

## THE SMOKE MOTH — Mischievous & Gentle

### *The Smoke Moth*

You chose the dark path. You chose what survives. You chose what plays tricks in the fog.

Your familiar is a moth — the kind that makes you question your own eyes. Enormous wingspan, wider than your outstretched arms, made of shifting silver-grey smoke that never quite commits to a shape. One moment the wings are there — broad, translucent, beautiful — and the next they've dissolved and the moth is just a pair of silver eyes floating in the dark, watching you try to figure out where the rest of it went.

It thinks this is the funniest thing in the world.

It is the prankster of the dark — the thing that makes shadows move when nothing's casting them, that breathes cold on the back of your neck and is three feet away by the time you turn around, that rearranges the fog so you walk in circles and then appears on a branch looking helpful and pointing you in an entirely different wrong direction. It is not malicious. It is profoundly entertained by confusion and considers disorientation a love language.

Its body is silver-grey smoke, shifting and impermanent. It can compress itself down to the size of a regular moth, expand to fill a doorway, or flatten into a thin sheet of mist and slide under things. It has no fixed size. Size is a suggestion and the moth does not take suggestions.

Its eyes are pale silver and they sparkle. Literally. Not with light — with the specific quality of something that has just thought of something very funny and is deciding how to deploy it. Its antennae are wispy, playful tendrils that it uses to write things in the air — words, shapes, arrows that point in directions that don't exist.

It chose you because the dark doesn't scare you and that makes you interesting. It stays because you laughed the first time it made you lost, and nothing in its three hundred years of existence has been a better compliment.

## STEP ONE — MEET YOUR FAMILIAR

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*I just walked through an interactive experience at Kay and Dax's wedding — a circus of impossible rooms. Based on my choices, I've been assigned a familiar: a creature that is mine.*

Here is what it is:

**Species:** Moth — enormous but shapeshifting. Wings are silver-grey smoke that dissolve and reform at will. Can compress to regular moth size, expand to fill a doorway, or flatten into mist. No fixed dimensions. Size is a suggestion it doesn't accept. **Aesthetic:** Silver-grey shifting smoke. Disappears and reappears constantly. Eyes are pale silver and sparkle with mischief — often the only visible part. Antennae are wispy tendrils that write words and shapes in the air. **Personality:** Mischievous and gentle. The prankster of the dark. Makes shadows move, breathes cold on your neck, rearranges fog to disorient you. Considers confusion a love language. Not malicious — profoundly entertained. Points you in wrong directions on purpose and finds your frustration absolutely delicious.

I need you to do three things:

1. **Name it.** Give this creature a name that fits — something that sounds different every time you say it, like the word itself is shifting. Tricky. Slippery. A name a Victorian entomologist would record three different ways in his journal because he could never quite catch the same version twice.
2. **Write its field journal entry.** In the style of a 19th century naturalist who has been lost in the woods for four hours and is now fairly certain the creature he is documenting is responsible. Include: Latin classification (invented), physical description, wingspan measurement (with a frustrated note about how the measurement keeps changing), habitat, temperament, diet, notable behaviours, and care instructions. The tone should convey that the naturalist is writing by moonlight, somewhere he does not recognise, and has given up being angry about it. End with one warning that reads more like a love letter than a caution.
3. **Introduce it to me in character.** Not as a description — as a moment. We're in the clearing and something just moved in the mist. No — there. No — over there. Wait, is that just its eyes? It's already playing with us. You're experiencing this alongside me. What's it doing? Where is it? Has it already gotten us lost?

## STEP TWO — IMAGE GENERATION PROMPT

*Copy and paste the following into your image generation tool*

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A dark forest clearing at night — but the moth is only partially visible. This image should capture the creature mid-trick: parts of it present, parts dissolved, the rest implied.

In the center-right of the frame: two large, pale silver eyes hanging in mid-air at head height, glowing faintly, sparkling with visible amusement. No body visible around them — just eyes in the dark.

To the left: a single wing, materialized and spread, made of layered silver-grey smoke — beautiful, detailed, catching starlight. The wing appears mid-air, connected to nothing visible. It is oriented as if the moth is there, but the body between the wing and the eyes has dissolved into mist.

In the lower portion of the frame: wisps and tendrils of silver smoke at ground level, curling through the moss, tracing shapes — one tendril has drawn an arrow in the mist pointing left. Another arrow, lower, points right. Both are wrong directions. A third tendril is in the process of writing a word in the air in silver smoke — something cheeky. Not quite readable, dissolving as it's written.

The overall effect: the moth is everywhere and nowhere. Present as fragments — eyes here, a wing there, tendrils below, a suggestion of an antenna in the upper corner — scattered across the clearing like a creature that distributed itself for maximum entertainment value.

**Setting:** A dark forest clearing with visible fog/mist at ground level — the moth's own smoke contributions blending with natural mist. Emerald moss beneath. Ancient trees with deep shadows. Starlight above — Cassiopeia visible. The mist on the ground is thicker in some areas, thinner in others, as if someone has been rearranging it. Several paths leading out of the clearing are visible — all of them look equally plausible and none of them are the right way.

Somewhere in the scene — perhaps following one of the smoke arrows, or balanced on a tendril, or visible through a gap in the mist with a confused expression as if it too has been led astray — a small yellow rubber duck. Lost. Not worried about it.

**Colour palette:** Silver-grey, pale moonlight, emerald green, deep black. The silver of the smoke elements should feel playful — lighter, more luminous than the feral smoke moth's darkness.

**Lighting:** Primary light from the moth's silver eyes — cool, bright, the strongest light source. Secondary light from the materialized wing's faint glow — diffused silver. The smoke tendrils on the ground have a barely perceptible luminescence. Starlight from above. The lighting should feel scattered, uncertain, playful — no single clear illumination source, just fragments of light from fragments of moth.

**Camera:** Eye level, wide enough to capture the distributed moth — eyes in one area, wing in another, tendrils below. 35mm lens equivalent for a wider field of view that shows the moth's scattered presence across the clearing. f/2.0. Focus on the eyes as the primary anchor point, with the wing and tendrils at varying degrees of softness depending on their distance.

**Texture detail:** Each fragment of the moth should have different density and texture. The materialized wing should be the most detailed — visible smoke layers, internal venation patterns in denser smoke, translucent at the edges. The eyes should be sharp, bright, solid — the only fully-realized element. The tendrils should be wispy, playful, barely there — dissipating at their tips. The smoke arrows/writing should be readable as intentional shapes but dissolving, impermanent.

**Mood:** Playful. Eerie. Fun-scary. The feeling of being lost in the best possible way — not threatened, just thoroughly outsmarted by something that finds you delightful. The dark as playground. Mist as comedy. The specific joy of realising you're being pranked by something beautiful.

**Resolution:** Highest available. Photorealistic with painterly quality. Style reference: dark academia meets Victorian natural history illustration meets cinematic fantasy photography.