound through warm, friendly, and encouraging remarks, especially those directed toward children's

development (Lama, 2007; Tracy, 1981; Twardosz, 2005). According to Pal (2017), affection differs from indulgence because affection does not overlook faults. Affection symbolizes protective security (Floyd, 2002; Park, Vo, & Tsong, 2009).

As depicted by previous studies, Maleficent is a mother figure with a strong desire to protect Aurora, the people of the Moors, and the other fairies. By shifting the present study's focus to the depiction of Maleficent's affectionate character, the present study intends to show that good character has always been an inherent part of Maleficent's personality. However, her circumstances have repeatedly placed Maleficent in a position that provoked her to be confrontative and aggressive, resulting in her labeling as an evil witch. Indeed, the film's title can lead to the interpretation of Maleficent as the evil mistress and Maleficent as the character who can conquer evil, thus mastering them. Therefore, depicting Maleficent's affectionate character can help diminish the assumption that powerful women must be witches or that all women having powers tend to be evil and cruel.

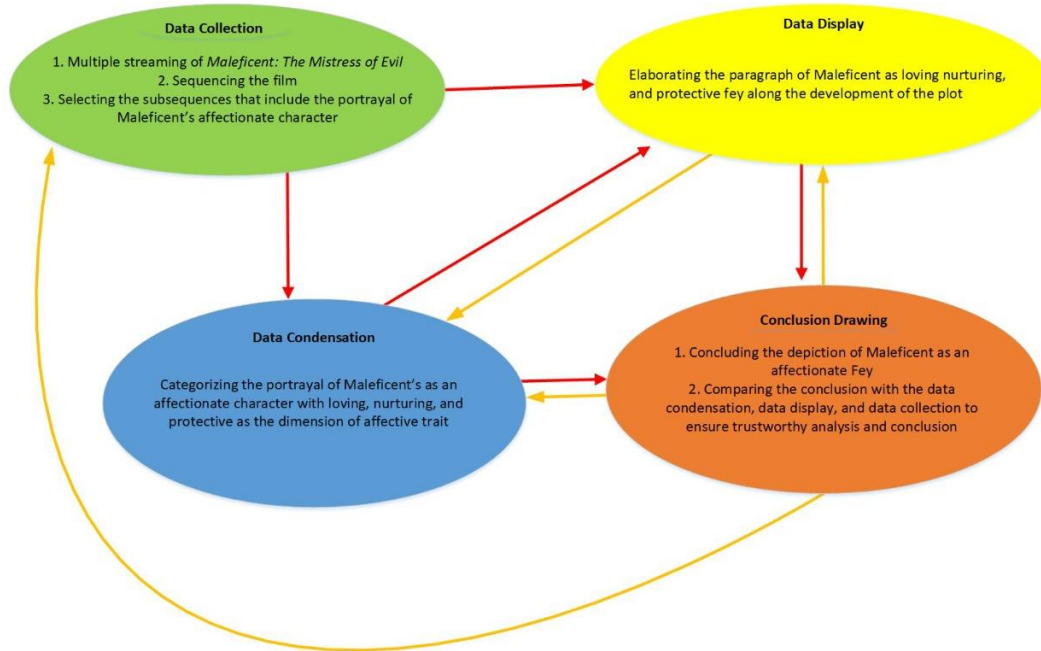
### Research Method

The present study was a textual analysis (McKee, 2003), following Miles et al., (2014) interactive qualitative data. Disney's 2019 *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil* was taken as the research subject. The researcher presented as the main instrument of data collection, conducted through repeated readings. In this case, the film was treated as a text following McKee's textual analysis. Units of analysis were extracted from the film's narrative. The film was first segmented into plot sequences following the segmentation technique proposed by Bordwell, Thompson, & Smith (2019). Bordwell, Thompson, & Smith's model divides the narrative into segments, consisting of major events in the plot. However, to provide more targeted units of analysis, the present study segmented the plot more rigidly. This study marked the segments based on the plot's events called sequences. Thus, a sequence covers the description of a single event in the plot development. Each sequence is further segmented into subsequences. Each subsequence consists of a description of an incident that contributes to its sequence's event (Dewi, Suwastini, et al. 2021). For example, Prince's Philip proposal in *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* was taken as a single sequence. This sequence is named sequence 5 because it is the fifth event in the plot development. This sequence was divided into four subsequences, consisting of subsequences 5a (Prince Phillip's arrival at the Moor), 5b (The conversation between Aurora and Prince Philip about the union of the Moors and Ulstead), 5c (Prince Phillip's asking of Aurora's hand) and 5d (The Fairies' joy in Aurra's acceptance of Prince Phillip's proposal). This study's plot was segmented into 31 sequences with their respective subsequences.

