



AMAZING ADVERSARIES & ENVIRONMENTS



New locations, environments,
and adversaries.





THE SKY ISLES

Visit the secluded home of the Phoenix Monks under the cloudless skies of the Sky Isles. A breathtaking place where loyalty and discipline rules all things.

THE PITCH

High above the world, where clouds drift below your feet, a chain of floating islands hides a monastery few have ever seen.

The Phoenix Monks live there—disciplined, serene, and bound by the precept that weakness cannot be tolerated. They welcome those strong enough to reach them, but their hospitality comes with expectations that are never spoken twice.

You've found your way to the Sky Isles, whether by chance, pursuit, or purpose. The climb alone is enough to break most people. What waits above is harder still.

The monks are as calm and disciplined as ever—but there's a tension here, something unspoken that lingers in the way they watch, the way they measure every word and action.

You're welcome here, if you can reach it. But it quickly becomes clear that this place is not just observing you. It's judging you.

Up here, nothing stays hidden for long. Not your strength. Not your doubt. Not what you're willing to sacrifice.

tone & feel

Serene, Tense, Disciplined, Ominous,
Elevated, Unforgiving

THEMES

Strength vs. Compassion, Control vs. Chaos,
Tradition vs. Change, Sacrifice and Cost, Trust
and Judgment

TOUCHSTONES

Princess Mononoke, The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, The Dark Crystal, Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind

OVERVIEW

Few have ever seen the Sky Isles. Those who have do not easily describe them—the words tend to fail somewhere between impossible and beautiful. Thousands of feet above the ground, earth motes drift through clouds and open sky, their edges trailing waterfalls that become soft rain long before they reach the earth below. The largest of these motes is home to Neverdark, a village of stone and discipline and firelight, where the sun never quite sets and the monks never quite stop watching.

SECULAR SECLUSION

Centuries ago, a bakeneko—a cat demon with a taste for fire and ruin—burned the Phoenix Monks' first monastery to the ground. The building was wood. Most of what they had built was wood. They did not make that mistake again.

The survivors climbed. They found the earth motes and they climbed those too, and when they finally stopped climbing, they built in stone and metal and stayed. They called the place Neverdark, because in their old life they had learned what darkness cost.

They created the Way of the Phoenix not as tradition but as insurance—a brutal, fire-centered discipline designed to ensure that what happened once could never happen again. In time, they learned not only to endure fire but to use it. The burn scars on every monk's hands and faces are not injuries. They are proof of completion.

NEVERDARK

Neverdark prospered—quietly, invisibly, by virtue of being somewhere most of the world couldn't reach. The monks planted rice and grew what the motes allowed. They fished the sky-fed streams for trout. Mountain goats occasionally wandered up and were hunted when they did. The trees were felled early and used for bowls and plates and nothing larger; the monks had learned what wood becomes when something wants it to burn.

Visitors came rarely, and only those capable enough to reach the Isles on their own were considered worth welcoming. A few stayed. The monks permitted it, provided the newcomers understood that Neverdark's warmth and Neverdark's standards were the same thing—inseparable, non-negotiable.

The village has been attacked once since the bakeneko. A blue dragon came hunting the winged leopards—creatures rare enough to be worth crossing the sky for— and tracked one back to Neverdark. The dragon offered a trade: the leopards in exchange for the monks' lives. The monks declined. They mounted the

leopards, fought the dragon on its own terms, and won. The dragon's skull rests in the Meditation Court now. Not as a trophy, but as a reminder that Neverdark has been tested before, and held.

STRONG VALUES

“Strong Values” is not a motto. It is the operating principle of every interaction, every judgment, every punishment in Neverdark. The monks are warm hosts—genuinely so—but their warmth exists within a structure that does not bend. An infraction earns a warning. It is said that a second infraction earns the Test of Truth. Some survivors claim that failure in the Test earns death, because Neverdark has learned the cost of carrying people who cannot be relied upon. What makes this unsettling is how calmly it is administered. No one raises their voice. No one takes pleasure in punishment. The monks have simply decided, generations ago, that serenity and uncompromising standards are not in conflict, and they have built a society that proves it, every day, in ways that are difficult to argue with and harder to live by.

ISOLATED LOCATION

The Sky Isles don't appear on most maps. They aren't stumbled upon. The encounters in this supplement assume the party finds them by chance—following leopards, chasing curiosity—but there are other ways in:

- The party hears rumors of winged leopards and traces them to their source.
- A Tier 3 or 4 party with flying capability spots movement in the clouds—shadows, or leopards in flight. As with The Way Up, the beasts could be under attack when found.
- A monk PC's backstory is rooted here. Neverdark was their training ground. Coming back is not the same as coming home.
- The party is preparing to face something that burns. They hear that the Phoenix Monks don't just endure fire; some have learned to answer it. Passing The Test of Truth could earn them the Fiery Blessing.

INSPIRATION

The Sky Isles are not a finished story—they are a stage. The text above offers one version of the Clan of the Phoenix, their history, and the threat they face. Take what serves your table and leave the rest.

Some questions worth considering before you begin:

What kind of people are the Phoenix Monks to you? Guardians who have calcified into something dangerous? A community that genuinely works, for better and worse? Something in between?

It is rumored that those who violate the Clan's code twice face a trial that can end in death. Is that true at your table—or is it a story the monks allow to circulate because fear is easier to maintain than enforcement? The monks are said to have fought and killed a dragon. What did that cost them—and does winning a fight like that change a community, or confirm what it already believed about itself? Sethlok is described here as the architect of the monks' crisis. But what if the monks' desperation has a different source at your table? What if Kayden's plan is not a response to manipulation, but to something genuinely falling apart from within?

The incantation requires a sacrifice. Who in your version of Neverdark knows this—and who has decided it is worth it? Those two questions may not have the same answer. Is the sacrifice really necessary?

OVERARCHING PLOT

THE REENCOUNTER

Sethlok, the bakeneko who destroyed the first monastery, has found them again. The monks do not know this yet. What they know is that rumors have reached Kayden, the leader of the Phoenix Monks, suggesting the demon is searching, growing bolder, growing closer. The rumors are Sethlok's own work, planted through intermediaries, designed to push the monks toward a desperate act.

It is working. In the monastery library, Kayden has found mention of the Golden Phoenix, a creature of mythic fire and said to be capable of destroying anything that burns. A summoning incantation exists—but it requires a living sacrifice. Kayden told most of the Clan what the incantation will cost, and many decided it is worth it.

What no one—not even Kayden—knows is that the Golden Phoenix has long since become corrupted. Summoning it will not save Neverdark. Sethlok is counting on that.

NAME	TYPE	LOCATION
The Way Up	Playful winged leopards perched atop earth motes	A mountain top
The Skywalk	Bridge that takes people to Neverdark	Earth motes
A Sight for Sore Eyes	Welcome to Neverdark!	Neverdark
Show Some Respect	A peaceful shrine, but not quite	Neverdark
The Hunt	The black goat is spotted and hunted	Neverdark/Earth motes
The Test of Truth	No room for weaknesses	Neverdark
The Fiery Incantation	An act of desperation	Neverdark/Fireborn Monastery

THE WAY UP: Winged leopards—curious, playful, impossible—appear on the floating earth motes above. They don't wait to be approached. They leave, but they look back, and something about that is an invitation.

THE SKYWALK: The bridge to Neverdark is not a welcome. It is a question. Seven blocks of green stone stretch across the open sky, and the only way forward is to deserve it.

A **SIGHT FOR SORE EYES:** Neverdark is breathtaking, and its people are warm, and their leader greets the party with open palms and a single condition. The village is theirs to explore. Something beneath the warmth is not quite right.

SHOW SOME RESPECT: A tranquil shrine hidden inside a waterfall becomes the stage for Neverdark's justice—calm, certain, and completely unmoved by outside opinion. The party can watch. Or they can make a choice that tells the Clan exactly who they are.

THE HUNT: The leader's son invites the party beyond the village, into the open sky, after a black goat no one has managed to catch. It is a hunt. It is also an audition.

THE TEST OF TRUTH: Someone must be tested. The whole of Neverdark will watch. If the one being tested is not a PC, they will ask for a champion—and the Clan will remember whoever steps forward.

THE FIERY INCANTATION: Kayden has been working toward something. The party has been assessed, measured, found worthy. Now they will learn what worthy means to a leader desperate enough to burn everything to protect what remains.



The background image shows a person standing on a dark, rocky mountain peak. They are looking up at a vast sky filled with floating islands or 'motes'. These motes are covered in green vegetation and have thin, white waterfalls cascading down their sides. A large, bright yellow sun is positioned in the upper right, casting a warm glow over the scene. Numerous small white birds are scattered across the sky, some near the floating islands. The overall atmosphere is one of wonder and exploration.

THE WAY UP

Scene Type: Exploration/Combat

Scene Overview: While exploring a mountaintop, the party notices earth motes that had been hidden by clouds. Perched atop these floating rocks are beautiful winged leopards, who watch the party and act as if they want to play with the characters.

Scene Location: Anywhere near the top of a mountain.

BACKGROUND

The earth motes that lead to the Sky Isles are usually hidden from sight by thick clouds, only becoming visible on rare occasions when strong winds blow the clouds away. The Phoenix Monks raise the winged leopards to be their mounts but allow them the freedom to roam the motes. If they spot people below, they'll want to play chase.

Overarching Plot: Kayden has instructed the leopards to draw capable travelers upward. The party doesn't know they're already being assessed; how they handle the ascent, and whether they earn the leopards' trust will quietly shape what comes next

THE SCENE

The party is near or at a mountain summit, whether by design, rumor, or wandering curiosity. Read or paraphrase:

The clouds tear apart in a single gust. Above you are floating rocks, covered in vegetation and trailing thin waterfalls that dissolve into mist far below, hanging impossibly in the open sky. On the nearest mote, two large winged leopards stand watching you, tails moving slowly. Then they turn and fly into the clouds above.

This is when the environment **The Way Up** activates. Follow the procedure from "The Ascent" feature and introduce the first mote. From here, each mote is yours to frame. The motes are connected with ropes, some allowing for a vertical climb, some allowing for a horizontal traversal.

THE WAY UP

Tier 1-4 Transversal

Playful winged leopards perched atop cloud-shrouded earth motes lure the party upward through dizzying heights—but the open skies above are not always safe.

Impulses: To lure the curious upward; to test those who wish to reach Neverdark; to expose the unprepared to the dangers of open sky.

Difficulty: 12 / 15 / 18 / 21

Potential Adversaries: Giant Eagles, Dire Bats, Manticores*, Young Ice Dragon, Winged Leopards*

FEATURES

The Ascent - Passive: When this environment is introduced, place a Progress Countdown (7). Each time the party resolves an event on a mote and moves forward, tick down the countdown regardless of whether it happens through an action roll or narrative solution. If it was particularly dangerous or difficult, tick twice. If a PC rolls a failure with Fear, the GM can activate any feature of this environment without spending a Fear. When the countdown triggers, the party arrives at the top mote, J, if using the map. Describe their arrival based on how the journey went.

What does the earth mote look like? What warnings did previous travelers leave?

Aerial Ambush - Action: Spend a Fear to have flying predators descend on the party. Choose one PC to make an Instinct Reaction Roll. On a failure, all adversaries immediately gain the spotlight. On a Success or Failure with Fear, the next roll for every PC is made with disadvantage. The predators focus on the Winged Leopards first. If the party does nothing, the leopards are driven off and no bond can be formed in this scene.

Why are they attacking the leopards? Have they been waiting here, or did something draw them in?

Sudden Gust - Action: Spend a Fear to send a violent windshear across the motes. Choose one PC currently crossing a gap or on a rope and have them make a Strength Reaction Roll. On a Failure with Hope, that PC marks a Stress. On a failure with Fear, they are knocked off the mote entirely and fall to the mote below at Close range, taking fall damage.

- **Fall damage:** 2d6+2 / 2d10+4 / 3d8+6 / 4d8+8

Does the wind feel unnatural? How can the PC get back up to the previous mote?

Happy Tail - Reaction: When a PC approaches a Winged Leopard that has landed nearby to wait for them, they may attempt to impress it. Place a Progress Countdown (4). It ticks down whenever that PC makes an action roll to impress the leopards:

- **Critical Success:** Tick down 3
- **Success with Hope:** Tick down 2
- **Success with Fear:** Tick down 1
- **Failure with Hope:** No advancement
- **Failure with Fear:** Tick up 1

When the countdown triggers, the leopard allows them to come close enough to touch it. That PC has earned a bond; record it. The bond can be called once before reaching Neverdark to help the group overcome an obstacle or to catch a PC when falling. The leopard does not stay as a companion but clearly remembers the PC.

Are the winged leopards attracting the PCs on purpose? What may impress the leopards?

RUNNING THIS ENVIRONMENT

Each mote is a beat: describe what the party sees, introduce something worth dealing with, and tick the countdown when they move on. It doesn't need to be combat, it just needs to cost something. A tick can come from an action roll, a narrative solution, or simply because they earned the progress. Occasionally hint at a harder route—a more dangerous crossing, a steeper rope, a mote that looks threatening. Let the party decide if it's worth it.

Throughout the ascent, the Winged Leopards are never far—circling, landing just out of reach, darting ahead and looking back. They never quite let the party catch up.