There are four steps in the interactive data analysis model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014): data collection, condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Those steps were conducted simultaneously, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 shows that the analysis commenced with multiple streaming of *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil* to get a deeper understanding of the film. It is continued with the segmentation of the film's narrative into sequences and subsequences that allow the selection of subsequences containing the portrayal of Maleficent's affectionate character as the study's data.

Figure 1. The Process of Interactive Data Analysis following Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) Model for Analyzing the Depiction of Maleficent's Affectionate Characters



Source: Ariantini et al. (2021)

The data collected are simultaneously processed into data condensation and data display. During the data condensation, the portrayals of Maleficent's affectionate characters are categorized into dimensions of the affectionate trait. Based on the data collection, they are categorized into loving, nurturing, and protective traits. Meanwhile, the data display simultaneously elaborated the portrayal of the affectionate traits from the subsequences in the narrative. These two simultaneous processes interactively happened with the conclusion drawing that concluded the categorization of Maleficent's affectionate traits based on their elaborations and to ensure these elaborations represent the revelation of the affectionate as categorized in the data condensation. At the same time, the conclusion was compared with the data collection to ensure that all the necessary data supporting the conclusion were included, categorized consistently, and elaborated comprehensively. This process was repeated until the data collection and analysis were saturated to ensure that the analysis and conclusion were trustworthy.

### Findings and discussion

The result reveals that Maleficent's affectionate traits appeared in 20 subsequences. The table below displays the subsequences where the affectionate traits appear in the film's narrative as categorized into loving, nurturing, and protective.

Table 1. Maleficent's Affectionate Traits in Disney's 2019 *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*

No.	Characters	Subsequence	Total
1	Loving	2c, 9c, 9d, 11a, 11b, 11c, 14b, 14f, 15c, 15d, 17e, 19d, 21c, 21d, 28b, 28c, 29a, 29d, 30a, 30b, 31a.	21

2	Nurturing	13a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 15d, 17e, 19c, 18d, 21b, 22c, 22e, 23b, 27a, 28b, 28d, 28f, 28g, 29a, 29b, 29e, 30a, 30b, 31a.	22
3	Protective	1b, 1d, 9b, 11d, 14d, 15a, 19d, 19e, 23b, 23c, 23d, 23e, 24d, 28a, 28d, 28g	16

Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

From Table 1, it can be inferred that Maleficent's affection is depicted through her loving, nurturing, and protective traits, which appear from the beginning of the plot in Sequence 1 and the end of the plot in Sequence 31.

### **Maleficent as a Loving Fey**

According to Cruces, Hawrylak, & Delegido (2015) and Protasi (2006), loving means showing strong affection. Thus, affection can be expressed in loving actions and utterances (Floyd, 2002; Dillow et al., 2014). Loving often includes feelings of helplessness and selflessness towards someone they love (Yela in Cruces et al., 2015; Fromm, 1956; Protasi, 2006). Selflessness refers to the willingness to accept others as they are and put their interest first while overcoming egocentricity (Fromm, 1956; Protasi, 2006). Loving someone is a personal need, and in doing so, it depends on how the person expresses their love in the form of affection (Carolina, Natsir, & Lubis, 2021; Muhiddin, 2015). In Disney's 2019 *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*, Maleficent's loving trait is depicted in subsequences 2c, 9c, 9d, 11a, 11b, 11c, 14b, 14f, 15c, 15d, 17e, 21c, 21d, 28b, 28c, 29a, 29d, 30a, 30b, and 31a.

Maleficent's helplessness against Aurora is most particularly shown in subsequences 11a and 11b. Subsequence 11a shows Maleficent's effort in training herself to be hospitably presentable for the betrothal dinner in Ulstead Castle. Diaval guided Maleficent on how to greet their host and how to smile, as shown in the following screen capture.

Figure 2. Diaval trained Maleficent to greet and smile



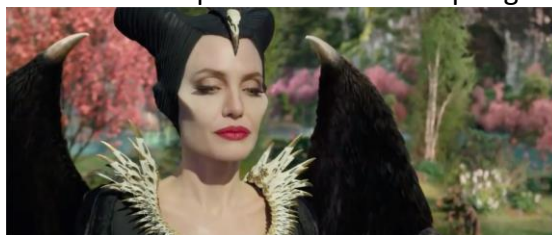
Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Figure 2 above shows Maleficent's awkward expression when she was trained to smile and greet Phillip's family. Maleficent kept trying, but Diaval was far from satisfied with the progress because Maleficent's smile did not come out hospitable despite her repeated efforts. The scene shows how hard Maleficent tried to become a proper guest in Ulstead for Aurora. Maleficent hated the idea of coming to Ulstead because previously, Ulstead had

banned Maleficent from entering the Kingdom. However, she forced herself to prepare to be a proper dinner guest.

In subsequence 11b, Maleficent again felt helpless against Aurora's plea for Maleficent to put on a veil to cover Maleficent's horns. Figure 3 below shows Maleficent's conflicting feelings about the issue.

Figure 3. Maleficent's expression when accepting Aurora's veil



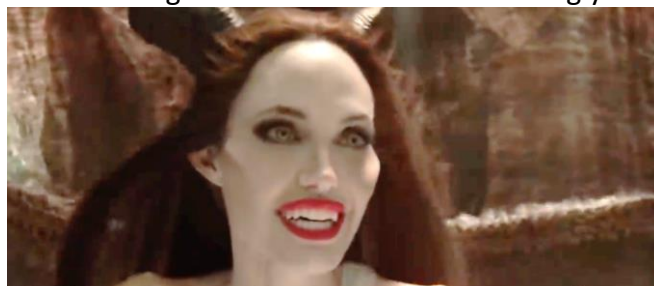
Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

In this scene from subsequence 11b, Maleficent was looking down at the veil in Aurora's hand, and her feeling was sinking. The veil symbolizes an effort to change Maleficent from her appearance, which means Aurora did not fully accept Maleficent. Aurora sensed Maleficent's feelings and withdrew the veil. Nevertheless, Maleficent insisted on accepting the veil because she knew Aurora would be happy if she wore the veil. Aurora's happiness touched Maleficent feeling because Maleficent loved Aurora Carolina et al. (2021). When Maleficent accepted the veil, Aurora expressed her happiness, "*I'm so excited,*" to which Maleficent replied, "*It's more than I can bear!*" with a forced smile and saddened eyes. The close-up shot of Maleficent's facial expression staged Maleficent's helplessness in fighting for her love for Aurora and intended to comply with Aurora's wishes to make her happy (Yela in Cruces et al., 2015; Fromm, 1956; Protasi, 2006).

Maleficent is also depicted to love the Feys, who hid in a cave on an island in the middle of a fierce sea. Subsequence 19d includes a scene that depicts Maleficent's love towards the Feys as she looked at a little Fey learning to fly. As the little Fey plunged herself from a Cliff, Maleficent was shown to hold her breath in concern for the Fey's safety.

Moreover, when the little Fey soared up, Maleficent smiled widely, as shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Maleficent smiled lovingly



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Maleficent's smile in subsequence 19d was voluntary, resulting from her appreciation of the little Fey's courage in learning to fly. This smile was the first of Maleficent's voluntary smiles throughout the narrative. It is very different from the forced smile that she had when

trained to smile by Diaval in subsequence 11a or when Aurora asked her to wear the veil in subsequence 11b. In this scene from subsequence 19d, Maleficent was wide and accompanied by chuckles as she was relieved to see that little Fey survived and mastered flying skills.