MOTE CHALLENGES

Below are a few challenge suggestions for each mote. Use them as-is, adapt them, or ignore them entirely and come up with your own.

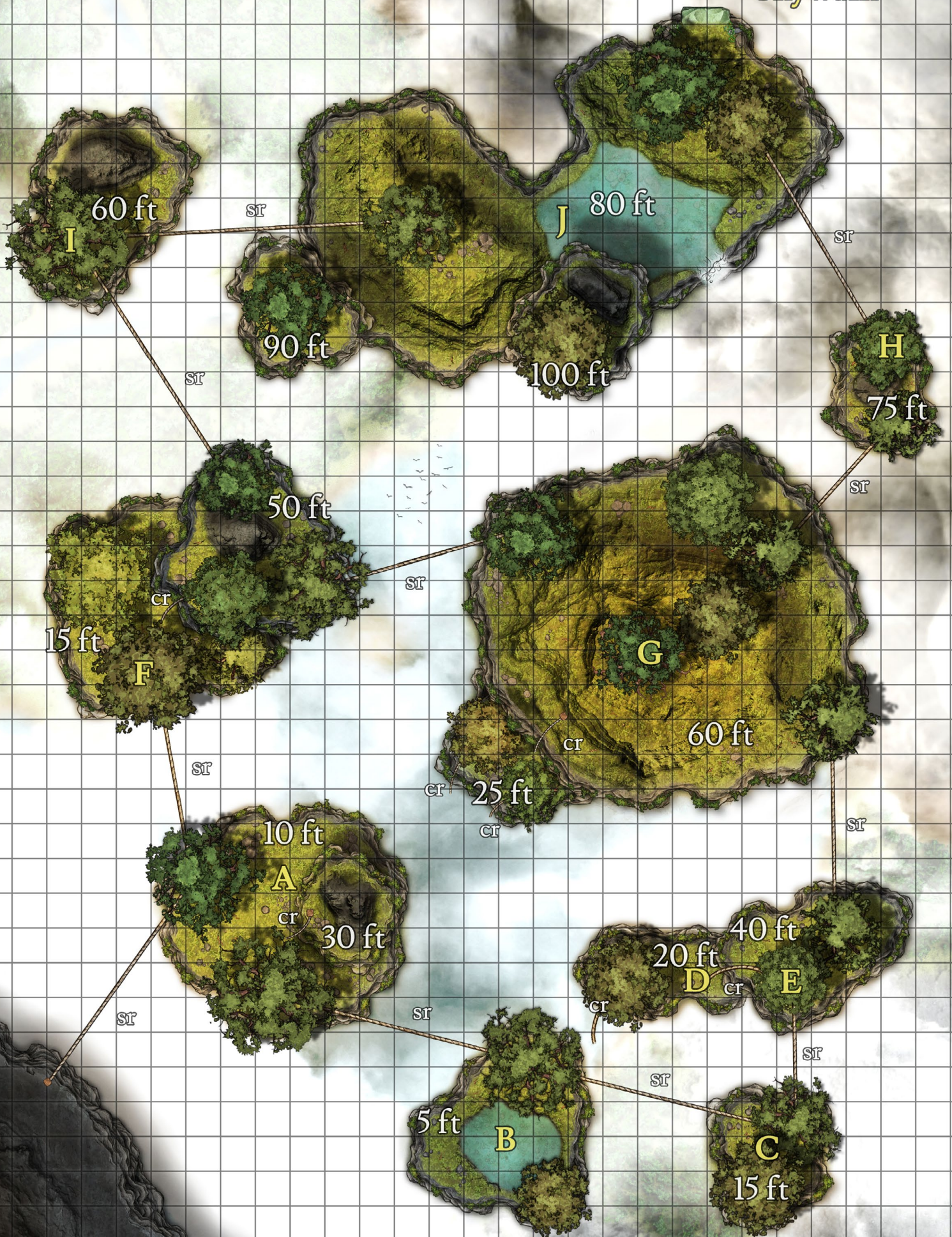
- A taut rope stretches between two motes, swaying over open sky as the wind tugs at it, forcing anyone crossing to cling tight or risk losing their grip.
- The mote is blanketed in thick fog. The far edge isn't visible. Something is moving in it, and it isn't a leopard.
- The mote begins drifting mid-crossing. Slowly at first, then faster—the gap behind the last PC grows with each passing moment.
- A large predator has nested on this mote and isn't interested in sharing. It won't chase the party off the edge, but it will make the crossing slow, painful, and loud.
- A narrow stream cuts straight across the mote, fed by a spring somewhere above and moving faster than it looks. The far bank is close, but the current is strong enough to pull someone off the edge.

DEVELOPMENTS

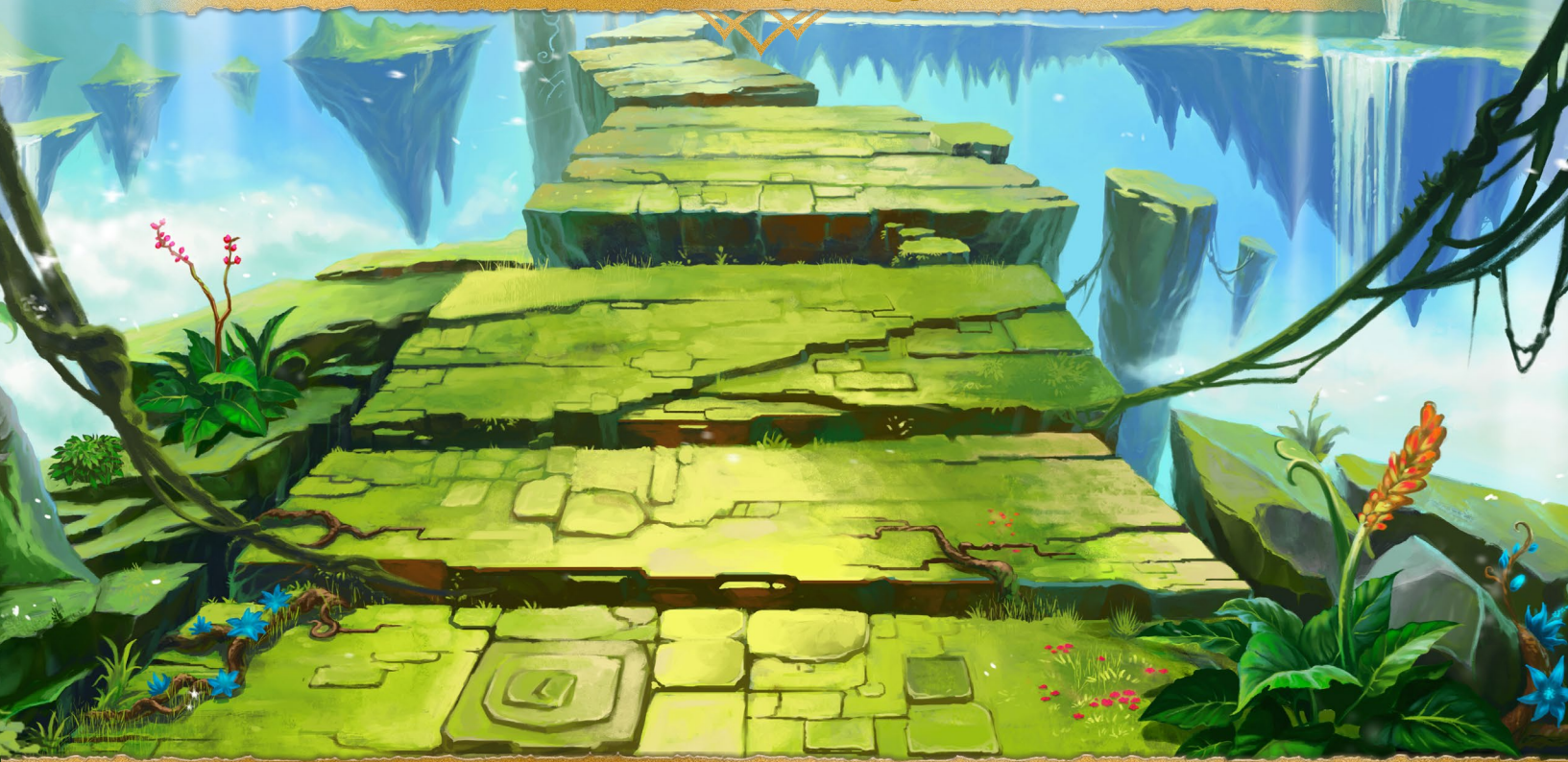
The scene ends when the Countdown triggers or the party abandons the ascent. When the party reaches mote J, describe their arrival based on how the journey went and continue to **A Sight for Sore Eyes**.

If any PC showed particular courage, creativity, or care during the crossing, note it—Kayden was watching. It will color how they are received.

Skywalk



THE SKYWALK



Scene Type: Exploration/Puzzle/Combat

Scene Overview: After climbing through the earth motes, the party arrives at a floating bridge of green stones that stretches across open sky toward the distant island of Neverdark.

Scene Location: Sky Isles earth motes

BACKGROUND

To protect Neverdark from unwanted visitors, the monks who studied magic created a bridge that ensures only the capable—and the bold—can reach them. The bridge is not a welcome. It is a question.

Overarching Plot: The monks added a sign at the bridge's base: "Ahead lies the shining Neverdark, with beauty beyond imagination. If you can reach us, we will welcome you. Good luck." Kayden's hand is in this—whoever makes it across is exactly who he is looking for.

THE SCENE

At this point, the Winged Leopards interact with the party one last time—circling, watching, communicating something between farewell and encouragement. If a PC earned a bond during The Way Up, their leopard stays close, circling above as they cross. Then the leopards are gone, ahead somewhere in the clouds, and the party is alone with the bridge. Read or paraphrase:

Seven blocks of green stone float in the open sky, each one separated from the next by a gap of open air. Thick vines, thirty feet long, hang from beneath the stones. In the distance, a massive island of green fills the horizon—a tall mountain, streams catching the light, buildings carved from stone. The leopards are already there, somewhere beyond the clouds. Between you and the bridge, a wooden sign reads: "One step at a time."

A PC who pauses to study the bridge before stepping onto it may attempt an Instinct Roll (Hard). On a success, they notice patterns—subtle signs of what each block demands. They gain an advantage on their next action roll to cross, and may share this advantage with the group by spending a Hope.

The moment the first PC steps onto the bridge, all remaining blocks sink silently into the clouds. Each block rises only when the previous one is reached, appearing from below and stopping suddenly at bridge level. Once a PC reaches a new block, the gap they crossed fills with rising stone, so the rest of the party can follow safely.

This is when the environment **The Skywalk** activates.

Sidebar: Flying Parties

If the whole party bypasses the bridge using flight, don't skip the scene. Run an aerial confrontation as they approach Neverdark from the air—the monks are watching. Kayden's greeting in the next encounter will carry a quiet reservation.

RUNNING THIS ENVIRONMENT

The Skywalk is structured differently from the earth motes. Here, the environment itself dictates the beats—each block is a new situation, and the party moves through them in sequence. Your job is to make each block feel distinct: the texture underfoot, the wind, the sound of the stone rising from the clouds below.

The countdown tracks blocks reached, not rolls made. A block resolved through creativity, brute force, or narrative ingenuity all tick it equally. What matters is that crossing each one costs something—attention, resources, courage.

CUSTOM ADVERSARIES

- **Gargoyles:** Use the Skeleton Knight and Skeleton Warrior. You can also use Skeleton Dredges for minions. All gargoyles can fly even if they don't have a feature for this.
- **Air Mephits:** Use the Spectral Archer, Spectral Captain, and Spectral Guardian for variety. They are demonic creatures made of magical air and wind.
- **Chaos Elementals:** Use the Outer Realms Abomination and Outer Realms Corrupter. They are creatures made of uncontrollable magic.

DEVELOPMENTS

The scene ends when the Countdown triggers or the party abandons the ascent. When the party reaches mote J, describe their arrival based on how the journey went and continue to A Sight for Sore Eyes.

If any PC showed particular courage, creativity, or care during the crossing, note it—Kayden was watching. It will color how they are received.

THE SKYWALK

Tier 1-4 Transversal

Seven blocks of green stone float between the last earth mote and Neverdark: a test of wit, courage, and body built to keep the unworthy out.

Impulses: To challenge those who would enter Neverdark; to reward cleverness and composure; to swallow the reckless into the endless sky below..

Difficulty: 11 / 14 / 17 / 20

Potential Adversaries: Air Mephits*, Battle Box, Chaos Elementals*, Construct, Gargoyles*, Greater Earth Elementals, Minor Chaos Elemental, Stonewraiths, Vault Guardians (Gaoler, Sentinel, Turret)

FEATURES

One Step at a Time—Passive: The bridge reveals itself one block at a time. Each block rises only when the previous one is reached. The gaps between blocks vary—some are jumpable, some demand creativity, and some seem impossible until someone tries anyway. Place a Progress Countdown (7) when the first PC steps onto the bridge. Tick it down each time the party reaches a new block, whether through an action roll, a clever solution, or by using what the bridge itself offers. When the countdown triggers, the party reaches Neverdark.

What does it sound like when a block rises from the clouds? Does it feel like the bridge is watching?

What the Bridge Offers - Passive: The blocks are not empty. Each one holds something—a tool, an inscription, a resource, a creature. When the party reaches a new block, introduce one thing worth noticing before they move on. It doesn't need to be a puzzle; it just needs to be a choice.