Although Maleficent is depicted as holding grudges against humans, the film shows that she gradually developed affection towards humans. In subsequence 29a, Maleficent trusted Prince Phillip's love towards Aurora and gave him her blessing to marry Aurora. Maleficent's blessing shows that she accepted Prince Phillip as the husband of her god-daughter, which means she would learn to love him as she did Aurora. Thus, Maleficent shows that love can be extended beyond the family member (Esianita & Widyawati, 2020). This change of heart is strongly affected by Prince Phillip's effort to bridge peace between humans and the fairies when he refused to kill Borra in subsequence 28b.

In subsequence 30b, Maleficent's growing love toward humans is shown through her sincere smile to King John and Diaval's explanation that Maleficent's curse upon the Queen was not permanent. Figure 5 below shows a sincere exchange of smiles between Maleficent and King John in subsequence 30b.

Figure 5. King John and Maleficent exchanged an amiable smile.



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Figure 5 above shows how Maleficent smiled at King John when he looked at her. The exchange of looks between them was very different from what happened in subsequence 12e when Maleficent first met King John during the dinner. Their sincere smiles show that their hearts were no longer filled with hatred. Instead, Maleficent had grown to trust humans again, while King John started to sincerely love the creatures of the Moors, including Maleficent. After the problematic relationship between King John and Maleficent due to Queen Ingrith's evil plan, they started to share a loving relationship because love can grow after a shared experience of hardship (Blangsinga, Suwastini, Lasmawan, Adnyani, & Rusnalasari, 2021; Esianita & Widyawati, 2020; Patmarinanta & Ernawati, 2016).

### ***Maleficent as a Nurturing Mother-Figure***

Nurturing refers to giving loving attention and assistance to animals, humans, or even the surrounding environment that may support their life and growth (England, Descartes, & Collier-Meek, 2011; Nemcek, 1987). Meanwhile, nurturing act of a mother can be shown by providing security, safety, and responsive caregiving for the children (Daelmans, Manji, & Raina, 2021; World Health Organization, United Nations Children's Fund, & World Bank Group, 2018). In line with this, Dewi et al. (2021) and Utami et al. (2020) found that showing social care toward others represents a nurturing person and relates to an affectionate character. In Disney's *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil*, Maleficent's nurturing traits are

depicted in subsequences 13a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 15d, 17e, 19c, 18d, 21b, 22c, 22e, 23b, 27a, 28b, 28d, 28g, 29a, 29b, 29e, 30a, 30b, and 31a. Maleficent's nurturing character is mainly reflected in the flashback of Aurora's childhood, her sympathy towards the Feys living in the cave, her forgiving attitude towards Lipsittle, and her willingness to sacrifice for Aurora's happiness.

Although much of the early parts of the narrative depict Maleficent as evil and resentful towards humans (Asis et al., 2021; Rowe, 2022; Widyahening & Wardhani, 2021), her nurturing characters are gradually revealed from the middle of the film's narrative. In subsequence 13a, Maleficent ironically commented on the poultry dish served in the dinner because she wanted to show that the host had missed the nature of their guest: that Diaval was a bird. Again, in subsequence 15a, Maleficent reminded the host to contain the Queen's cat as it intended to attack Diaval. While Maleficent's actions in these two subsequences show her effort to ensure Diaval's wellbeing, they are also efforts to protect the fairies and the creatures of the Moors from human poaching.

Maleficent's nurturing trait is shown through descriptions of how she raised Aurora and made her Queen of the Moors in subsequences 14b and 15d. Although Queen Ingrith undermined Maleficent's nurturing trait as considered unnatural for a Fey in subsequence 15d, Maleficent is depicted as nurturing when the narrative included flashback scenes of Aurora's childhood in subsequences 17e and 22c. In subsequence 17e, Maleficent was unconscious from Gerda's attack, and Conall brought her away to the Feys' hiding place in the sea. During this flight, Maleficent remembered how she started to take care of Aurora when Aurora was still a baby, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Maleficent looking at Aurora's crib in the fairies' house



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Cinematographically, the subsequence included a scene from the first film, as Maleficent discreetly was taking care of Baby Aurora in the fairies' hut. However, when the camera zooms into the crib to show that Baby Aurora was not there. This flashback scene is a reminder of Maleficent's nurturing trait from the prequel and describes Maleficent's feeling that she had lost Aurora. The feeling of loss in this scene emphasizes Maleficent's nurturing trait because Aurora's rejection to come with Maleficent had caused a great pain of loss in her heart, like a mother who lost her baby.