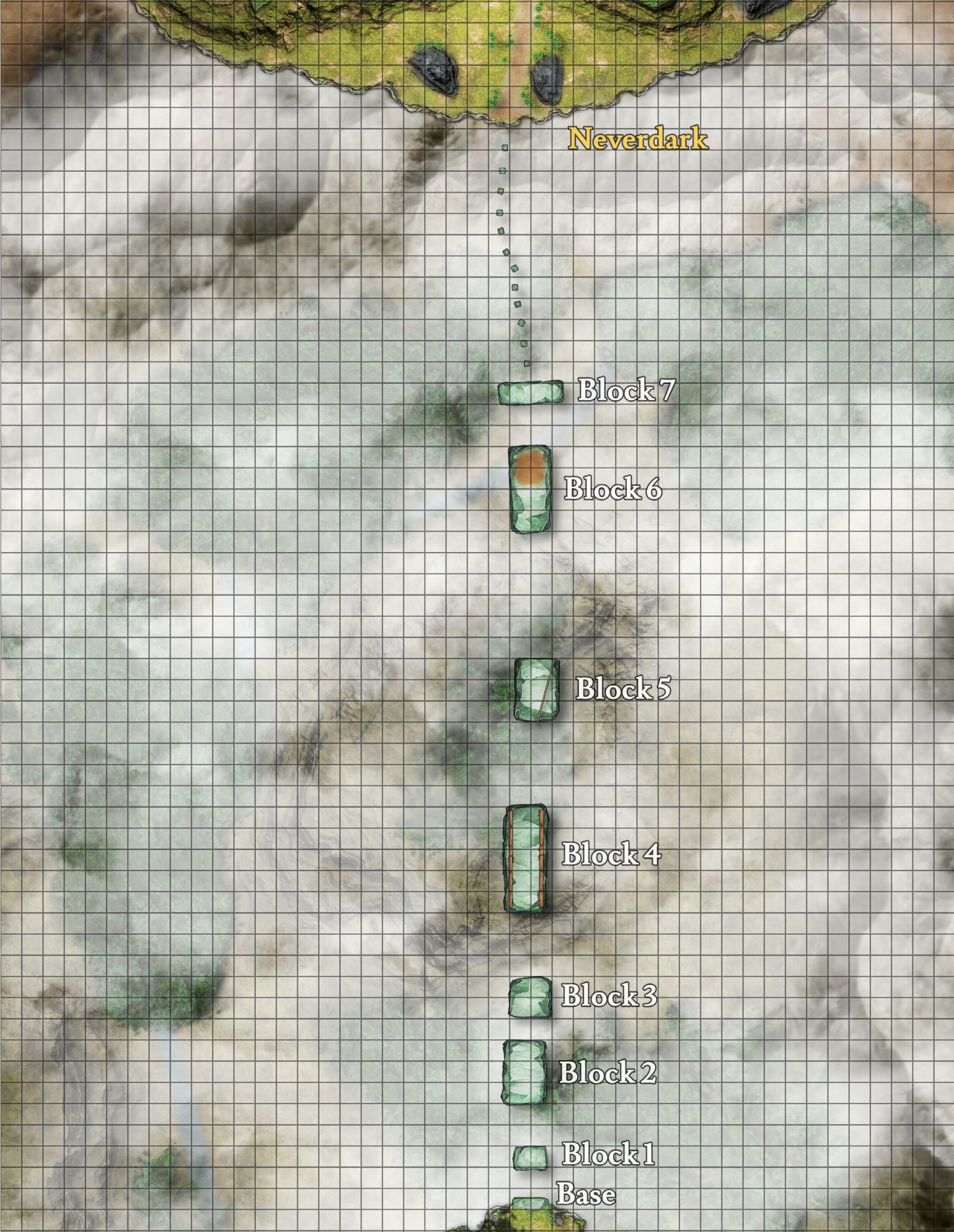
Below are the seven blocks as originally designed, offered as a reference and source of inspiration. Use them as-is, reorder them, or replace them entirely.

- **Block 1:** A short jump. Trivial for most, but there's no going back once someone commits. This must be the first block.
- **Block 2:** A moss-covered stone bearing an inscription reading "Again. Trust your heart." Five small blue mushrooms—the Emboldening Blues—grow in a crack. When consumed, they restore a mix between 1d4 HP and Stress, and grant advantage on the PC's next bold action roll. They spoil after 24 hours.
- **Block 3:** The next gap is too wide to jump. A pillar stands on the far edge—something to lasso, something to pull the block closer.
- **Block 4:** Wooden parapets line both edges. Someone with a good eye might notice the boards can be dismantled and laid across the gap ahead.
- **Block 5:** A bamboo pole, 15 feet long, lying on the ground. The gap ahead is 30 feet (Close range).
- **Block 6:** A conjuration pool at the far end. When a PC reaches the center of the block, a creature rises from it and moves to block the way forward. It will not stand down.
- **Block 7:** An inscription on the ground: "Do not hesitate." Spanning the final gap are twelve stepping stones, each barely a foot wide. Each one crumbles the moment it's touched. There is no stopping. There is no going back.

What does this block want from the party—and what does it offer in return?

Winged Leopard's Bond - Passive: The first time a PC falls from the bridge, if they have a bond with a Winged Leopard from **The Way Up**, the leopard dives from above and catches them, returning them safely to the last block they stood on. The leopard only does this once.

The leopard doesn't hesitate. Was it following them the whole way, just out of sight?



Neverdark

Block 7

Block 6

Block 5

Block 4

Block 3

Block 2

Block 1

Base



A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES

Scene Type: Social/Exploration/Combat

Scene Overview: The party reaches Neverdark and is welcomed by Kayden, who offers them shelter under one condition: they must follow the monks' guiding principle..

Scene Location: Neverdark

BACKGROUND

The Phoenix Monks are excellent hosts to the worthy guests who can reach their secluded home. As long as the party agrees to follow the monks' rules, they are welcome in Neverdark.

Overarching Plot: While most Neverdarkans genuinely welcome the party, a quiet undercurrent of unease runs through the village. Everyone knows about Kayden's plan to summon the Golden Phoenix using a living sacrifice. Most agree. A few do not, but none will betray the Clan openly.

OVERVIEW

A luminous village perched atop the largest of the Sky Isles earth motes, Neverdark is the secluded home of the Phoenix Monks—the Clan of the Phoenix. It sits above the cloud layer, open to an unbroken sky: constant sunlight by day, moonlight and stars by night,

with smaller floating earth motes drifting nearby and the white expanse of clouds far below. Neverdark is a community built on discipline, resilience, and the memory of survival. Stone and metal dominate its construction; the monks learned long ago not to build in wood. The village is entered from the east via a gravel path that leads from the Skywalk bridge.

The Clan's guiding principle is "The strong shall respect life with unending serenity." This is not just a motto—it is law. Infractions are punished. Repeated failures are tested. The Test of Truth is the ultimate price for weakness, and it can mean death. The monks are calm, warm, and welcoming to proven guests, but they are also utterly uncompromising.

Neverdarkans rarely receive visitors and are genuinely curious. Throughout the party's stay, monks may approach them with questions: "*Where are you from?*" / "*How was the way up?*" / "*What do you seek?*" / "*How have things been below the clouds?*" These are not interrogations; they are the honest questions of people who have lived above the world for a very long time.

POPULATION

Neverdark holds several dozen to a couple of hundred inhabitants, depending on the tier. Most adults and teenagers are Phoenix Monk Apprentices. A smaller number are Phoenix Monks, and a few are Phoenix Firepalms. Kayden, Aryana, and Qaeth are Master Phoenix Monks. If the party causes serious trouble, such as hurting someone or destroying property, the monks demand surrender and the Test of Truth. Refusing means fighting the full Clan, a battle few parties can survive.

IMPORTANT NPCs

Kayden (Master Phoenix Monk): The spiritual leader of the Clan. Calm, composed, and utterly dedicated, Kayden has never been seen to lose control of a situation. Although currently consumed by the threat of Sethlok's return and the desperate search for the Golden Phoenix incantation, Kayden greets all worthy arrivals personally with four monks at their side. Kayden and their companions wear green robes with flame-trimmed sleeves, and bear subtle burn scars, as do all who have completed the Way of the Phoenix.

Aryana (Master Phoenix Monk): One of the twin masters, she is co-leader of the Fireborn Monastery alongside her brother. She is passionate about dance. Aryana silently disagrees with Kayden's incantation plan but was rebuked when she voiced her concerns and now keeps her doubts hidden out of fear.

Qaeth (Master Phoenix Monk): Aryana's twin brother. He is a gifted lute player and agrees fully with Kayden's plans. The twins often perform together at night, drawing Neverdarkans to dance and sing under the stars.

Threyss (Phoenix Firepalm): Kayden's son. One of Neverdark's finest hunters, he carries quiet shame over having failed to catch the black goat on a previous hunt. He knows about the incantation plan and is anxious to prove himself.

LOCATIONS

Fair of Colors: Neverdark's market is named for its multicolored stalls and paper lanterns. Merchants here sell vegetables, rice, fruits, meat, and eggs. A mage here sells minor healing or stamina potions to visitors at double the usual price. The whole community is aware of Kayden's plan; tension is present beneath the welcoming surface, but only noticeable to those who look closely.

Dotted Stables: Home to fifteen Winged Leopards, tamed and trained here. The leopards are not for sale—gaining one requires earning Neverdark's deep favor,

either by helping against Sethlok or by voluntarily passing the Test of Truth. If the party has earned that favor, a tamer introduces them to a leopard. Bonding is a Long-Term Project Countdown (8). When it triggers, the creature accepts the PC as its rider.

Sky Grounds: A small glass-floored arena that reflects the open sky, the Sky Grounds is the primary training ground for the Way of the Phoenix. During the daytime hours, it is occupied by sparring monks.

Fireborn Monastery: Built into the central platform of the Shading Hill, the Fireborn Monastery is where all Neverdarkans are trained from childhood. Kayden is normally present but is currently absorbed in preparing the incantation. Aryana and Qaeth receive any visitors who come to the monastery in Kayden's absence.

Meditation Court: This is an open courtyard surrounded by flowering hedges, with a large everburning brazier at its center and a dragon's skull resting nearby, a memorial to the blue dragon the Clan defeated.

Shading Hill: This tall, multi-level, rocky cliff face that the village hugs was named for the cool shadow it casts in this ever-lit place. Buildings are carved into its platforms. Access to the upper platforms and top is normally restricted.

All-Seeing Towers: At the top of the Shading Hill are three watchtowers, each staffed by a Phoenix Firepalm and a Phoenix Monk trained to operate a ballista loaded with paralyzing arrows. Their primary purpose is defense against aerial threats. Due to the Sethlok threat, staffing has been doubled and a Phoenix Mage has been added to each tower.

RUNNING NEVERDARK

Neverdark is not a single scene—it is a living location the party moves through over time. The Neverdark environment provides features the GM can activate as moves, creating pressure, opportunity, and texture during the party's stay. Use them selectively rather than all at once; let the party's choices determine which features become relevant. In addition to the environment, this encounter provides guidelines for how Kayden welcomes the party, how the Clan's rules create friction, and how the overarching plot runs through the people and places of Neverdark—through tension at the market, a moment with Aryana, or something glimpsed at the Meditation Court that does not quite add up.

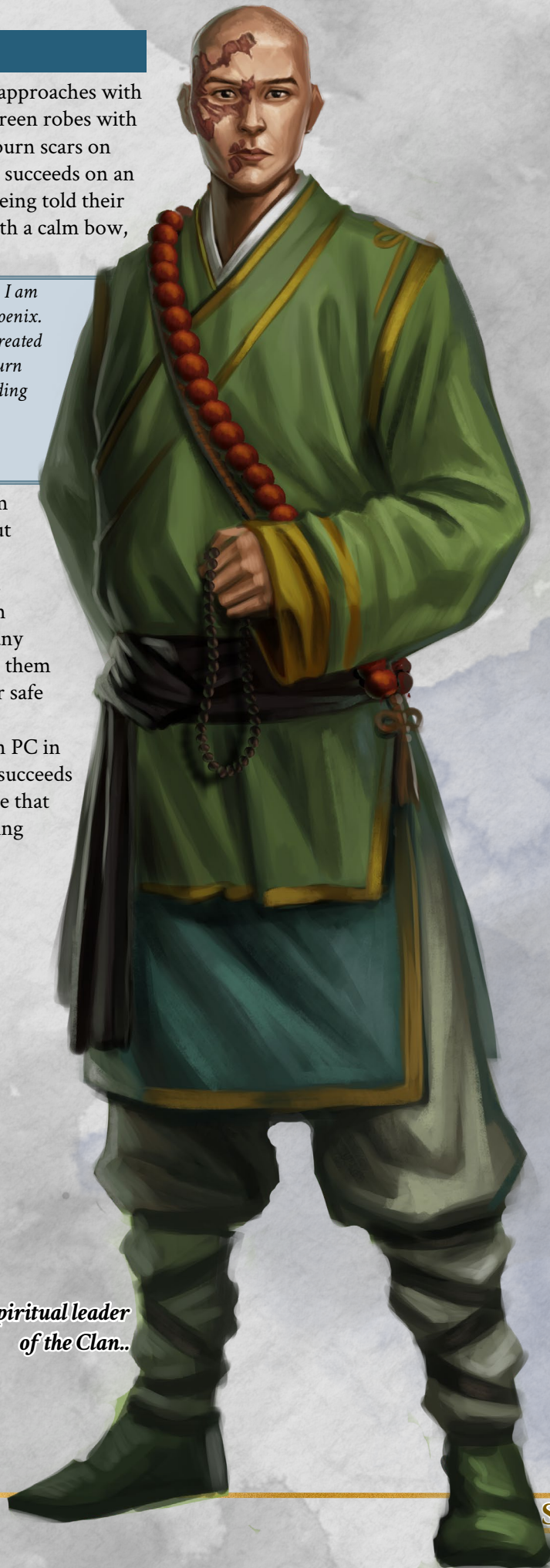
KAYDEN'S WELCOME

As the party enters Neverdark, Kayden approaches with four monks at their side. All five wear green robes with flame-trimmed sleeves and bear subtle burn scars on their hands, faces, and necks. A PC who succeeds on an Instinct Roll notices the scars without being told their significance. Kayden greets the party with a calm bow, palms joined, and says:

"Brave travelers, we welcome you to our home. I am Kayden, spiritual leader of the Clan of the Phoenix. You are our most honored guests and will be treated with utmost respect. All we ask is that you return the same courtesy and agree to follow our guiding principle: 'The strong shall respect life with unending serenity.' Is this something you can agree with?"

If the party agrees, Kayden walks them to the village proper, briefly pointing out Neverdark's key locations, then excuses themselves to attend to urgent business. If the party refuses, Kayden thanks them for making the journey, apologizes for any hardship along the way, and calmly asks them to leave. The Skywalk remains intact for safe passage back.

Before leaving, Kayden glances at each PC in turn, unhurried, measuring. A PC who succeeds on an Instinct Roll gets the distinct sense that they have just been assessed for something Kayden has not named. Then Kayden bows and goes.



Kayden, Master Phoenix Monk and spiritual leader of the Clan..

NEVERDARK

Tier 1-4 Social

A breathtaking village above the clouds, home to the disciplined and scarred Phoenix Monks—peaceful hosts with a dangerous secret.

Impulses: To test the worthy with hospitality; to protect what was built from ashes; to draw capable outsiders deeper into the Clan's affairs

Difficulty: 13 / 16 / 19 / 21

Potential Adversaries: Phoenix Monks* (Apprentice, Disciple, Firepalm, Mage, Master)

FEATURES

Meditation Court - Passive: Once per scene, a PC who takes a short rest in the Meditation Court, near the everburning flame and the dragon skull memorial, clears HP and Stress.

- **HP and Stress:** 1 / 1 / 2 / 3

Whose memory does the dragon skull honor—and does meditating in its presence change how a PC understands the Clan's willingness to fight?

Something Beneath the Surface - Passive: A PC who pays attention—at the market, at the party, near the meditation court—may notice that not everyone is at ease with the party's presence. Most hide it well. A PC who succeeds on an Instinct Roll notices the hesitation: a glance exchanged, a conversation that stops too quickly, a prayer spoken in a low voice with words that don't quite mean what they claim. These people won't betray the Clan—but they're carrying something.

What are they afraid the party will find out? What are they afraid will happen if the party doesn't?

Life in Neverdark - Passive: The village is alive with routine—monks sparring at the Sky Grounds, trading at the Fair of Colors, meditating near the eternal flame. When the party explores a new location or initiates a conversation, introduce one thing worth noticing: something unusual, something warm, something that doesn't quite add up. Neverdark rewards the curious and punishes the careless.

What does this place look like to someone who has never seen anything like it? What does it look like to someone who has?

Village Event - Action: Introduce a situation in the village that shifts the scene unexpectedly: a monk is brought to the shrine for punishment, an argument breaks out at the market, a teenager leads the party somewhere they probably shouldn't be. The party is not the cause—but they are witnesses, and witnesses have to decide what to do. Spend a Fear to make the situation unavoidable—the party is seen, implicated, or directly accused. Walking away is no longer an option without consequence.

The Rules of the House - Reaction: If the party causes trouble—raises their voices, draws a weapon, damages property—the monks respond swiftly and without escalation. They warn once. If the behavior continues, the offenders are asked to leave. If anyone is harmed, the monks demand surrender and the Test of Truth. A PC who refuses should understand what they're facing: the monks are many, trained, and on home ground.

Does Kayden appear—or do they already know, and are simply waiting?

SCENE HOOKS

The following scenes can emerge naturally from the party's time in Neverdark. Use them when the environment features point in their direction, or whenever the moment feels right.

Friendly Sparring: A monk named Ylxa challenges a PC to a bout at the Sky Grounds. No lethal damage, no ranged attacks, no leaving the arena. A crowd forms quickly. If the PC wins, Ylxa offers to train with them—completing the training grants the Fiery Blessing, a temporary resistance to magic fire damage (see map Sky Grounds page 17).

The Top of the World: A teenager named Cassel offers to take the party to the top of the Shading Hill via an unofficial route, past the watchtower guards. He mentions rare flowers up there—Invigorating Flowers that grant the benefits of an extra short rest when consumed but wilt within 24 hours. If the party is spotted, Cassel immediately takes the blame. If the party is spotted, note it; it surfaces in Show Some Respect.

Welcome Party: Aryana and Qaeth organize a celebration at the Sky Grounds. Refusing is considered disrespectful. Qaeth plays lute, Aryana dances, and the village joins in. The same tension visible at the market is present here, but is harder to read through the music and food.

Aryana's Doubt: If a PC seeks Aryana out alone and makes a genuine effort to connect—whether by reading her carefully or giving her a reason to trust them—have them make an action roll. On a success with Hope, she makes a decision she can't take back—she tells the party everything, knowing what it costs her. On a success with Fear, she tells them just enough, then asks them to forget she said anything. On a failure, she excuses herself quickly. Qaeth appears shortly after, pleasant and unhurried, and asks what they were talking about. What the PC says now determines whether Kayden finds out.





SHOW SOME RESPECT

Scene Type: Social/Exploration/Combat

Scene Overview: While the party visits the Refreshing Shrine, a Neverdarkan is brought there to receive punishment for an infraction. The party can watch, intervene, or find another way.

Scene Location: Neverdark.

BACKGROUND

The Refreshing Shrine sits inside the Shading Hill—an open cave, roofless, surrounded by waterfalls. In the center, a small earth mote holds a shining shrine reachable by floating tiles. The place is quiet by design. People come here alone.

Overarching Plot: If the party climbed the Shading Hill with Cassel and avoided detection, Kayden has arranged for a monk named Yeghel to stage a public act of disrespect—provoking an argument with an elderly monk—so the resulting punishment draws the party into making a mistake. Yeghel agreed to help the Clan but is not comfortable with the plan. He knows what he's being asked to do and has been wrestling with it. If the party reaches him before he's gagged, he has something to say.

THE SCENE

The party may arrive here through any of the following:

- They hear about the shrine's restorative properties and seek it out.
- A trio of Winged Leopards flies through the waterfalls nearby and leads them there, then disappears upward once they arrive.
- Word spreads through Neverdark that someone violated the Clan's rules and punishment is coming.

When the party arrives, a woman named Layssa kneels at the shrine, back to them, praying in silence. In a standalone scene, she's grateful and happy to talk. If the overarching plot is active, she's praying for forgiveness—she knows about Kayden's plan and has been told to stay quiet. She won't betray the Clan, but she won't feign warmth either. A PC who presses carefully may sense she's not afraid of the party. She's afraid of what happens after they leave.

After the party has had a moment with Layssa—or immediately, if hook 3 was used—a group of monks arrives with the offender. The monks ask anyone meditating to leave. One monk reads the charge aloud: the offender failed to uphold the Clan's standard and

committed an act of profound disrespect. The monks chain the offender by the feet to the edge of the central mote, gag them, and throw them over the edge. They will hang there for a day.

The offender is either Cassel—if the party was spotted during The Top of the World—or Yeghel, if the overarching plot is active.

The monk leading the punishment—a young Firepalm named Ossek—carries out the sentence with mechanical precision. He doesn't look at the offender's face. A PC who watches him closely notices he mouths something just before the chain pulls taut. It might be an apology.

THE REFRESHING SHRINE

Tier 1-4 Social

A place of solitary peace hidden inside the Shading Hill—until it isn't.

Impulses: To offer stillness before the storm; to force witnesses to choose; to reveal what the Clan asks of its people

Difficulty: 12 / 15 / 18 / 21

Potential Adversaries: Phoenix Monks* (Apprentice, Disciple, Firepalm, Mage, Master)

FEATURES

Serenity Demands a Price - Passive: The shrine is a place of judgment as much as restoration. When a PC who has visibly broken the Clan's code, disappointed the monks, or initiated any aggressive action within the shrine, reduce the PC's Hope Die to a d10 while in this environment.

How do the monks react? Do they show anger, sadness, or nothing at all?

The Waterfall Mist - Passive: A creature that spends ten minutes at the shrine in contact with the mist clears the Poisoned condition and recovers HP.

- **HP Recovered:** 1d4 / 2d4 / 3d4 / 4d4.

What does the mist feel like? Does it feel different after witnessing what happened here?

Kayden Arrives - Action: Spend a Fear to have Kayden appear before the party expects—not rushing, not angry, simply present. They observe without speaking. Whatever the party is doing at that moment, Kayden sees it. They do not intervene unless forced.

What does Kayden's presence change in the room—and who notices first?

WHAT THE PARTY CAN DO

The party has more options than simply watching or fighting:

- **Watch without acting:** The punishment proceeds. No one stops the party from returning later.
- **Question the charge:** A PC may challenge the facts behind the accusation with an Instinct or Presence Roll. On a success, they identify an inconsistency. The monks won't reverse the sentence, but the challenge is remembered—by Ossek, and by Kayden.
- **Reach the offender before they're gagged:** If Yeghel is being punished and the party moves quickly, a PC may hear him before the monks intervene. He says only: "I chose this. Ask Kayden why." Then the gag goes in.
- **Offer to take the offender's place:** The monks accept without hesitation.
- **Intervene physically:** The monks warn once. If the party persists, one of them leaves to notify Kayden—the party has until Kayden arrives to resolve the situation by other means.

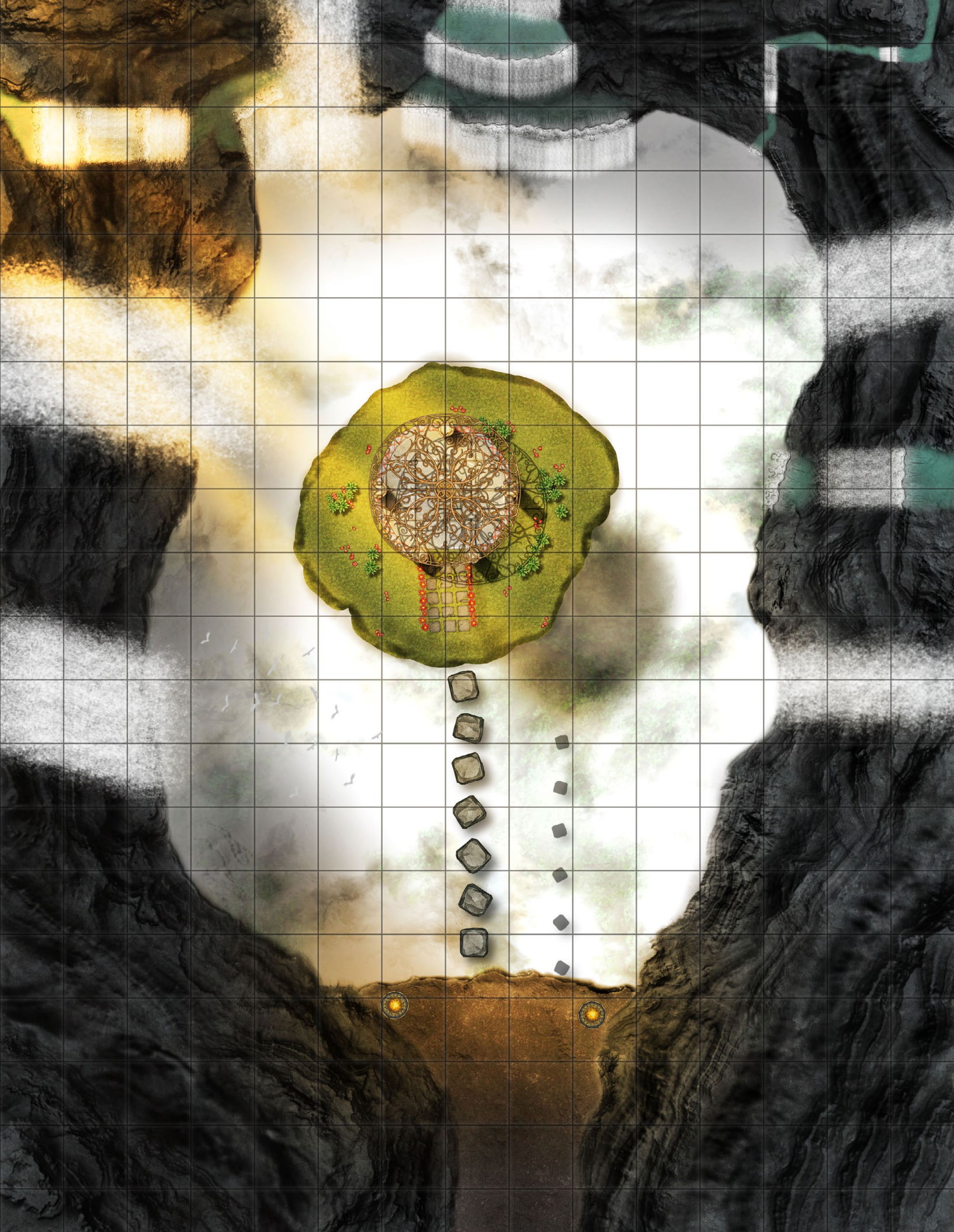
This is when the environment **The Refreshing Shrine** activates.