Subsequence 22c includes a scene that juxtaposes Maleficent and Aurora when they were separated by the sea. Aurora was looking at the moon over the sea, having a flashback about her promise to Maleficent to look after each other, presented by the film by including another scene from the first film. Again, the film cinematographically reminded the audience about the effect of Maleficent's nurturing trait on Aurora, which made Aurora sincerely love



Maleficent in the first film. In the meantime, Maleficent was also looking at the moon over the sea. In this scene, the montage of the zoom-in of Maleficent and Aurora renders the idea that Aurora and Maleficent were thinking about the same thing. Thus, the scenes from subsequence 22c show that Maleficent and Aurora had powerful emotional connections.

Later in subsequence 22d, Aurora admitted that she did not like how she had been dressed in the palace, making her feel like she was different. This admission comes directly after the flashback of Maleficent's affection in accepting Aurora, invoking a comparison of how Maleficent had accepted Aurora as she was while Queen Ingrith tried to adjust Aurora to meet Queen Ingrith's standards. This comparison made Aurora regretfully admit to Prince Phillip that she should not ask Maleficent to wear the veil and cover her horns. This scene concludes that Aurora was assured of Maleficent's unconditional love for her, which marks the start of Aurora's search for the truth to clean Maleficent's name.

Meanwhile, in subsequences 19c, 19d, and 19e, Borra and Conall recalled Maleficent's selfless care toward Aurora. In subsequence 19c, Borra used Aurora's connection to Maleficent as a trigger to raise Maleficent's anger towards humans. Nevertheless, it effectively shows how defensive Maleficent was against Aurora. She was angered by the mentioning of Aurora as her god-daughter because it reminded Maleficent of her loss when Aurora chose to stay in Ulstead. As mentioned by Muhiddin (2015), love is very close to hating. Thus, when Maleficent felt her love was not enough to convince Aurora, she felt hurt.

When Conall recalled how her nurturing baby Aurora was proof that humans and Feys could live together in subsequence 19d, Maleficent denied him by saying that she did not have a daughter because Aurora had chosen her side. Nevertheless, Maleficent's denial indicates her strong affection toward Aurora, which grew from her taking care of Aurora since Aurora was a baby.

Maleficent's nurturing trait is further revealed through her attentive concern for the Feys in their hiding, as shown in subsequences 21b and 27a. In subsequence 21b, Conall persuaded Maleficent to avoid war with humans and find a peaceful way for humans and Feys to live together in harmony. In this subsequence, Conall showed Maleficent the bones of the Phoenix and reminded Maleficent that she had the Phoenix's power of transformation. According to Conall, the key to Maleficent was her transformation in changing her hatred toward humans into a nurturing love for Aurora. Later in subsequence 27a, Conall spent his last breath to remind Maleficent about her big heart by asking her to choose peace over war with humans. Conall's wish came true in subsequence 28f when Maleficent finally transformed into the Phoenix after forgiving Aurora and embracing her as a human at the cost of her own life.

Towards the end of the narrative, Maleficent is shown to nurture good relationships with humans, which in turn nurture the peaceful relationship between Feys and humans, much in line with Conall's last wish. Subsequence 28b includes a scene where Maleficent witnessed Prince Phillip's effort to prevent Borra from killing General Percival of Ulstead. Although After witnessing Prince Phillip's action, Maleficent was more focused on saving the trapped Feys than attacking the human.

Maleficent's nurturing trait toward humans is emphasized in subsequence 30b when Diaval explained that Maleficent could lift her curse on Queen Ingrith and change her back from a goat into a human again. Among all humans, Queen Ingrith was the one who treated Maleficent worst. However, Maleficent did not kill the Queen or permanently change her into

a goat. It shows that Maleficent no longer sought revenge. Furthermore, her curse also means that Queen Ingrith no longer could talk and provoked humans to fear Maleficent. The announcement that Maleficent did not permanently curse the Queen could affect the citizen of Ulstead's attitude toward Maleficent, so they no longer feared Maleficent.

This intended result occurred in subsequence 30c when Maleficent walked Aurora on the aisle. The citizen of Ulstead did not show fearful expressions compared to their reaction to Maleficent's arrival for dinner in subsequence 12b. Instead, subsequence 30c stages the citizens of Ulstead stand side by side with the Feys and the fairies, as shown in the following picture.

Figure 7. The wedding was attended by humans, fairies, and feys in peace



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

As shown in Figure 7, the citizens of Ulstead were standing together with the Feys and the fairies; none showed fearful expressions. Throughout the wedding, humans were cheering, not running in fear. Narratively, it means that Maleficent's effort to nurture good the harmonious relationship between humans and the fairies, resulting from Maleficent's forgiving trait toward the Queen, her effort to understand Phillip as a kind person, and her caring attitude toward Aurora after the war (Dewi et al., 2021; Suwastini et al., 2020; Utami et al., 2020).

### ***Maleficent as a Protective Woman***

Another essential trait that reflects Maleficent's affectionate character is her protective behavior about the people she loved (Floyd, 2002; Park et al., 2009). A person's protective form is shown through caring and giving a sense of security. Department of Education of Western Australia (2017) and SOS Children's Villages International (2019) stated that children have the right to feel safe, be safe, and have the opportunity to express themselves. The sense of security in question is that children are ensured not to experience physical abuse, child sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect (Department of Education of Western Australia, 2017; UNICEF, 2022; Ward, Brown, & Hyde-Dryden, 2014). Parents are obliged to be protective towards their children and teach them about understanding responsibility and expressing their feelings (Department of Education of Western Australia, 2017; SOS Children's Villages International, 2019; Ward et al., 2014)

In Disney's *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil*, Maleficent affectionately protected the creatures of the Moors, the other feys, and Aurora, as shown in subsequences 1b, 1d, 9b, 11d, 14d, 15a, 19d, 19e, 23b, 23c, 23d, 23e, 24d, 28a, 28d, and 28g.

Maleficent's protective trait is repeatedly depicted through her actions in defending the Moors and its creature. In subsequences 1b and 1d, Maleficent haunted the thieves that

poached the fairies from the Moors. Although the scenes did not explicitly present Maleficent, subsequence 1b shows the camera uses the character's point of view that follows the thieves with the aerial point of view, as exemplified in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8. Aerial point of view of the thieves



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

The character point of view and aerial angle used for showing the thieves implies a character that could fly, for example, Maleficent. Moreover, the scenes also include a soundtrack that invokes a mysterious feeling, while the mise-en-scene's low lighting adds to the watcher's mysterious appearance that follows the thieves. Subsequence 1d starts to include shots of Maleficent's horns, hands, and wings to indicate that Maleficent protected the Moors from the thieves.

Figure 9. Maleficent's horns



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Figure 9 above exemplifies the partial revelation of Maleficent as the creature that attacked the thieves who poached the fairies from the Moors. It is essential to note the dim lighting, the mysterious tone of the soundtrack, and the stealthy aerial point of view as the camera follows Maleficent's eyes in watching the thieves mark Maleficent's clandestine effort to protect the Moors. It is because the formal Queen of the Moors is Aurora, yet Maleficent could not stand seeing the fairies poached by the thieves. While narratively, Maleficent's action causes prejudices among humans, in Aurora's mind, this stealthy protection also represents Maleficent's efforts to protect the Moors while maintaining Aurora's dignity as its Queen. Thus, in her own way, Maleficent was also protecting Aurora in these scenes.