DEVELOPMENTS

Here are some potential outcomes to this Scene:

- **The party watched without intervening.** Nothing changes immediately. But the shrine is no longer just a place of rest.
- **The party intervened and no monk was harmed.** Kayden receives the report and says nothing directly. The next time they speak to the party, there is a quality to their attention that wasn't there before.
- **Combat broke out and someone was hurt.** The Clan demands accountability. The party is not expelled—yet—but the Test of Truth is now mentioned by name in conversation. Casually. As if it had always been a possibility.
- **The party reached Yeghel before he was gagged and heard his words.** That thread remains open. "Ask Kayden why" has no answer yet. It will.

Regardless of how the scene played out, Ossek does not return to duty that evening. A PC who seeks him out finds him at the edge of the Shading Hill, looking down at the clouds. He does not explain himself. But he does not leave either.





THE HUNT

Scene Type: Social/Exploration/Combat

Scene Overview: Word spreads through Neverdark—the black goat has been spotted again. Threyss, Kayden’s son, invites the party to join the hunt. What he doesn’t tell them is that he plans to miss.

Scene Location: Sky Isles earth motes, north of Neverdark.

BACKGROUND

Black mountain goats occasionally wander onto the Sky Isles when the motes drift close enough to the mountain range. The monks’ ancestors wrote of their meat’s extraordinary taste, and the creature has become something of a legend in Neverdark. Threyss attempted to hunt one before and failed—a failure he has not forgotten and that Kayden has not let him forget.

Overarching Plot: Threyss knows about the incantation. He has been quietly ordered by Kayden to engineer a situation that puts a worthy candidate through the Test of Truth—and he intends to use this hunt to do it. He will miss the killing shot on purpose and let events unfold from there. He hates that he has to do it.

THE SCENE

The news travels fast: a child spotted the black goat north of the village, on the largest mote beyond Neverdark. Threyss addresses the community at the Fair of Colors—calm, confident, carrying the quiet weight of someone with something to prove. He invites the party along, framing it as a chance to see the isles and get to know each other. He doesn’t mention that he has a paralyzing arrow in his quiver that he’s not supposed to be using on livestock.

The crossing north uses rope bridges the monks have built—safer than The Way Up, but the motes are wilder and less tended. During the walk, Threyss talks. He asks about the party, where they’re from, what they’ve seen. If asked about the goat, he shares what he knows: it’s fast, it can vanish from sight, it jumps impossible distances, and its senses are sharp enough that surprising it is nearly out of the question. He says all of this with the practiced tone of someone reciting a failure.

When they arrive at the mote, Threyss slows and draws his bow. He signals the party to fall back. This is when the environment The Hunt activates.

If any PC moves to act independently, Threyss notices immediately and tells them, in a low voice, to stand down—this is his hunt. If they persist, he stops trying to coordinate with them entirely. He'll find the goat before they do, or he'll let it escape trying.

THE HUNT

Tier 1-4 Event

A fey black goat with impossible speed and the instincts to match—and a hunter beside the party who is playing a longer game than he's letting on.

Impulses: To flee at all costs; to test those who pursue; to expose the gap between who Threyss wants to be and what Kayden has asked him to do

Difficulty: 12 / 15 / 18 / 21

Potential Adversaries: Black Goat*, Elementals (Minor Chaos Elemental, Stonewraiths, Greater Earth Elementals), Flying Creatures (Giant Eagle, Giant Mosquitoes, Dire Bats, Manticores*)

FEATURES

Finding the Goat - Passive: Before the chase begins, the party and Threyss must locate the goat. Place two Progress Countdowns (4) side by side—one for the party, one for Threyss. When a PC makes an action roll to track, observe, or move through the mote carefully, tick the party's countdown on a success. Threyss ticks his own countdown at the end of each round on a roll of 1d6: on a 4+, tick 1; on 6, tick 2. When either countdown triggers, that side finds the goat first. If the party finds it first, they spot the goat before Threyss arrives. If Threyss finds it first, he lines up the shot—and misses deliberately, sending the goat running.

What does Threyss's face look like when he realizes the party found it first? What does it look like when he misses?

Emboldening Blues - Passive: Scattered across this mote are patches of small blue mushrooms growing in rock crevices. A PC who succeeds on an Instinct Roll while exploring finds 1d4 of them. When consumed, an **Emboldening Blue** restores a mix HP and Stress (player's choice), and grants advantage on the PC's next bold action roll. They spoil within 24 hours.

• **Emboldening Blue restoration:** 1d4 / 1d6 / 1d8 / 1d10

How does it affect the person who consumes it? Does Threyss seem unsurprised to find them?

Impossible Jump - Action: Spend a Fear to have the goat leap across a gap that shouldn't be possible—to a higher rock, a distant ledge, or the edge of another mote entirely. The party must decide immediately: follow or find another route. To follow, tick the goat's countdown down 1, then each PC makes an action roll to cross—on a failure, mark a Stress. To find another route, tick the party's countdown back by 1 instead.

Where does it land—and what does the party have to cross, climb, or let go of to follow?

The Chase - Action: When the goat flees, place a Chase Countdown (6) for both the party and the black goat. The goat's countdown starts with a head start based on how much warning it had. Threyss pursues alongside the party. When the party's countdown triggers, they corner the goat. When the goat's countdown triggers, it escapes.

Which direction does it run? Does it head toward the edge of the mote, toward the rope bridges, or somewhere that doesn't make sense until it's too late?

THE BLACK GOAT

The goat is large, dark-furred, and wrong in the way that fey creatures are wrong—too aware, too still before it moves, too fast once it does. It is not aggressive unless cornered. What it wants is to be somewhere else. When it spots the party or Threyss, it runs. If the party fights the Black Goat, use the version equivalent to the party's tier.

RUNNING THIS ENVIRONMENT

This scene has two layers running simultaneously: the hunt itself, and Threyss. Keep both in frame. When the party is tracking, Threyss is tracking too—sometimes ahead, sometimes behind, always aware of what the party is doing. He is not their enemy, but he is not fully their ally either. He knows more than he says, and a PC who is paying attention will sense that.

The chase is designed to cost resources and create pressure—failures should introduce complications that feel physical and spatial: a gap between motes widens, the goat veers toward an unstable bridge, someone loses their footing on the edge. The goat is fast and clever. The party should feel like they're barely keeping up.

If the party corners the goat, Threyss hesitates before the killing blow—just a moment, just long enough to notice. What he does next depends on whether anyone is watching.

DEVELOPMENTS

Here are some potential outcomes for this Scene:

- **The party catches or kills the goat.** Threyss is visibly conflicted—relieved and ashamed in equal measure. He takes the goat back to Neverdark without fanfare. The feast happens. It tastes exactly as the legends say.
- **The goat escapes.** Threyss says nothing on the walk back. He goes directly to his quarters. By morning, word has reached Kayden.
- **The party interferes directly with Threyss's hunt.** If they take the shot, block his path, or act against his explicit instruction, he returns to Neverdark angry and silent. What Kayden makes of it surfaces in **The Test of Truth**.





THE TEST OF TRUTH

Scene Type: Social/Exploration/Combat

Scene Overview: One of the Neverdarkans—or one of the characters—is subjected to the Test of Truth, which draws the attention of the entire community.

Scene Location: Neverdark.

BACKGROUND

The Test of Truth was created to ensure that no Neverdarkan becomes a weak link if Sethlok ever returns. A monk who fails the Way of the Phoenix a second time faces the test—a hallucination-induced trial of mind, body, and will. Those who succeed emerge changed. Those who fail do not return. The community accepts this. Most of them have seen it happen before.

The test is not a secret. Everyone in Neverdark knows what it means and what it costs. When the test is called, the whole village stops.

Overarching Plot: Threyss is the one brought to the test—set up by Kayden to create a situation that puts a worthy PC in the role of a Phoenix Champion. Kayden needs to assess the party directly, and this is how.

THE SCENE

The crowd gathers around the Sky Grounds before the party fully understands what is happening. Read or paraphrase:

A mass of people has gathered around the Sky Grounds. You hear the words “Test of Truth” repeated through the crowd—some faces are solemn, others are tense. No one is smiling.

Kayden enters the arena with Aryana and Qaeth, and the person to be tested beside them. Kayden addresses the crowd:

“My fellow brothers and sisters, I take no pleasure in what my position requires of me today. But we are only as strong as our weakest link. This person must prove their worth to the Phoenix, so that what was can be buried, and what will be can begin. Let the trial begin.”

At this point, the person being tested invokes the **Phoenix Champion Rule**: another may take the trial in their place, believing in the tested one’s potential. If the champion fails, both bear the consequences. If the champion succeeds, they assume responsibility for mentoring the offender—and should the offender fail again, both face death. This has never happened.

If **Threyss** is the one tested, he claims the party interfered with his hunt and argues they should be the ones on trial. Whether this is convincing, manipulative, or transparently desperate depends on how the hunt went.

If **Fayril** is tested instead—a guard caught sleeping on duty for the second time, hiding a sick newborn at home—he whispers the truth to whichever PC is closest and quietly asks for help.

A PC who agrees to become a Phoenix Champion kneels before the phoenix mage, who reads words of power from a scroll and offers them a sprig of herb to consume. The hallucination begins immediately.

The Trial

THE TRIAL

The trial has three phases. Each one tests something different, and the person undergoing it cannot distinguish what is real from what is not. The crowd watches every movement. Every word spoken aloud is heard.

Introduce each phase as a scene, not a checklist. What matters is what the PC chooses, not whether they roll well. The trial should feel inevitable, not solvable.

STAGE ONE: STILLNESS

A rocky wasteland under a dark and violent sky. A wooden sign reads: *"Haste is the enemy of perfection."* A cave is visible a hundred feet ahead. A child stands at its entrance, waving urgently, calling out to hurry. As soon as the character starts moving, the child collapses to the ground.

Lightning strikes the ground between them and the cave. The message is clear: move fast, or don't move at all.

If the PC walks—resisting the urgency—they arrive safely. If they run, have them make an Agility Action Roll (Hard). On a failure, the lightning finds them and they take **lightning damage** before reaching the cave. The crowd sees them flinch.

- **Lightning damage:** 1d12+4 / 2d10+4 / 3d10+8 / 4d12+12 magic

Sidebar: GM Note

The child's collapse is the test's central deception. Do not confirm or deny whether the child is in danger—let the Tested One's imagination do the work. The lightning is a secondary pressure. The child is the real one.

STAGE TWO: REFLECTION

An empty arena. A perfect reflection of the PC stands across from them—same face, same posture, same weapon. The reflection says: *"You shall not prevail. I am you. I know your every thought."* Then it attacks.

The reflection fights exactly as the PC would. It anticipates. It adapts. The only way to end the fight is to win it—or to find the thing the reflection cannot copy: a choice the PC would never make, a moment of genuine surprise.

When the reflection is defeated, it holds an iron key to its own throat—the key to the gate in the north wall.

Sidebar: GM Note

Review the Tested One's loadout before the trial begins. Flag any domain cards that would be impossible to adapt and bring these to the table for discussion. Some abilities may need to be replaced with thematically equivalent adversary features rather than direct conversions. Don't sweat over details, this scene does not need to be balanced.

STAGE THREE: COURAGE

A fiery wasteland. Companions—monks, party members, or people the PC cares about—stand nearby, facing a massive creature guarding the only exit. They look at the PC and say: *"Together. Let's go."*

The creature is enormous. The fight is winnable—but only barely, and only together. If the PC tries to slip through while their companions fight, the creature reaches through the portal and grabs them: *"Leaving your friends for dead? You could be one of us."*

If they stay and fight alongside their companions, let it go one or two rounds. The moment it would cost the PC everything—or the moment after—the hallucination ends. The trial is over.

Sidebar: GM Note

Use any adversary from tier 4 for this stage, and increase its stats to be higher than the maximum on the Adversary Improvised Statistics by Tier from the Core Rulebook. Prompt the player for what could be their nemesis, a terrible monster, or something their character is afraid of. Use the answers to help choose the adversary and how to run this scene.

THE TEST OF TRUTH

Tier 1-4 Event

A hallucinatory trial of mind and body, watched by the entire community—a test that kills the unworthy and reshapes the strong.

Impulses: To expose weakness; to demand a choice that costs something; to reshape whoever survives

Difficulty: 13 / 16 / 19 / 22

Potential Adversaries: The Reflection (reskin of any PC-equivalent adversary), Trial Creature (see Stage Three: Courage), Phoenix Monks* (Apprentice, Disciple, Firepalm, Mage, Master)

FEATURES

Face It - Passive: When a PC chooses to confront something in the trial head-on—without hesitation, without waiting to be forced—they may **mark 1 HP** to gain advantage on their next action roll. If they have a relevant Experience, they may use it on that roll without spending Hope.

What does choosing to face it cost them—and what does it tell the people watching?

Witness - Passive: While a PC undergoes the trial, the rest of the party watches from outside; they cannot intervene directly, but they are not powerless. Once during the trial, a PC watching may call out something true, such as a reminder, a name, a moment they shared. If what they say is genuine, they may Help the PC in the trial as normal, even though they are not present in the hallucination.

Does the PC in the trial react visibly, and what does the crowd make of that? What does Kayden's expression look like when someone speaks?

The Weight of It - Action: The hallucination bleeds into something personal. The PC sees someone they've lost, a place they left behind, a version of a choice they made differently. The vision arrests them mid-trial. The phase does not advance until they face it.

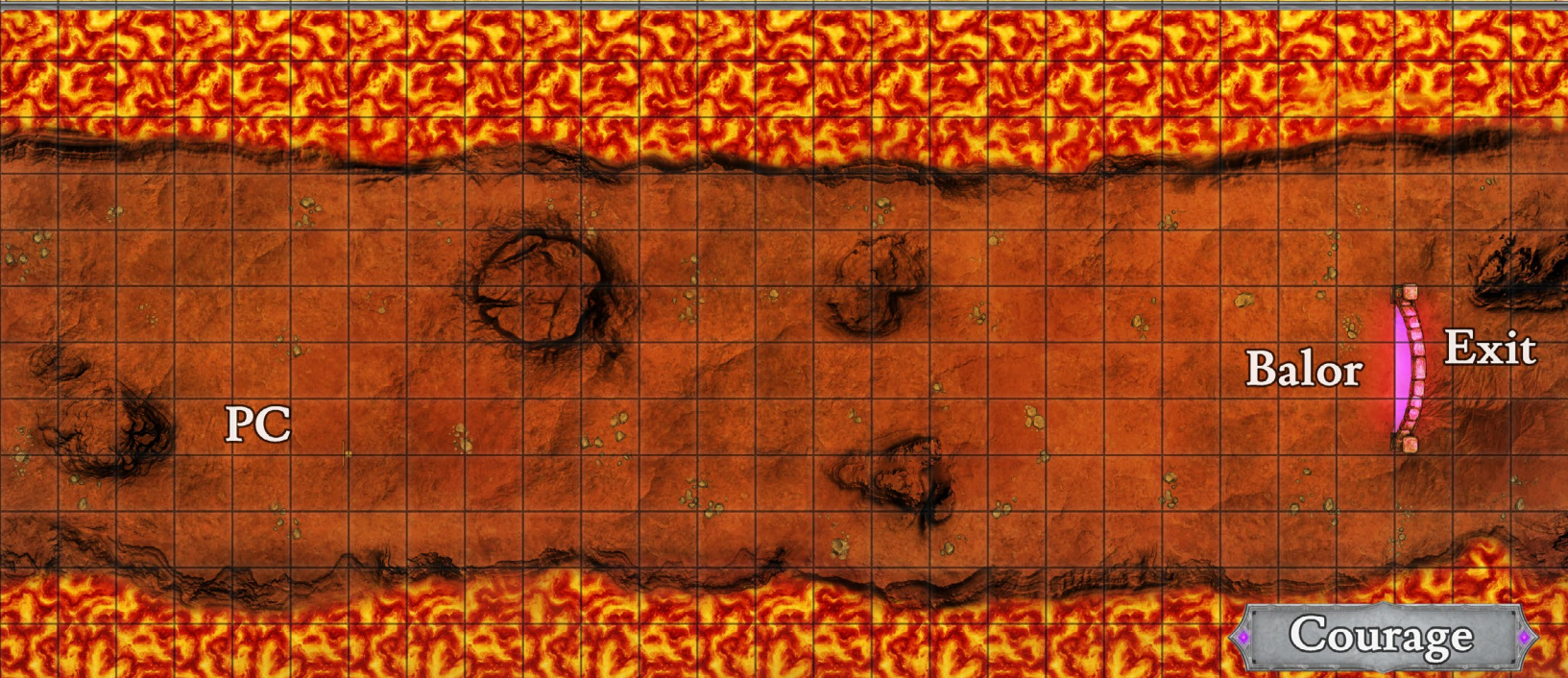
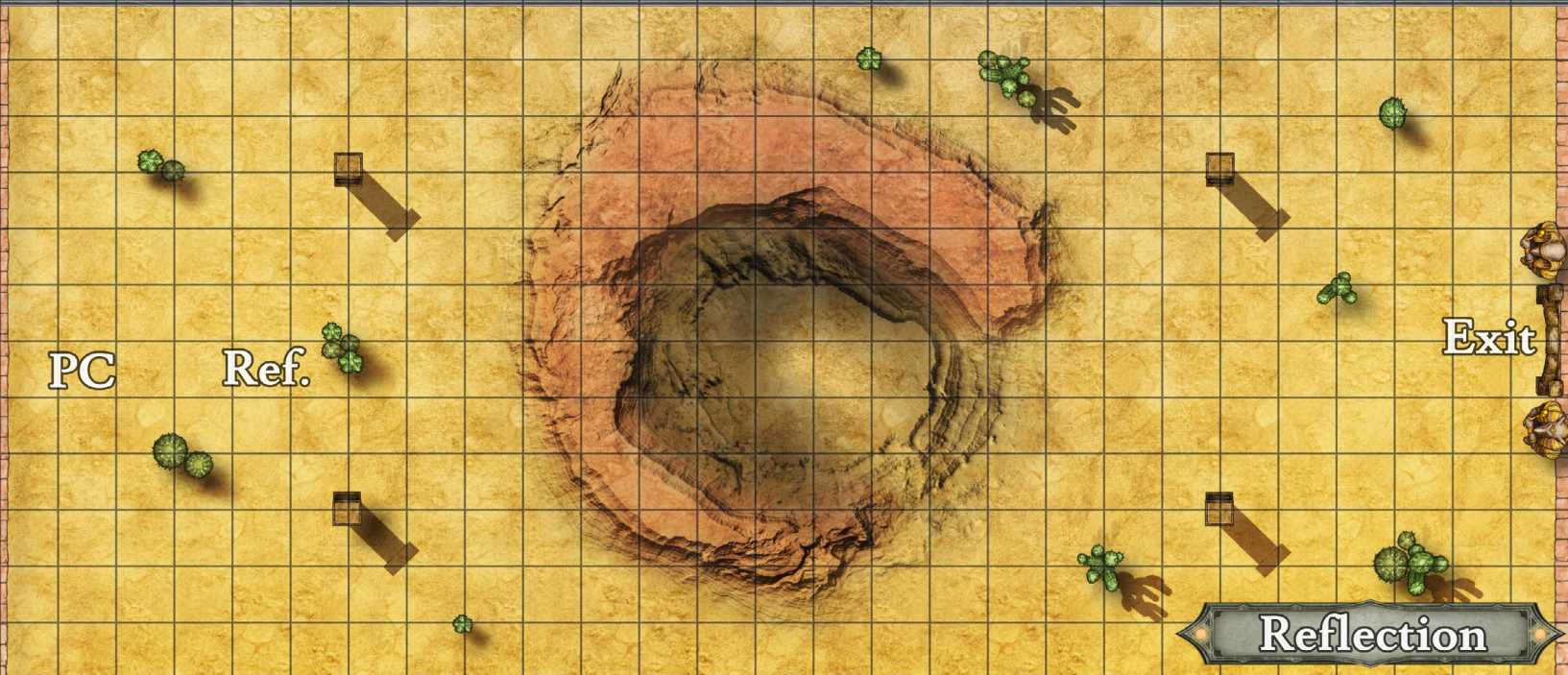
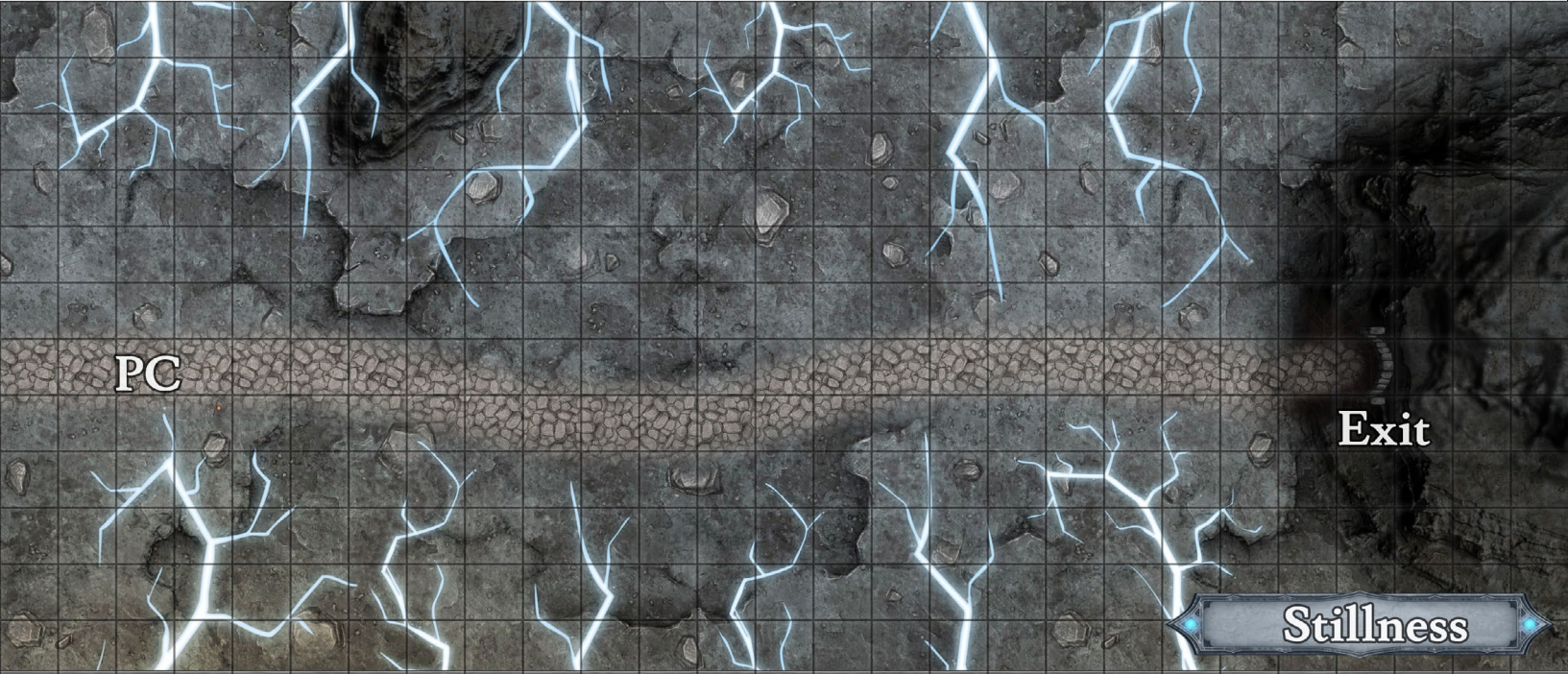
What is the one thing the trial could show them that they are not ready to see?

DEVELOPMENTS

If the PC succeeds, Kayden approaches them personally after the crowd disperses. He says nothing about the incantation yet—but the way he looks at the PC says something has been decided. Kayden offers a reward: a gem and a rare item, depending on tier. If Fayril was the one tested, he finds the party later that night and leaves something outside their door without knocking.

If the PC fails, Kayden moves immediately to claim the body. What the party does in that moment determines everything that follows. If they fight the monks, they are outnumbered on home ground. If they yield, the body is used in the incantation. If they fled beforehand—if they knew what was coming—that is a different scene entirely.

*Under the wasteland's red skies,
the courage is tested!*





THE FIERY INCANTATION

Scene Type: Social/Combat

Scene Overview: Kayden reveals everything—the plan, the sacrifice, the desperate hope of the Golden Phoenix. Whatever the party decides, Sethlok comes. And what rises from the fire may not be what anyone expected.

Scene Location: Fireborn Monastery.

BACKGROUND

Kayden has been deceived. Sethlok planted the rumor of its own return, knowing that Kayden would find the book about the Golden Phoenix—and knowing that desperation would do the rest. The incantation is real. The Phoenix will come. But the Golden Phoenix has been a yokai under a Demon Lord's control for centuries, and when it rises, it will not serve anyone.

Kayden does not know this. Aryana suspects it. Qaeth believes in Kayden completely.

Overarching Plot: Everything that happened in Neverdark was preparation for this moment. The test, the hunt, the shrine—all of it was Kayden assessing the party, looking for someone strong enough and willing enough to be the sacrifice. If Aryana warned the party during A Sight for Sore Eyes, they arrive here with information Kayden doesn't know they have.

Sidebar: The Golden Phoenix

If a PC attempts to research or recall knowledge about the Golden Phoenix, have them make a Knowledge Roll (Hard or Very Hard).

On a Critical Success, they learn everything below. On a Success with Hope, they learn two pieces and may ask one follow-up question. On a Success with Fear, they learn two pieces. On a Failure with Hope, they learn one piece. On a Failure with Fear, whatever they try—searching, recalling, asking around—they come up short. But the attempt itself points somewhere: the restricted archive at the top of the Fireborn Monastery likely holds what they need. Access is not freely given.