Subsequences 14e, 15a, and 15b further highlight Maleficent's protective character toward the creatures of the Moors. Subsequences 14a and 15b stage the banter between Maleficent and Queen Ingrith, where Maleficent tried to expose Ulstead's roles in the poaching of the fairies from the Moors by humans. Although the banter shows Maleficent's aggressive and prejudiced traits, her intuitive nature correctly pointed out that Queen Ingrith

was behind the fairy poaching, as depicted in subsequence 10d before Maleficent arrived in the castle.

The strength of Maleficent's instinctive protective nature is further displayed in subsequent 15a when Maleficent froze the Queen's cat, which tried to attack Diaval.

Figure 10. Maleficent froze the cat



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Figure 10 above shows Maleficent's green magic emanating from her fingers, holding the Queen's cat in the air when it was jumping to attack Diaval. As a raven, Diaval was prey to the cat. Hence Diaval needed protection from it. The cat had been annoying Diaval since subsequence 13c, yet Maleficent had been occupied with her banter with the Queen. Nevertheless, when the cat jumps towards Diaval, Maleficent's magic instinctively works to protect Diaval.

In subsequence 23c, Maleficent's instinct to protect the Moors was awakened, even though she was away in the sea with the other Feys. As Ulstead's army robbed the fairy cemetery of its Tomb Blooms, Maleficent felt the pain of the blooms. Thus, she spontaneously flew to the Moors, followed by Borra and Conall. In her grief over the tombs, the feys were attacked by Ulstead's army. Conall took a hit in his effort to protect Maleficent. In return, Maleficent created a protective cage from the roots to shield them from the army's attack:

Figure 11. Maleficent created a protective cage from the roots



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Maleficent kept Conall safe with the cage while Borra fought back the army. From inside the cage, Maleficent also helped Borra fight the army, using magic to move the roots and attack the soldiers. After they defeated the soldiers, Maleficent carried Conall back to the cave in the sea. It is important to note that in this sequence, the feys protected each other valiantly despite their different points of view about how to face human aggression toward the Feys' existence. Their cooperative attitude in the face of danger indicates their possible openness towards difference, including accepting humans as their equals in harmonious coexistence.

Maleficent's protective trait is strongly shown when she dealt with Aurora's safety. As Aurora's godmother, Maleficent initially refused to bless Aurora's union with Prince Phillip, as depicted in subsequence 9b. Below is the excerpt of the conversation between Aurora and Maleficent concerning Prince Phillip's proposal.

Excerpt 1

*Aurora* : *Why don't you like Philip?*  
*Maleficent* : *Well, for one thing, he's human.*  
*Aurora* : *I'm a human*  
*Maleficent* : *And I have never held that against you*  
*Aurora* : *Until I fell in love*  
*Maleficent* : *Love doesn't always end well, Beasty.*  
(*Mistress of Evil*, 2019, subsequence 9b;  
00:17:28 – 00:17:44)

Excerpt 1 shows that Maleficent refused to bless Aurora's union with Prince Phillip because she did not trust that love would end well. This statement calls for the events in the first movie. First, Maleficent had a relationship with Stephan, but he betrayed Maleficent. Maleficent might refuse the union to protect Aurora from the same pain. The second event was Prince Phillip's kiss of true love failed to wake Aurora from her sleep in the first movie. This failure could make Maleficent think Prince Phillip did not genuinely love Aurora then and in the present narrative. Besides, the epilogue also states that the human heart quickly changed. Once they heard rumors about Maleficent's witchcraft, they soon forgot that Maleficent was also capable of true love that lifted her curse upon Aurora. As the narrative later reveals, the union was indeed tarnished by Queen Ingrith's plan to use the wedding to kill all the fairies and conquer the Moors. Thus, Prince Phillip's heart could also easily change and break Aurora's heart. Unfortunately, the narrative in subsequent 9b did not include this reasoning, perhaps to provide the plot with enough suspense and surprising twists, making Maleficent look like a jealous mother instead of a protective one.

Late in the narrative, subsequences 28d and 28g shows how protective Maleficent was toward Aurora. In subsequence 28d, Maleficent put herself between Queen Ingrith's arrow and Aurora to protect the god-daughter.