The Golden Phoenix produces fire so hot it can melt stone and kill fire elementals.

It is said to dwell deep within a great elemental fire plane, its lair buried in gold.

The Phoenix once fought a powerful Demon Lord who sought to corrupt it—and lost.

What most do not know: the Phoenix was defeated and turned, becoming a yokai under demonic control.

Sethlok knows this. The bakeneko engineered th



*Sethlok will only stop when Neverdark turns
is but dust.*

THE SCENE

Kayden summons the party to the monastery courtyard. The space has been prepared—a massive brazier at the center, scrolls unfurled on stone, monks standing at the perimeter in silence. Aryana and Qaeth stand to either side of Kayden. Aryana's hands are still. Qaeth is calm.

Kayden speaks without ceremony:

"You have earned the right to hear this. Sethlok is coming—perhaps tomorrow, perhaps sooner. We have one chance to meet it with something more than swords and fire. There is an incantation that can summon the Golden Phoenix—a being whose flames can end what Sethlok is. But the ritual requires a body. A willing one, if possible. A powerful one, either way."

Kayden pauses.

"I am asking if any of you would be willing to give what the Phoenix requires. I do not ask this lightly. I would not ask this at all if I saw another way."

Give the party space to respond. This is not a moment to rush. What Kayden says next depends entirely on what the party does

- **If a PC volunteers:** Kayden accepts with a gravity that suggests they were not certain anyone would. They explain what the ritual involves—the brazier, the ashes, the moment of no return. They offer the party the rest of the day to prepare. Aryana leaves the courtyard without a word.
- **If no one volunteers:** Kayden is quiet for a long moment. Then: "Then I will do it myself. Threys—you know what this means." Threys looks like he has known for some time. The ritual proceeds with Kayden as the sacrifice. Aryana steps forward to stop it and is held back by Qaeth. What she does next—and whether the party acts—determines whether Kayden lives.
- **If the party tries to stop the ritual entirely:** They must make a compelling case—not just a roll. What they say matters. If they have information Kayden doesn't—about the Phoenix, about Sethlok's deception—Kayden listens. A Presence Roll made with relevant information succeeds more easily than one made without it. On a success, Kayden stands down. On a failure, Kayden proceeds—but they are shaken, and that matters later.
- **If the party heard Aryana during A Sight for Sore Eyes:** Kayden cannot dismiss it as rumor—this is the word of a Master of the Clan. The ritual stops. What happens next is uncharted—no one in Neverdark has a plan for this moment. Sethlok is still coming.

- **If the party heard Yeghel's words at the shrine:** This is the moment to ask. Kayden does not deny it. "Yeghel understood what was at stake. He chose to help. I did not force him." Whether the party believes that is their choice.

This is when the environment **The Fiery Incantation** activates.

THE FIERY INCANTATION

Tier 1-4 Event

A desperate summoning, a yokai in the dark, and a fire that answers to no one.

Impulses: To test what the party is willing to sacrifice; to unleash what cannot be controlled; to let Sethlok's plan reach its conclusion

Difficulty: 14 / 17 / 20 / 23

Potential Adversaries: Sethlok*, Yokai Phoenix*, Phoenix Monks* (Apprentice, Disciple, Firepalm, Mage, Master)

FEATURES

The Brazier - Passive: The incantation requires one full uninterrupted scene to complete. Place a Progress Countdown (4) when the ritual begins. At the end of each beat in which the monks are not interrupted, tick it down. When it triggers, the Phoenix rises. If the ritual is interrupted somehow, the countdown pauses. If the interruption is resolved and no monk was harmed, the monks resume their positions and the countdown continues from where it stopped. If a monk was harmed or the brazier was physically disrupted, the countdown resets to 4.

What do the monks do when the ritual pauses? Do they hold position, or does the formation begin to break?

Aryana Acts - Action: If Kayden is the sacrifice and the ritual has begun, Aryana breaks. She moves to stop it—she needs one PC to act with her or she cannot reach the brazier in time. If a PC helps her and they succeed on an action roll, the ritual is disrupted. Kayden survives.

What does Qaeth do when Aryana moves? Does he try to stop her, or does he let her go?

Collapse - Action: Spend a Fear when a burning section of the courtyard has been on fire for 2 or more GM turns. A burning structure or wall gives way. All PCs within Close range of that section must succeed on an Agility Reaction Roll or take **collapse damage** and become Restrained under debris until they succeed on a Strength Roll. Alternatively, an ally can help them when spotlighted, but becomes *Vulnerable* while doing so.

- **Collapse damage:** 1d10+1 / 2d10+2 / 3d10+3 / 4d10+4 physical
What falls—and does it take someone with it?

Spreading Fire - Action: Sethlok ignites something at Close range—a structure, a tree, a section of the courtyard. The fire spreads. Any PC within Close range to the fire takes **magic damage**. The fire cannot be extinguished by normal means and creates difficult terrain. Each time this feature is activated, the fire expands by one zone.

- **Magic damage:** 1d8+2 / 2d8+4 / 3d8+6 / 4d8+10 magic
What is Sethlok trying to burn—and is it tactical, or just gleeful?

DEVELOPMENTS

The scene ends when Sethlok flees or is defeated, and when the Phoenix—if summoned—is brought down or driven off.

- **If Kayden survived and the Phoenix was not summoned.** Neverdark is damaged but standing. Kayden addresses the party in the aftermath—not with gratitude, exactly, but with something that takes longer to name. Threyss watches from a distance.
- **If Kayden was the sacrifice.** The ritual happened. The Phoenix rose. What it did before it was stopped—or wasn't—is part of the story now. The Clan will rebuild. Threyss leads them, younger than anyone expected.
- **If Aryana disrupted the ritual.** Kayden is alive and knows what Aryana did. That conversation happens in private. What comes out of it is between them—but the Clan will feel it.
- **If the party stopped everything before the ritual.** Neverdark survived on its own terms. No Phoenix, no sacrifice. Sethlok was stopped—or fled—without the plan it built. Somewhere, a Demon Lord is paying attention.

REWARDS

The surviving monks offer the following, scaled by tier:

- **Gold:** 8 Handfuls / 4 Bags / 8 Bags / 2 Chests per PC, drawn from the Clan's reserves.
- **Fiery Blessing:** Each PC who fought receives training from the monks over 1d4+1 days. Once per session, when a PC with this blessing would take magic fire damage, they may mark a Stress to reduce that damage to 0.
- **A Winged Leopard:** Any PC who wishes may begin the bonding process at the Dotted Stables immediately, with the Long-Term Countdown reduced to 4 instead of 8—the Clan's blessing accelerates what would otherwise take much longer.

LOCATION ADVERSARIES

PHOENIX MONK APPRENTICE

Tier 1-4 Minion

A disciplined warrior of the Phoenix Clan—fire-hardened, swift, and trained to endure what others cannot.

Motives & Tactics: Overwhelm through numbers, stay close to senior monks, prove own worth

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Minion (3) - Passive: The Apprentice is defeated when they take any damage. For every 3 damage a PC deals to an Apprentice, defeat an additional Apprentice within range the attack would succeed against.

Chant of the Flame - Passive: When three or more Apprentices are present in the scene, all Phoenix Monk adversaries within Close range of at least one Apprentice gain +1 to their Difficulty as the chanting disrupts the party's focus.

Group Rush - Action: Spend a Fear to choose a target and spotlight all Phoenix Monk Apprentices within Close range of them. Those Minions move into Melee range of the target and make one shared attack roll. On a success, they deal Unarmed Strike damage each. Combine this damage.

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	11	13	15	17
Threshold	None			
HP	1			
Stress	1	1	1	2
ATK	-1	0	+1	+2
Unarmed Strike	2	3	6	10
Melee (Phy)				



Phoenix Monk Apprentice

PHOENIX MONK DISCIPLE

Tier 1-4 Standard

A disciplined warrior of the Phoenix Clan—fire-hardened, swift, and trained to endure what others cannot.

Motives & Tactics: Uphold the Clan's honor, test intruders, protect Neverdark, show no weakness

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Paralyzing Dart - Action: Make an attack against a target within Far range. On a success, deal physical damage. The target must mark a Stress or become Restrained until it clears an HP.

- **Damage:** 1d8+2 / 2d6+4 / 3d6+4 / 4d6+8 physical

Ki Fighting - Reaction: Mark a Stress to add extra physical damage when the Monk hits with an Unarmed Strike.

Ki Senses - Reaction: Mark a Stress when a PC makes an attack roll against the Monk to have them roll with disadvantage.

Fire Resistance - Passive: The Monk has resistance to damage from fire sources.

T2

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	12	14	16	18
Threshold	7/12	10/20	17/32	27/47
HP	4	5	6	7
Stress	3	3	4	5
ATK	+1	+2	+3	+4
Unarmed Strike Melee (Phy)	1d6+2	2d6+3	3d6+3	4d6+10
Experience: Acrobatics	+2	+2	+3	+3
Ki Fighting	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12

PHOENIX FIREPALM MONK

Tier 1-4 Bruiser

A senior Phoenix Monk whose hands blaze with channeled ki-fire; as dangerous at range as they are face-to-face, and far more deliberate.

Motives & Tactics: Dominate close quarters, unleash fire at distance, stun and overpower, protect the Master

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Fire Resistance - Passive: The Firepalm has resistance to damage from fire sources.

Fire Channeling - Action: Mark a Stress to attack a target within Far range. On a success, deal **magic damage**.

Ki Fighting - Reaction: Mark a Stress to add extra **magic damage** when the Firepalm hits with a Burning Strike.

Ki Senses - Reaction: Mark a Stress when a PC makes an attack roll against the Firepalm to have them roll with disadvantage.

Explosive Blast - Action: Spend a Fear to hurl a fireball at a point within Far range. All targets within Very Close range of that point must make an Agility Reaction Roll. Targets who fail take **magic damage** and are *Vulnerable*. Targets who succeed take half damage and don't become *Vulnerable*. A target can end *Vulnerable* with a successful Agility or Instinct Roll.

T2

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	12	14	17	19
Threshold	8/14	13/24	20/38	32/63
HP	6	7	8	9
Stress	3	4	5	6
ATK	+2	+3	+4	+6
Unarmed Strike Melee (Phy)	1d10+4	2d10+6	3d10+8	4d10+12
Experience: Acrobatics	+2	+2	+3	+3
Fire Channeling	1d12+4	2d12+6	3d12+10	5d10+20
Ki Fighting	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12
Explosive Blast	NA	2d10+4	3d10+10	4d12+15



Phoenix Monk Disciple

PHOENIX MAGE

Tier 1-4 Support

A scholar of the Way of the Phoenix who channels fire through discipline—not as a weapon, but as a force that shapes the battlefield.

Motives & Tactics: Protect Neverdark, empower allies, hinder threats, keep distance

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Ember Shield - Passive: While the Phoenix Mage is within Close range of an ally, that ally has resistance to magic damage.

Flame Surge - Action: Mark a Stress to empower an ally within Close range. That ally's next attack roll is made with advantage and deals **extra magic damage** on a success.

Smoldering Mind - Action: Make an attack against a target within Far range. On a success, deal **magic damage**. The target loses 1 Hope and must make a Presence Reaction Roll. On a failure, their next action roll is made with disadvantage.

Firestep - Reaction: When an ally within Close range is hit by an attack, mark a Stress to have that ally mark 1 fewer HP from that hit.

Fire Resistance - Passive: The Phoenix Mage has resistance to damage from fire sources.

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	12	14	17	18
Threshold	6/10	9/17	16/30	22/38
HP	3	4	5	6
Stress	4	5	5	6
ATK	+1	+2	+3	+4
Firebolt: Far (mag)	1d6+2	2d6+3	3d6+4	4d6+8
Experience: Acrobatics	+2	+2	+3	+3
Flame Surge	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12
Smoldering Mind	1d6+2	2d6+4	3d6+6	4d8+8

MASTER PHOENIX MONK

Tier 1-4 Leader

The supreme warrior of the Phoenix Clan—a living embodiment of the Way of the Phoenix, feared, revered, and utterly without mercy in battle.

Motives & Tactics: Command the Clan, eliminate threats to Neverdark, demonstrate absolute superiority, never yield

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Fire Resistance - Passive: The Master has resistance to damage from fire sources.

Burning Legion - Action: Once per scene, spend a Fear to spotlight all other adversaries within Far range. Attacks they make while spotlighted in this way deal half damage.

Deflect Missiles - Reaction: When the Master is hit by a ranged attack, mark a Stress to suffer half damage. Spend a Fear to catch the projectile and immediately make an attack against a target within Close range. On a success, it deals **physical damage**.

Ki Senses - Reaction: Mark a Stress when a PC makes an attack roll against the Master to have them roll with disadvantage.

Devastating Fire Strike - Action: Mark 2 Stress to make an attack against a target within Very Close range. On a success, deal **magic damage** and the target becomes *Vulnerable* until they roll with Hope.

Fire Channeling - Action: Mark a Stress to attack a target within Far range. On a success, deal **magic damage**.

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	13	15	18	21
Threshold	8/14	14/24	20/38	32/63
HP	6	6	7	8
Stress	4	4	5	6
ATK	+3	+4	+6	+8
Burning Fist: Melee (mag)	1d10+3	2d10+4	3d10+6	4d10+8
Experience: Wise	+2	+2	+3	+4
Deflect Missiles	1d10+4	2d10+6	3d10+8	4d10+10
Devastating Strikes	NA	2d12+4	3d12+10	4d12+15
Fire Channeling	NA	NA	3d10+10	5d10+20

Phoenix Mage



Winged Leopard

WINGED LEOPARD

Tier 1 Standard

A large, gold-furred leopard with broad, feathered wings—curious, swift, and deceptively dangerous when roused.

Motives & Tactics: Protect territory, play, defend the monks, flee by taking flight

Difficulty: 13 **Thresholds:** 6/11
HP: 4 **Stress:** 3
ATK: +2 | **Claws:** Melee | 1d8+2 phy
Experience: Keen Senses +3

FEATURES

Flight - Passive: While flying, the Winged Leopard gains a +3 bonus to their Difficulty.

Mount - Passive: A creature who is riding the Winged Leopard can cause the Winged Leopard to **mark a Stress** to move to a Far range when they act.

Paralyzing Sting - Action: **Mark a Stress** to make an attack against a target within Close Range. On a success, deal 1d10+3 physical damage, *Paralyzing* the target. A *Paralyzed* target cannot act until this condition is removed by making a Strength Reaction Roll or by spending Hope when spotlighted.

Pounce - Action: **Mark a Stress** to make an attack against a target within Close Range. On a success, deal 2d8+4 physical damage and knock the target over, making them *Vulnerable* until they make a Finesse Roll to recover their balance.

BLACK GOAT

Tier 1-4 Solo

A large, coal-furred mountain goat of fey origin—impossibly swift, uncannily aware, and maddening to corner.

Motives & Tactics: Flee at all costs, teleport away, ram only as a last resort

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Relentless (X) - Passive: The Black Goat can be spotlighted up to this many times per GM turn. Spend Fear as usual to spotlight them.

Fey Jump - Passive: As part of its movement, the Black Goat can teleport to any point it can see within Close range.

Shadow Strike - Passive: The Black Goat deals direct damage while Hidden.

Charge - Action: **Mark a Stress** to move into Melee range of a target and make an attack. On a success, **deal physical** damage and knock the target back to Close range. If knocked into a solid object or another creature, the target takes an **extra damage**.

Vanish - Reaction: When the Black Goat is missed by an attack, or when you **Spend a Fear**, it teleports to any point it can see within Far range and becomes *Hidden*. Its next attack is made with advantage.

Momentum - Reaction: When the Black Goat makes a successful attack against a PC, you gain a Fear.

T2

Echoing Stomp - Action: **Mark a Stress** to slam the ground, sending ripples of fey energy outward. Each PC within Close range sees a perfect mirror image of the Black Goat appear beside them. Until the Black Goat is spotlighted again, it cannot be targeted unless the PC first succeeds on an Instinct Roll—attacks made without identifying the real one fail automatically.

T3

Fey Shriek - Action: **Spend a Fear** to have the Black Goat release a piercing, otherworldly cry that cuts through reason. All PCs within Far range lose 1 Hope. If a PC has no Hope to lose, they mark 1 HP instead.

T4

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	13	15	18	20
Threshold	9/16	15/26	22/39	37/69
HP	8	9	10	11
Stress	3	4	5	7
ATK	+3	+4	+6	+8
Ram: Melee (phy)	1d10+3	2d10+5	3d10+8	4d10+10
Experience: Untouchable	+2	+2	+3	+3
Relentless	2	2	3	3
Charge - phy	1d6+6	2d8+8	3d10+10	4d12+12
Charge - extra damage	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12

MANTICORE

Tier 1-4 Bruiser

A lion-bodied, winged monstrosity with a human face and a tail bristling with razor spikes, it circles its prey from above before diving in.

Motives & Tactics: Soften targets with tail spikes, dive to rend, keep moving, never stay grounded long

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Flyer - Passive: While flying, the Manticore gains a +2 bonus to their Difficulty.

Spike Barrage - Action: Mark a Stress to launch a volley of spikes at all targets within Close range. Each target must make an Agility Reaction Roll. On a failure, they take **physical damage**. On a failure with Fear, they also become *Vulnerable* until they clear a Stress.

Tail Spike - Action: Make an attack against a target within Very Close range. On a success, deal **physical damage**. The Manticore may use this feature twice before needing to mark a Stress to use it again; its spikes regenerate quickly, but not instantly.

Diving Strike - Action: Mark a Stress to dive from above onto a target within Far range. Move into Melee range and make an attack. On a success, deal **physical damage** and knock the target prone. The Manticore immediately moves back to Far range after the strike.

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	13	15	17	19
Threshold	8/14	13/24	20/37	32/65
HP	5	6	7	8
Stress	3	4	5	5
ATK	+2	+3	+5	+6
Rend: Melee (phy)	1d10+5	2d8+8	3d12+3	4d10+10
Spike Barrage - phy	1d8+2	2d8+2	3d8+4	4d8+8
Tail Spike - phy	1d8+3	2d8+4	3d8+6	4d8+10
Diving Strike - phy	NA	NA	3d12+6	4d12+10

Sethlok



SETHLOK

Tier 1-4 Solo

A cat the size of a dog, with ash-crusted black fur and gleaming eyes—walking on its hind legs, wearing a smug smile. It laughs as it burns.

Motives & Tactics: Set fires, hide in the flames, strike from concealment, never commit to a fight it might lose

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Relentless (3) - Passive: Sethlok can be spotlighted up to this three times per GM turn. Spend Fear as usual to spotlight them.

Firebred - Passive: Sethlok is immune to fire damage. While within Close range of anything on fire, Sethlok is Hidden and cannot be targeted unless a PC first succeeds on an Instinct Roll.

Spread the Flame - Action: Sethlok spreads fire from an ignited creature or object. Each space within Very Close range of the target fills with flame. Any PC moving through such flames takes **magic damage**. Each time this feature is activated, the fire expands by one Very Close zone.

Venomous Bite - Action: Spend a Fear to make an attack against a target within Melee range. On a success, deal **magic damage**. The target must make a Strength Reaction Roll. On a failure, they become *Poisoned* until their next rest or they succeed on a Knowledge Roll. While *Poisoned*, the target must roll a d6 before they make an action roll. On a result of 4 or lower, they must mark a Stress.

Pyrokinesis - Passive: When Sethlok deals damage to a creature, it becomes *Ignited*. An *Ignited* PC takes **magic damage** the next time they make an action roll. A PC can spend an action to extinguish the fire before that happens.

Agile Escape - Reaction: When Sethlok is targeted by an attack, before the roll is made, it may mark a Stress to move anywhere within Far range and become *Hidden*. The attack resolves against the new position—if the attacker cannot reach Far range, the attack misses automatically.

Ash Cloud - Action: Mark a Stress to release a billowing cloud of toxic ash that fills a Close range area within Far range. The cloud blocks line of sight completely and persists until the GM spends any Fear. Any PC who moves through or remains in the cloud must make an Instinct Reaction Roll. On a failure, they mark a Stress and cannot see beyond Very Close range until they leave. While the cloud persists, Sethlok may move through it freely and become *Hidden* inside it.

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	14	16	19	22
Threshold	8/15	13/25	23/35	33/65
HP	9	10	11	12
Stress	4	5	6	7
ATK	+3	+4	+6	+8
Bite: Melee (phy)	1d12+2	2d10+6	3d10+12	4d12+15
Experience: Trickster	+2	+3	+3	+4
Spread the Flames	1d8+2	2d8+6	3d8+6	4d8+10
Venomous Bite	1d12+4	2d10+6	3d10+8	4d12+10
Pyrokinesis	NA	1d8	1d10	1d12

YOKAI PHOENIX

Tier 1-4 Solo

A gargantuan flaming bird of dark feathers and ancient fire—summoned to serve, turned to destroy. It does not distinguish between enemies.

Motives & Tactics: Burn everything, control the battlefield with fire, use Fiery Hurricane whenever possible, recharge relentlessly

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table below

FEATURES

Relentless (X) - Passive: The Yokai Phoenix can be spotlighted up to this many times per GM turn. Spend Fear as usual to spotlight them.

Fire Immunity - Passive: The Yokai Phoenix is immune to damage from fire sources. Any PC who makes a Melee attack against the Phoenix must make an Agility Reaction Roll—on a failure, they take **magic damage** from the heat of its body.

Burning Terrain - Action: The Phoenix ignites a Very Close zone within Far range. Any PC moving through such flames takes **magic damage**. Burning zones persist until extinguished. Each time this feature is activated, a new zone ignites.

Fiery Hurricane - Action: Spend a Fear to unleash a devastating storm of fire. All PCs within Close range must make an Agility Reaction Roll. On a failure, they take **magic damage**. On a failure with Fear, they are also knocked back to Far range and become *Vulnerable* until they roll with Hope.

Reborn in Darkness (Phase Change) - Reaction: When the Yokai Phoenix would be reduced to 0 HP for the first time, it does not fall. Instead, it explodes in a burst of dark flame—all PCs within Close range must make an Agility Reaction Roll or take **magic damage**. The Phoenix collapses, its fire going dark. Replace it with the Corrupted Phoenix and immediately spotlight it.

Refuel - Reaction: When a burning zone is within Close range of the Phoenix, it may **mark a Stress** to draw from the flames. It immediately clears 1 HP to consume those flames, extinguishing them, and may use Fiery Hurricane the next time without spending a Fear.

Wing Slam - Action: Mark a Stress to slam both wings outward. All PCs within Very Close range must make a Strength Reaction Roll. On a failure, they are knocked back to Far range and take **physical damage**. On a failure with Fear, they are also knocked *Prone* and mark a Stress.

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	13	16	19	22
Threshold	9/15	14/26	21/40	35/70
HP	9	10	11	12
Stress	5	5	7	7
ATK	+3	+4	+7	+9
Talons: Melee (phy)	1d12+3	2d10+5	3d10+8	4d8+20
Experience: Hunt from Above	+2	+3	+3	+4
Relentless	2	2	3	3
Fire Immunity	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12
Burning Terrain	1d8+2	2d8+4	3d10+6	4d10+8
Fiery Hurricane	2d10+4	3d10+6	4d8+10	5d12+4
Reborn in Darkness	3d6+3	2d10+8	4d8+10	5d12+4
Wing Slam	NA	NA	3d10+6	4d10+12

LOCATION ADVERSARIES



In fire she fell...

CORRUPTED PHOENIX

Tier 1-4 Solo

What rises from the ash is not the Phoenix that fell. The fire is wrong—cold at its edges, hungry at its center. It remembers nothing but rage.

Motives & Tactics: Spread fear, drain Hope, burn what remains, punish those who resist

Traits, Experience, and Damages listed in the table at side

FEATURES

Relentless (X) - Passive: The Corrupted Phoenix can be spotlighted up to this many times per GM turn. Spend Fear as usual to spotlight them.

Dread Presence - Passive: While the Corrupted Phoenix has not marked more than half its maximum HP, all PCs within Close range that rolls with Fear lose 1 Hope.. Once it has marked more than half its maximum HP, this feature affects all PCs within Far range instead. Whenever a PC has no Hope to lose, the GM gains 1 Fear.

Dying Fire - Passive: The Corrupted Phoenix retains control of all burning zones created by the Yokai Phoenix. Whenever the Corrupted Phoenix is spotlighted, each burning zone deals **magic damage** to any PC within it; the fire does not spread, but it does not die.

Corruption Flame - Action: Make an attack against a target within Far range. On a success, deal **magic damage**. The target becomes *Marked*. While *Marked*, the Corrupted Phoenix has advantage on all attacks against that target. The Mark fades when the target clears an HP.

Wings of Despair - Action: Mark a Stress to beat its wings in a slow, deliberate rhythm. All PCs within Close range must make a Presence Reaction Roll. On a failure, they lose a Hope and become *Frightened* until they roll with Hope. If they cannot lose Hope, they mark a Stress. While *Frightened*, they cannot spend Hope.

Dying Scream - Reaction: When the Corrupted Phoenix marks a Major or Severe threshold, roll a d10. On a result of 7 or higher, it unleashes a wave of corrupt flame in all directions. All PCs within Close range must make an Agility Reaction Roll. On a failure, they take **magic damage** and have disadvantage on attack rolls until they roll with Hope. On a success, they take half damage.

Final Conflagration - Action: Spend a Fear to have the Corrupted Phoenix ignite itself entirely. Until the Corrupted Phoenix takes Severe damage, any PC moving within Close range takes **direct damage**. During this time, the Phoenix cannot use any other Actions—it simply burns.

	T1	T2	T3	T4
Difficulty	13	15	18	20
Threshold	7/13	12/23	19/36	30/60
HP	8	9	10	11
Stress	5	6	6	8
ATK	+3	+4	+7	+8
Talons: Melee (phy)	1d8+6	2d8+10	3d12+10	4d12+15
Experience: Hunt from Above	+2	+3	+3	+4
Relentless	3	3	4	4
Dying Fire	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12
Corruption Flame	1d10+4	2d10+6	3d10+8	4d10+10
Dying Scream	NA	2d12+8	3d10+12	4d8+20
Final Conflagration	NA	NA	4d10+15	6d8+18



...in darkness she rose.