Figure 12. Maleficent's demise at the hand of Queen Ingrith.



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

The scene when Queen Ingrith's arrow hit Maleficent. The arrow was intended for Aurora, but Maleficent protected Aurora by putting herself in between Aurora and the arrow. Because the arrow contained the red powder that killed fairies, Maleficent instantly changed into dust. However, Maleficent's expression during this scene was very peaceful, as shown in Figure 8, indicating her willingness to die for Aurora's safety, representing how strong Maleficent's affection for Aurora was (Blangsinga et al. (2021).

In the subsequent 28g, Maleficent, who rose from the dust as the Phoenix, jumped off the turret to save Aurora. The jump was perilous, and Maleficent would not have time to catch Aurora and rise to the sky afterward, risking a severe fall that could kill both Aurora and Maleficent. However, Maleficent protected Aurora, as depicted in the picture below.

Figure 13. Maleficent rescued Aurora



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

Figure 13 shows how Maleficent spread her wings to save Aurora. The camera is strategically placed to tilt up and show the breadth of Maleficent's wings. From this point, Maleficent's wings embraced Aurora and buffered the fall. The severity of Maleficent's crash landing is shown in the following picture:

Figure 14. Maleficent crashed into the park to save Aurora.



Source: *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (2019)

The length of Maleficent's crash shows how hard the landing was. However, with Maleficent's protective wings, Aurora emerged from Maleficent's wings unhurt. With subsequent 28d, this subsequence depicts Maleficent's affection towards Aurora by protecting the god-daughter with her own life twice (Wedawati & Darma, 2018).

It is essential to notice that the rescue scene on subsequence 28g was done in public. By setting the rescue outdoors amidst the fight between humans and the Feys, the rescue

was witnessed by all humans, Feys, and fairies in the war. Narratively, this staging works to remedy the mistake from the first film, where the setting of Maleficent's true love kiss that saved Aurora was in the privacy of Aurora's bedroom. It could explain why Queen Ingrith easily spread the rumour that "a baby was cursed to sleep and never wake," because only very few people witnessed Maleficent's true kiss and Aurora's waking. Thus, people believed Queen Ingrith's story that the baby never woke up, as depicted in subsequence 14d. It was even believable for naïve people like King John, while the supposedly asleep baby was Aurora herself, who was present at the dinner at the very same table.

Thus, this sequel places Aurora's rescue in public, with many witnesses. These witnesses would have first-hand knowledge about Maleficent's affectionate character. Therefore, ideologically speaking, it would be more difficult to discredit Maleficent again with rumours because many people would also tell the tale of Maleficent's affection.

### Conclusion

The present study aims to elaborate on Maleficent's affectionate characters in Disney's *Maleficent: The Mistress of Evil*. The study reveals that Maleficent's affectionate trait is depicted in the film through her loving, nurturing, and protective personality towards Aurora, the creatures of the Moors, the other Feys, and the humans.

Narratively, Maleficent's protective character is depicted early from the beginning of the narrative, more specifically from the Prologue. However, her loving trait is shown a little later, starting from sequence 9 although the voice-over narration in sequence 2 mentions Maleficent's loving trait. Meanwhile, Maleficent's nurturing personality appeared from the middle of the plot, starting from sequence 13. The early depiction of Maleficent's protective character in the beginning of the narrative presents Maleficent as an aggressive Fey. This impression is due to the absence of her reasons to be fiercely protective toward creatures of the Moors and Aurora. After the narrative slowly reveals Maleficent loving and nurturing characters, Maleficent's protective trait is more understandable as reflection of her affection to ensure the wellbeing of those that she loved.

Cinematographically, the narrative secured the deconstruction of Maleficent's evil characters by performing her selfless attitudes in public. The setting allows the presence of humans, feys, and fairies to witness that Maleficent sacrificed herself to save Aurora's life. This mise-en-scene places preventive constraints for future misunderstanding and prejudices against Maleficent in future narrative, because the humans, feys, and fairies present during the action would become witness of Maleficent's affectionate characters.

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